

In a 2012 study headed by Dr. Patrick Carnes* it was estimated that sexual addiction is estimated to afflict up to 3% to 6% of the population. However, many clinicians lack clear criteria for detecting potential cases.

PATHOS is a brief sexual addiction screening questionnaire. The aforementioned clinical study from Carnes, et. al., found PATHOS as clinically significant for effectively classifying patient's appropriateness for entering treatment as potential sex addicts.

PATHOS stands for the six assessment questions:

Preoccupied – Do you often find yourself preoccupied with sexual thoughts?

Ashamed – Do you hide some of your sexual behavior from others?

Treatment – Have you ever sought therapy for sexual behavior you did not like?

Hurt others – Has anyone been hurt emotionally because of your sexual behavior?

Out of control – Do you feel controlled by your sexual desire?

Sad – When you have sex, do you feel depressed afterwards?

A positive response to just one of the six questions would indicate a need for additional assessment with a certified sex addiction therapist. Two or more are considered to certainly indicate sexual addiction.

* Carnes PJ, Green BA, Merlo LJ, Polles A, Carnes S, Gold MS, March 6, 2012 (1):29-34. *PATHOS: a brief screening application for assessing sexual addiction*. doi: 10.1097/ADM.0b013e3182251a28. PATHOS is reprinted here with permission from the *International Institute of Trauma and Addiction Professionals* (iitap).