

The Chronically Awesome Foundation Mankoski Subjective Pain Scale

Chronic pain patients, when asked to describe our pain using the typical 1-10 scale have difficulty accurately scoring our pain. Emergency Rooms are more equipped to handle patients with acute pain, pain from injuries, than they are the Chronically Awesome. The 1-10 scale is better suited for acute pain patients. The Mankoski scale works with three categories, and describes subtypes of pain within the three categories. This scale allows us to give a complete

and subjective picture of our pain. By using words instead of just numbers, we can paint a clearer picture of chronic pain. We have been in pain for longer than an acute pain patient. We have built a *tolerance* to our pain. The same level of pain that might be excruciating for one person is average for us. Stimuli to trigger points and fatigue from the day-to-day of living with chronic pain make our perception of pain different than

that of the acute pain patient. That is the subjective nature of pain. The typical pain scale has long been a source of frustration for chronic pain patients. We frontload our rating with explanations about why our pain is different, or present a number we know our pain would be comparable to if we were acute pain patients, resulting in many 9's and 10's.

	0	No pain. Feeling perfectly normal.
Minor Able to adapt to pain	1 Very Mild	Very light barely noticeable pain, occasional twinges, no medication needed.
	2 Discomforting	Minor pain, like pinching the fold of skin, occasional twinges, no medication needed.
	3 Tolerable	Very noticeable pain, annoying enough to be distracting, over the counter (OTC) pain reliever needed.
Moderate Interferes with many activities	4 Distressing	Strong, deep pain, like an average toothache, can be ignored if one is very focused on a task. OTC pain reliever may be effective.
	5 Very Distressing	Strong, deep, piercing pain, can't be ignored for more than 30 minutes. OTC pain reliever may reduce pain for 3-4 hours.
	6 Intense	Strong, deep, piercing pain, cannot be ignored however one may be able to work or attend social events. Narcotic pain relievers (Codeine, Vicodin, Norco) may be effective every 3-4 hours.
Severe Patient is disabled and unable to function independently.	7 Very Intense	It is difficult to concentrate or sleep. You can still function with effort. Stronger narcotic pain relievers are only partially effective. Strongest pain relievers relieve pain (OxyContin, Morphine)
	8 Utterly Horrible	Physical activity severely limited. Patient can read and converse with effort. Pain related nausea and dizziness. Stronger pain relievers are minimally effective. Strongest pain relievers are effective for 3-4 hours.
	9 Excruciating Unbearable	Unable to speak. Crying out or moaning uncontrollably. Near delirium. Strongest pain relievers are only partially effective.
	10 Unimaginable Unthinkable	Loss of consciousness due to pain. Strongest pain relievers may be partially effective.

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Original pain scale ©1995 Andrea Mankoski