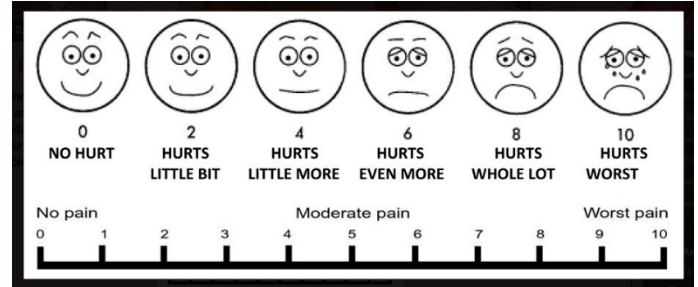


DESCRIBING YOUR PAIN by Barbara Montgomery

Pain can interfere in our daily lives, and it is not easy to manage or sometimes easy to describe to your doctor so they can help manage your pain. If you can find the root cause of pain it is easier to manage. If you can describe your pain to your doctor, they are better able to help you. Pain can be subjective and varies from person to person, yet there is a guide to help you describe your pain to your provider. The pain scale is important as it is a standardized means of measuring pain intensity and severity. This helps your doctor access your pain and understand your needs.



The following are suggestions to use in describing your pain:

1. Keep a pain journal: Document your pain based on daily activities; what foods you are eating plus medications and supplements; also your emotions and stress level before and after pain flare-ups.
2. Describe the pain/sensation as accurately as you can:
 - a. Burning
 - b. Sharp
 - c. Dull
 - d. Aching
 - e. Stabbing
 - f. Radiating
 - g. Throbbing
 - h. Cramping
 - i. Raw
 - j. Shooting
 - k. Tender/sensitive to touch
 - l. Heavy
 - m. Itching
3. Describe your pain level: This is a way for you and your doctor to be on the same page when it comes to describing your pain.
 - a. 1-3 Mild to distracting
 - b. 4-6 Moderate to strong that disrupts your daily activities
 - c. 7-10 Debilitating and prevents you from living a normal life
4. Describe your limitations: Lifting, bending, stretching, using hands, stairs and walking.
5. Keep track of when it gets better or worse:
 - a. Is it worse in morning or evening?
 - b.
 - c. Do certain foods/drink/medications increase the pain?

References

<https://www.vulcanpainmanagement.com/>

<https://connect.mayoclinic.org/blog/adult-pain-medicine/newsfeed-post/what-to-expect-at-my-pain-medicine-appointment/>

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