

CBT sessions by disorder, per guideline

There is no single number for "CBT": each guideline sets its own, by disorder and sometimes by severity. Doses as each guideline writes them; the NICE and IMSS rows are for adults.

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GUIDELINE	YEAR	CONDITION	INTERVENTION	DOSE, AS THE GUIDELINE WRITES IT · LEEWAY	WHERE
NICE NG222	2022	Less severe depression (PHQ-9 below 16)	Individual CBT or behavioral activation	"Usually" 8 sessions · more with comorbidity, complex social needs or residual symptoms	1.5.2, table 1
NICE NG222	2022	Less severe depression (PHQ-9 below 16)	Group CBT or behavioral activation	"Usually" 8 sessions and 8 participants; 2 practitioners, at least 1 with therapy-specific training · no adjustment clause	1.5.2, table 1
NICE NG222	2022	More severe depression (PHQ-9 16 or more)	Individual CBT	"Usually" 16 sessions · more, for the same reasons	1.6.1, table 2
NICE NG222	2022	More severe depression (PHQ-9 16 or more)	Individual behavioral activation	"Usually" 12 to 16 sessions · more, for the same reasons	1.6.1, table 2
NICE CG113	2011	Generalized anxiety, step 3: marked functional impairment or no improvement after step 2	CBT	"usually" 12 to 15 weekly sessions of 1 hour · "fewer if the person recovers sooner; more if clinically required"	1.2.19
NICE CG113	2004	Moderate to severe panic disorder (step 3)	CBT	7 to 14 hours in total; weekly sessions of 1 to 2 hours, within a maximum of 4 months · "For most people"	1.3.12 [2011]; 1.3.15, 1.3.16
NICE CG159	2013	Social anxiety	CBT, Clark and Wells model	Up to 14 sessions of 90 minutes, over approximately 4 months · ceiling	1.3.13
NICE CG159	2013	Social anxiety	CBT, Heimberg model	15 sessions of 60 minutes and 1 of 90, over approximately 4 months · fixed count	1.3.14
NICE NG116	2018	PTSD, more than 1 month after the trauma	Trauma-focused CBT	"typically" 8 to 12 sessions · more if clinically indicated	1.6.17
NICE CG31	2005	OCD	CBT with exposure and response prevention	Up to 10 therapist hours per patient (mild impairment or preference); more than 10 (mild, if low intensity is not enough, or moderate) · no ceiling	1.5.1.1–1.5.1.3
Alianza por el Sueño (Spain)	2026	Chronic insomnia (regardless of age)	CBT-I	"se aplica habitualmente en 4 a 8 sesiones" (usually delivered in 4 to 8 sessions) · flexible sequence	p. 6, p. 27
IMSS-161-09 (Mexico)	2015	Mild-to-moderate depression	CBT or problem-solving therapy	6 to 8 sessions over 10 to 12 weeks · "se recomienda considerar" (consider)	p. 24
IMSS-161-09 (Mexico)	2015	Moderate-to-severe depression	CBT or interpersonal therapy	16 to 20 sessions over 5 months · "tratamiento psicológico de elección" (treatment of choice)	p. 24
IMSS-392-10 (Mexico)	2010 (upd. 2011)	Anxiety disorders (non-drug treatment, 4.3.2)	CBT	Weekly sessions of 1 to 2 hours, maximum 4 months · "Para la mayor parte de los pacientes" (for most patients)	p. 26

HOW TO READ IT

- The adverb is part of the dose. NG222 provides for additional sessions, never fewer; CG113 (generalized anxiety) provides for fewer and more.
- Sessions are not hours: panic (CG113) and OCD (CG31) count hours, not sessions. Record the unit in the plan.
- NICE writes for England; IMSS guidelines are Mexican institutional guidance, not binding regulation. Check the guidance where you practice.
- Status at 7 October 2026: NG222, reviewed January 2026, no change. CG113, reviewed September 2026: an update is needed, not yet scheduled. CG31 is being updated: the September 2026 draft (consultation to 21 October) proposes "Usually 12 to 14 weekly sessions" of individual CBT for adults; publication expected 16 February 2027. Until then, CG31 applies.
- Adjust with the reasons the guideline names and write any other reason into the plan. Schedule the first review.

SOURCES

- NICE NG222 (2022) · [nice.org.uk/guidance/ng222](https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng222)
- NICE CG113 (2011, updated 2020) · [nice.org.uk/guidance/cg113](https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/cg113)
- NICE CG159 (2013) · [nice.org.uk/guidance/cg159](https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/cg159)
- NICE NG116 (2018) · [nice.org.uk/guidance/ng116](https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng116)
- NICE CG31 (2005) · [nice.org.uk/guidance/cg31](https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/cg31)
- Alianza por el Sueño, practical guide to CBT for chronic insomnia (PDF dated March 2026) · [infocop.es](https://www.infocop.es)
- IMSS-161-09, depression in adults (2015) · imss.gob.mx/sites/all/statics/guiasclinicas/161GER.pdf
- IMSS-392-10, anxiety disorders in adults (2010, updated 2011) · imss.gob.mx/sites/all/statics/guiasclinicas/392GER.pdf