# Chapter 27 Depersonalization

# Systematic Assessment

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# Abstract

Depersonalization is often not the presenting complaint, making familiarity with the means for detection and assessment critical to avoiding misdiagnosis and ineffective treatment. Depersonalization occurs on a spectrum, from few/transient episodes in individuals with a variety of psychiatric disorders, to recurrent or ongoing episodes experienced in those with posttraumatic and dissociative disorders. Accurate diagnosis requires assessment of depersonalization within a context of other dissociative symptoms in order to properly characterize an underlying dissociative disorder, or to rule one out. The author reviews assessments of depersonalization in adolescents and adults using the Structured Clinical Interview for Dissociative Disorders (SCID-D) (Steinberg, 1994, DSM-5/ICD version). The SCID-D evaluates depersonalization in the context of four additional dissociative symptoms: amnesia, derealization, identity confusion, and identity alteration. Many studies have documented the SCID-D's good-to-excellent reliability and validity for detection of depersonalization and its characterization within the full spectrum of dissociative symptoms.