A SCALE TO ASSESS HYPERCHONRIASIS: THE CONVERSE OF HYPOCHONDRIASIS

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AB An instrument to assess the attitudes of men who devote an undue amount of time and effort to the maintenance of health is described. The behavior is labeled hyperchondriasis and the concomitant attitudes were measured by a 47-item questionnaire derived from material in magazines intended for weight-lifters. The scale has adequate reliability. Validity is indicated by 2 sets of normally distributed scores and by discrimination of 2 subsamples by mean scale scores. 2 distinctive subsamples representing the tails of the distribution of scores were given the MMPI. "High" hyperchondriasis scores obtain lower K and Hy scores but exceed the "low" scorers on Si. The content of the experimental scale suggests that a high score should lead to ineffective functioning and personal discomfort. The MMPI does not support this, suggesting that enhancement of the soma serves to maintain psychological integrity.