

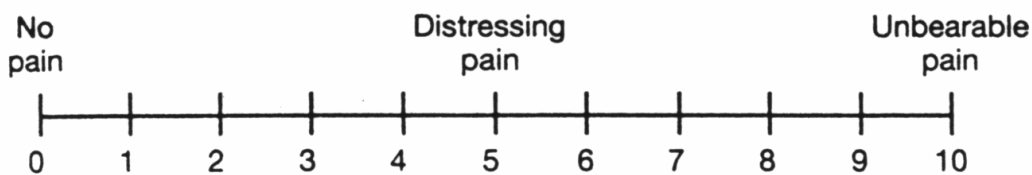
Describing Your Pain

You are the expert on your pain. One of the most important steps in getting pain relief is talking with your doctor, nurse or pharmacist. The information you share will help them find the best way to treat your pain.

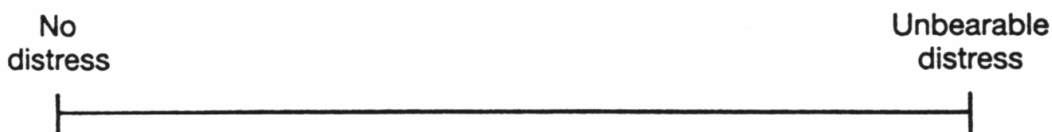
The following questions may help you to describe your pain. You may want to write down the answers or just talk to your health care professional about them.

- 1. Where is your pain?** Pain can be in more than one place. Pointing to the place where it hurts is sometimes the best way to explain where it is.
- 2. When did the pain start?**
- 3. How bad does it hurt?** To help measure pain, there are different scales that sometimes help. The most common is a number scale with 0 meaning no pain and 10 meaning the worst pain. Below are some examples of scales. Use the scale that works best for you.

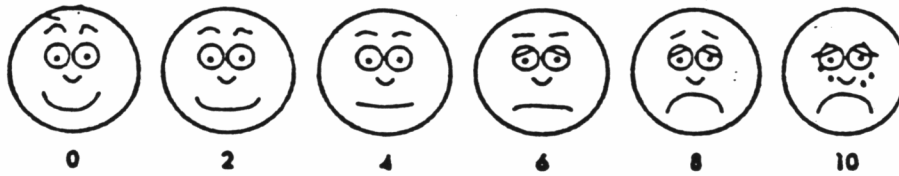
0–10 Numeric Pain Distress Scale¹



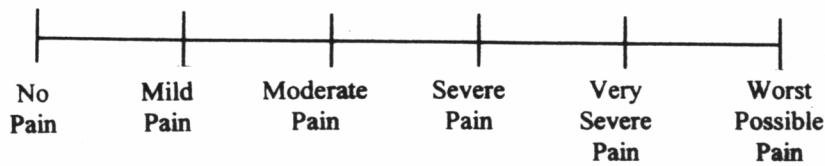
Visual Analog Scale (VAS)²



Modified Faces Pain Rating Scale



Simple Descriptive Pain Intensity Scale



4. **What does it feel like?** Does it burn? Tingle? Ache? Is it dull or sharp?
5. **Is it worse at anytime of the day more than another?** Morning? Evening?
6. **What make the pain feel better?** What makes the pain feel worse? Does medicine make it feel better? Heat? Cold? Lying in a certain position? Does it hurt more when you're active or when you're lying still?
7. **Has the pain affected any other parts of your life?** For example, does it make it hard to sleep, eat or care for yourself or others? Has it affected your emotions? Your relationships?
8. **Do you have any other comments or questions?**