

# Therapists should assess for IBS during psychiatric intake

## Introduction

- Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS) is a disorder of gut-brain interaction that is commonly characterized by abdominal pain, bloating, and changes in a person's bowel habits.
- The prevalence of IBS in the general population is up to 6% using Rome IV criteria. Of these people, up to 90% also have a comorbid psychiatric diagnosis.
- This study aims to find the inverse of the above: What is the prevalence of IBS in patients with mental disorders?

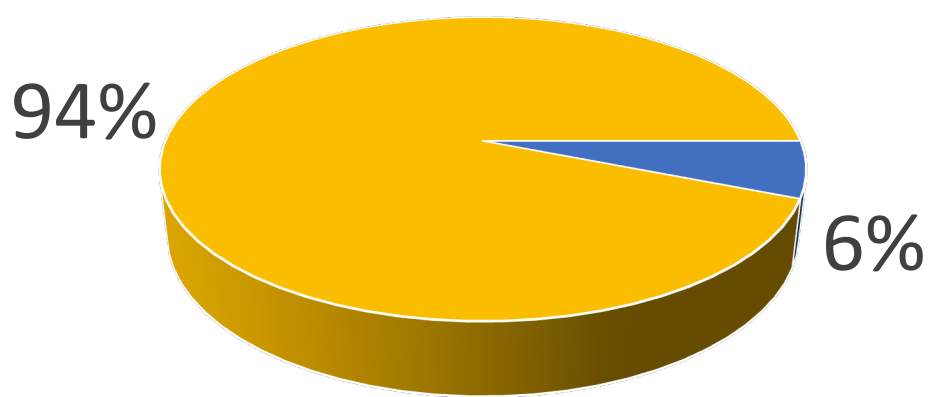
## Methods

- Participants ( $n = 747$ ) were recruited from two sources:
  - Prolific,  $n = 698$
  - Reddit,  $n = 49$
- Participants had at least one of eight diagnoses.
- Participants completed a survey with the Rome IV diagnostic criteria, demographic information and psychiatric diagnosis.

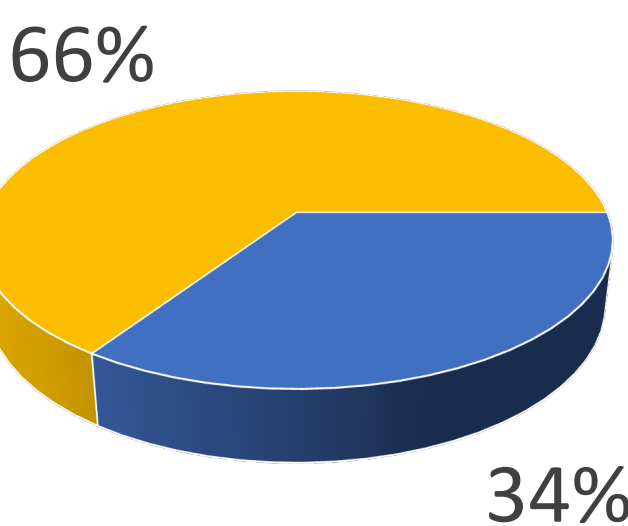
## Prevalence of IBS in psychiatric populations

IBS Prevalence Using Rome IV Criteria

General Population

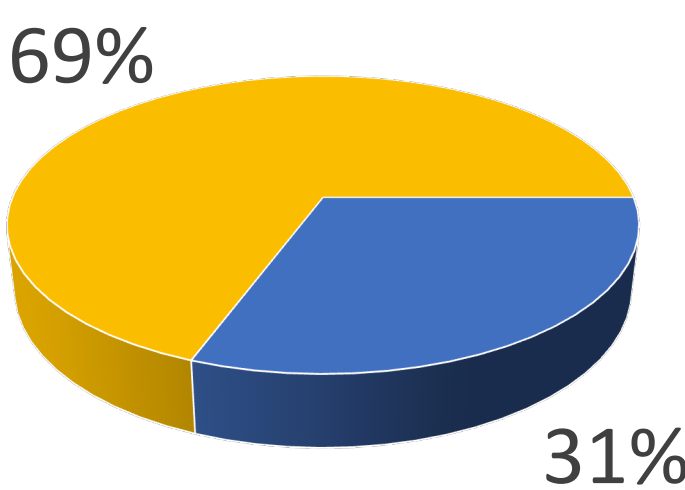


MDD



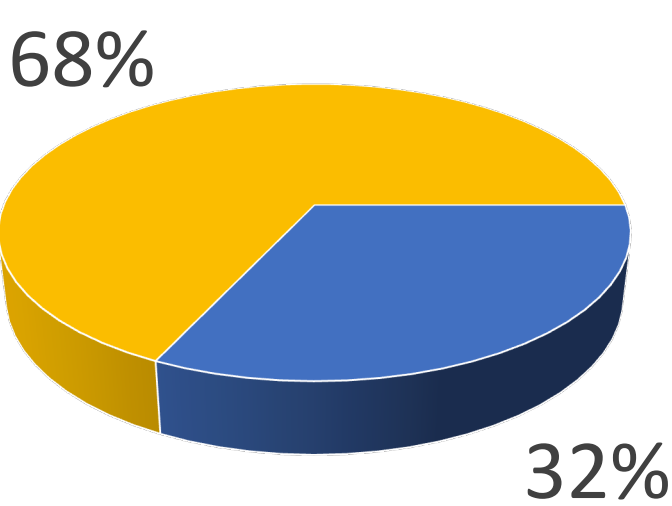
$n = 343$

Agoraphobia



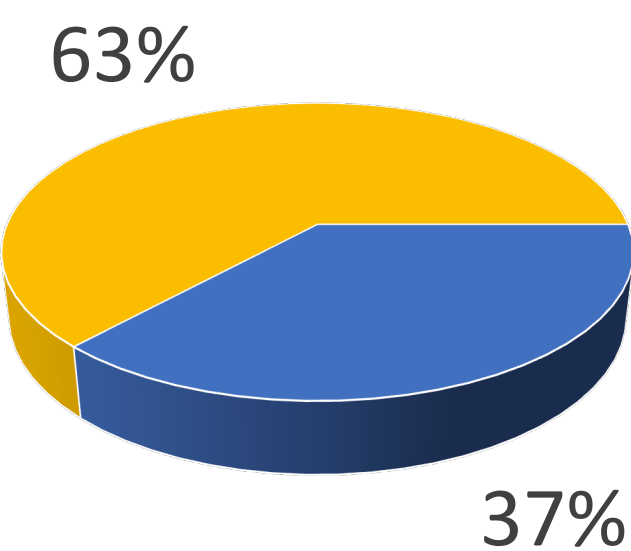
$n = 215$

GAD



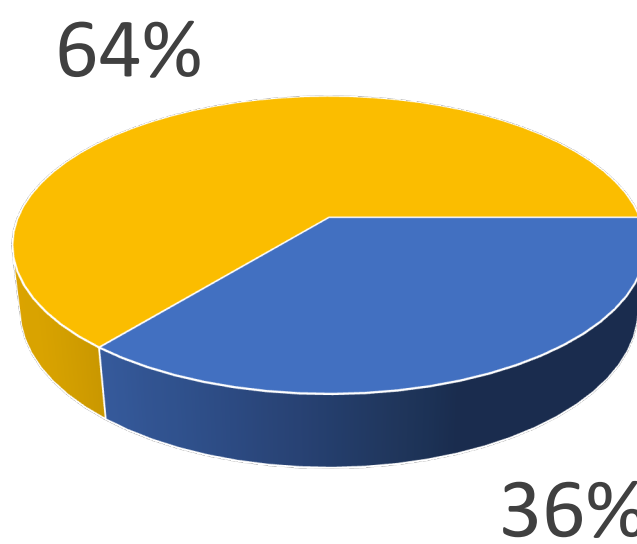
$n = 397$

Panic



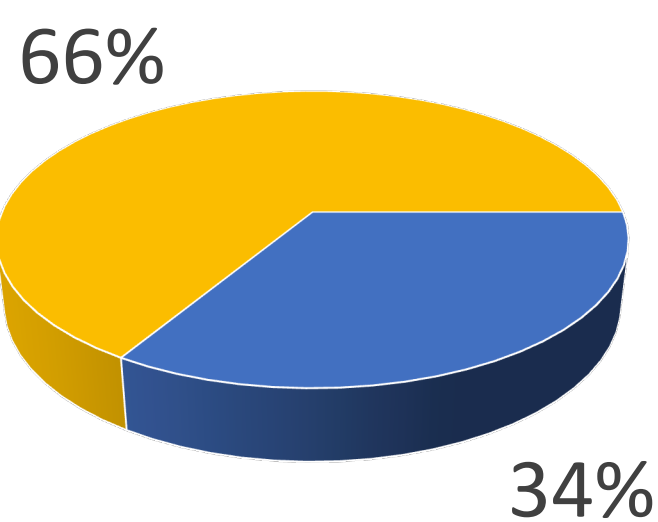
$n = 114$

SAD



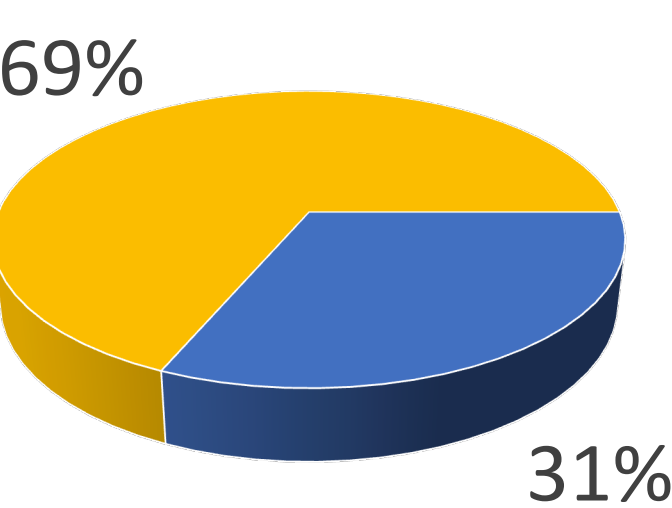
$n = 117$

OCD



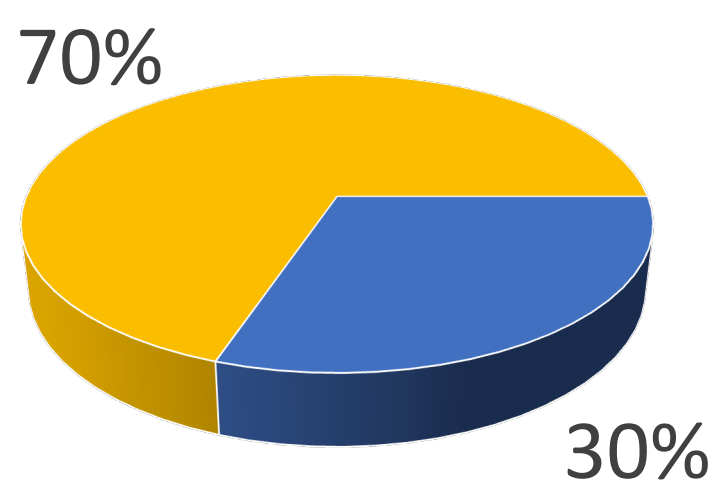
$n = 193$

PTSD



$n = 124$

>1 Disorder

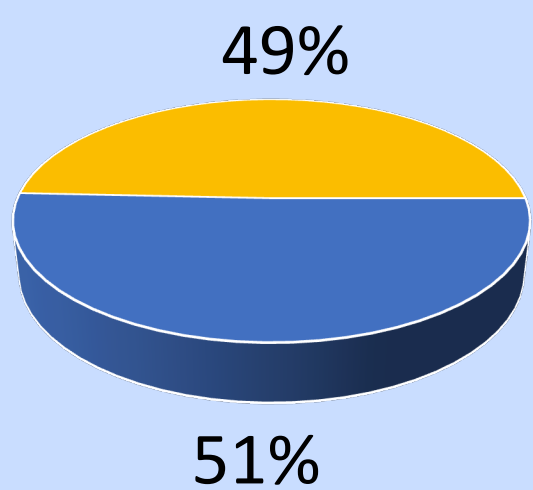


$n = 536$

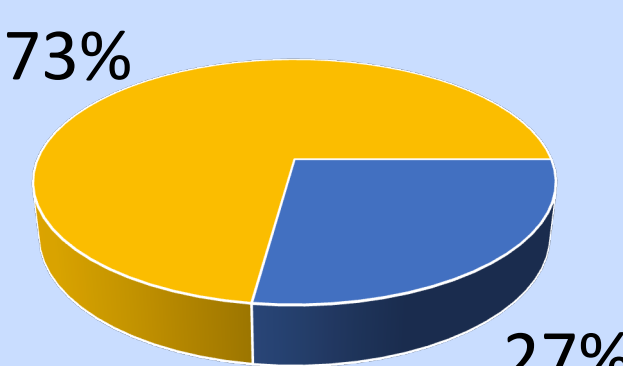
■ IBS ■ No IBS

## Additional Visuals

IBS Prevalence:  
Rome III



IBS Prevalence:  
Rome IV



■ IBS ■ No IBS

## Conclusion

- Clinical IBS symptoms are significantly more prevalent in those with anxiety, depression, OCD, or PTSD, compared with the general population.
- IBS prevalence rates were far higher using Rome III diagnostic criteria.
- Therapists should scan for IBS symptoms at intake.

## Future Directions

- Investigate impacts of Rome IV updates on IBS “diagnostic orphans.”
- Chart review studies of patients with confirmed DSM 5 and IBS diagnoses.
- Expand IBS training resources for therapists to address gastrointestinal distress.

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