

PAIN MANAGEMENT: ASSESSMENT AND NON-PHARMACOLOGICAL CARE



Pain is among the most common complaints among clients seeking medical care. More than 25% of the US population suffers from chronic pain. Failure to manage chronic pain, along with the associated risks of opioid use, result in significant morbidity and mortality. In this context, the medical community has increasingly recognized the need for a multi-modality and interdisciplinary team approach to pain management, including use of nonpharmacologic interventions.

Acute vs chronic pain

Acute pain:

- Specific disease or injury as cause
- Useful biological purpose
- Self-limited; resolves with normal healing process
- Treatment aimed at underlying cause

Chronic pain:

- Lasting > 3 months (disease state)
- No biological purpose
- Types: neuropathic, nociceptive, musculoskeletal, inflammatory, psychogenic, mechanical
- Most clients report more than one type.
- ↑ risk of anxiety, depression, and suicidality

Pain assessment tools

In order to effectively treat pain, nurses must be able to consistently assess baseline pain level and pain level in response to therapy. Choose the appropriate pain scale based on client age, cognitive status, and ability to verbalize pain level.

Numeric rating scale

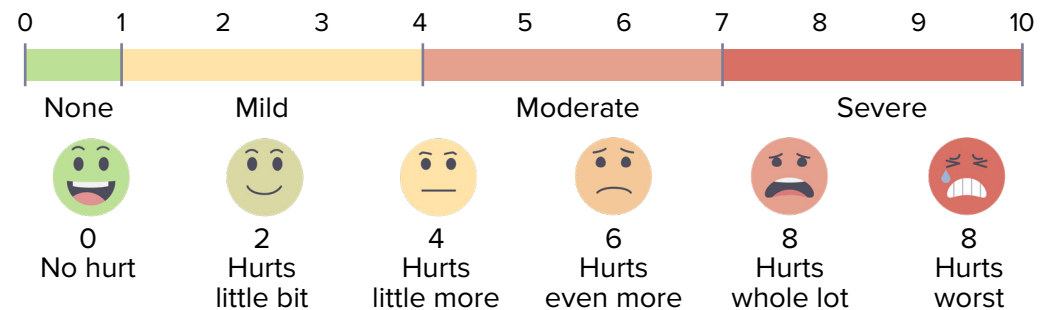
Good for older children and adults who are able to verbally articulate their pain level.

Wong-Baker faces scale

Good for younger children or adults who may have difficulty verbalizing, but can point to a face to indicate their pain level.

FLACC and PAINAD scales

- Used for babies, very young children, and clients with dementia who are unable to rate or articulate their pain level
- Observe variables such as facial expression, vocalizations, body movements, and consolability to determine degree of comfort or pain and rate each variable to determine pain score.



Nonpharmacologic pain management strategies



Heat/cold therapy



Hydrotherapy



Distraction/
companionship



Transcutaneous
electrical nerve
stimulation



Relaxation



Counseling
or pastoral
services



Meditation



Alternative &
complementary
medicine

NOTES

