

HOW TO DESCRIBE YOUR PAIN TO A HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONAL

1. What does the pain feel like?

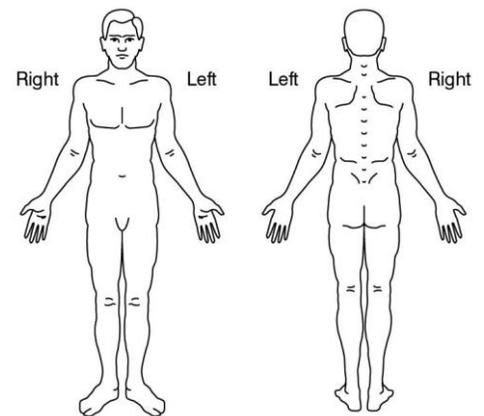
Aching	Gnawing	Pricking	Spreading
Agonizing	Hurting	Pulling	Squeezing
Beating	Intense	Pulsing	Stabbing
Burning	Itchy	Quivering	Stinging
Cramping	Jumping	Radiating	Tearing
Crushing	Nagging	Rasping	Tender
Cutting	Numb	Scalding	Throbbing
Drilling	Penetrating	Searing	Tight
Dull	Piercing	Sharp	Tingling
Electric	Pinching	Shooting	Tugging
Flashing	Pounding	Sore	Vicious
Freezing	Pressing	Splitting	Wrenching

2. Where does it hurt? (Mark the body drawing to show where it hurts.)

3. Does the pain move? Where does it travel? Does it come and go?

4. Does the pain interrupt your sleep? Do you wake up in the night or in the morning with pain?

5. What is worst and best pain levels recently? (1-10 Comparative Pain Scale)



1-10 COMPARATIVE PAIN SCALE¹

Minor - Does not interfere with most activities. Able to adapt to pain psychologically and with medication or devices such as cushions.

0 = No pain.	Feeling perfectly normal.
1 = Very Mild	Very light barely noticeable pain, like a mosquito bite or a poison ivy itch. Most of the time you never think about the pain.
2 = Discomforting	Minor pain, like lightly pinching the fold of skin between the thumb and first finger with the other hand, using the fingernails. Note that people react differently to this self-test.
3 = Tolerable	Very noticeable pain, like an accidental cut, or a doctor giving you an injection. The pain is not so strong that you cannot get used to it. Eventually, most of the time you don't notice the pain. You have adapted to it.

Moderate - Interferes with many activities. Requires lifestyle changes but patient remains independent. Unable to adapt to pain.

4 = Distressing	Strong, deep pain, like an minor trauma to part of the body, such as stubbing your toe real hard. So strong you notice the pain all the time and cannot completely adapt.
5 = Very Distressing	Strong, deep, piercing pain, such as a sprained ankle or mild back pain. You notice the pain all the time, and are now so preoccupied with managing causing normal lifestyle to be curtailed.
6 = Intense	Strong, deep, piercing pain so strong it seems to partially dominate your senses, causing you to think somewhat unclearly. You begin to have trouble holding a job or maintaining normal social relationships.

Severe - Unable to engage in normal activities. Patient is disabled and unable to function independently.

7 = Very Intense	Same as 6 except the pain completely dominates your senses, causing you to think unclearly ½ the time. At this point you are effectively disabled and frequently cannot live alone.
8 = Utterly Horrible	Pain so intense you can no longer think clearly at all, and have often undergone severe personality change if the pain has been present for a long time.
9 = Excruciating	Unbearable pain so intense you cannot tolerate it and demand pain killers or surgery, no matter what the side effects or risk.
10 = Unimaginable	Unspeakable pain

¹ Jack Harich, The Comparative Pain Scale, July 14, 2002