



# Section 14: Appendix 2: Medical Procedures

## SECTION 14: PAIN ASSESSMENT

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P	PARAMEDIC	P

INDICATIONS	SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS	CONTRAINDICATIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Injury or illness requiring pain management.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Abdominal pain</li> <li>Chest pain secondary to infarction or angina</li> <li>Acute urinary retention</li> <li>Fractures</li> <li>Severe burns</li> <li>Kidney stones</li> <li>Musculoskeletal trauma</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Altered level of consciousness</li> <li>Head injuries</li> <li>Chest injuries (blunt or penetrating)</li> <li>Intoxication</li> <li>Maxillofacial injuries</li> <li>Psychiatric problems</li> <li>Pediatric patients under 12 years of age</li> <li>Pregnancy</li> <li>Respiratory distress / failure</li> </ul>

### PROCEDURE

- Initial and ongoing assessment of pain intensity and character is accomplished through the patient's self report.
- Pain should be assessed and documented during initial assessment, before starting pain control treatment, and with each set of vitals.
- Pain should be assessed using the appropriate approved scale.
- Two pain scales are available: the 0 - 10 and the Wong - Baker "faces" scale.
- 0 - 10 Scale: the most familiar scale used by EMS for rating pain with patients. It is primarily for adults and is based on the patient being able to express their perception of the pain as related to numbers. Avoid coaching the patient; simply ask them to rate their pain on a scale from 0 to 10, where 0 is no pain at all and 10 is the worst pain ever.
- Wong - Baker Faces scale: this scale is primarily for use with pediatrics but may also be used with geriatrics or any patient with a language barrier. The faces correspond to numeric values from 0-10. This scale can be documented with the numeric value or the textual pain description.

### KEY POINTS

- Pain is an unpleasant sensory and emotional experience associated with actual or potential tissue damage.
- Pain is subjective (whatever the patient says it is).

#### The Wong-Baker Faces Pain Rating Scale

Designed for children aged 3 years and older, the Wong-Baker Faces pain rating scale is also helpful for elderly patients who may be cognitively impaired. It offers a visual description for those who don't have the verbal skills to explain how their symptoms make them feel.



To use this scale, you should explain that each face shows how a person in pain is feeling. That is, a person may feel happy because he or she has no pain (hurt), or a person may feel sad because he or she has some or a lot of pain.

#### A Numerical Pain Scale

A numerical pain scale allows you to describe the intensity of your discomfort in numbers ranging from 0 to 10 (or greater, depending on the scale). Rating the intensity of sensation is one way of helping your doctor determine treatment. Numerical pain scales may include words or descriptions to better label your symptoms, from feeling no pain to experiencing excruciating pain. Some researchers believe that this type of combination scale may be most sensitive to gender and ethnic differences in describing pain.