

Verbal Descriptor Scale

Instructions: This tool is for more articulate patients, who can use verbal terms to express the level of their pain. Have patients place a check mark next to the phrase that best describes the current intensity of their pain.

Scoring: Keep a record of the corresponding number that the patients mark on this tool. A response of “No Pain” is given a value of zero, whereas a response of “The Most Intense Pain Imaginable” is given a value of six. Compute a mean score by summing the values reported at each assessment and dividing by the number of assessments. You may also simply track either the values or the descriptors themselves over time.

Sources:

- Herr KA, Garand L. Assessment and measurement of pain in older adults. *Clin Geriatr Med*. 2001 Aug;17(3):457-78, vi.
- Herr KA, Spratt K, Mobily PR, Richardson G. Pain intensity assessment in older adults: use of experimental pain to compare psychometric properties and usability of selected pain scales with younger adults. *Clin J Pain*. 2004;20(4):207-19.
- Young DM, Menten JC, Titler MG. Acute pain management protocol. *J Gerontol Nurs*. 1999;25(6):10-21.

Verbal Descriptor Scale

Patient's Name: _____

Date: _____

Instructions: Please place a check mark next to the phrase that best describes the current level of your pain.

_____ The Most Intense Pain Imaginable

_____ Extreme Pain

_____ Severe Pain

_____ Moderate Pain

_____ Mild Pain

_____ Slight Pain

_____ No Pain