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SUICIDE INTENT SCALE IN THE PREDICTION OF SUICIDE

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Objective: To assess the predictive value of the Suicide Intent Scale in patients with a high suicide risk. The secondary aim was to assess if the use of the factors of the Suicide Intent Scale would offer a better predictive value in case detection. Finally a short version of the scale was created after an item analysis.

Method: Eighty-one suicide attempters were assessed with the Beck's Suicide Intent Scale (SIS). All patients were followed up for cause of death. Receiver-operating characteristic (ROC) curves and tables were created to establish the optimal cut-off values for SIS and SIS factors to predict suicide.

Results: Seven patients committed suicide during a mean follow up of 9.5 years. The major finding was that mean SIS distinguished between suicides and survivors. The positive predictive value was 16.7 % and the AUC was 0.74. Only the planning subscale reached the statistical significance. Four items were used to test a short version of SIS in the suicide prediction. The positive predictive value was 19 % and the AUC was 0.82.

Conclusions: The Suicide Intent Scale is a valuable tool in clinical suicide risk assessment, a short version of the scale may offer a better predictive value.