Pain Scores

Pain scores are tools used to assess and quantify a patient's subjective perception of pain, enabling consistent monitoring and treatment decisions.

Common Pain Scales

Numeric Rating Scale (NRS)

- **Scale:** 0–10
- **0 =** No pain, **10 =** Worst imaginable pain
- **Use:** Most commonly used in adults
- **Advantages:** Quick, easy to administer

Visual Analog Scale (VAS)

- **Description:** 10 cm line with endpoints "No pain" and "Worst imaginable pain"
- **Scoring:** Measured in mm from "No pain" end
- **Use:** Clinical trials, sensitive detection of changes
- **Limitation:** Requires patient comprehension and fine motor skills

Verbal Rating Scale (VRS)

- **Options:** No pain, Mild, Moderate, Severe, Very severe, Worst possible
- **Use:** Suitable for elderly or those with low numeracy
- **Advantage:** Simple and intuitive

Faces Pain Scale – Revised (FPS-R)

- **Visual:** Series of faces from happy (0) to crying (10)
- **Use:** Pediatric patients, language barriers, cognitive impairment
- **Aligned with:** 0–10 Numeric Rating

FLACC Scale

- **Components:** Face, Legs, Activity, Cry, Consolability
- **Score range:** 0–10
- **Use:** Infants, non-verbal, sedated patients
- **Observational tool:** Based on behavior

Behavioral Pain Scale (BPS)

- **Domains:**

1. Facial expression
2. Upper limb movements
3. Compliance with ventilation

- **Use:** ICU, sedated/ventilated patients

Clinical Interpretation

Score	Description	Suggested Action
0	No pain	No treatment required
1–3	Mild pain	Monitor or mild analgesics (e.g. paracetamol)
4–6	Moderate pain	Standard analgesia (e.g. NSAIDs, weak opioids)
7–10	Severe pain	Strong analgesia; assess for complications

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