

I'm not a robot























Ian C. Langtree - Writer/Editor for Disabled World (DW)Published: 2016/05/20 - Updated: 2025/02/02Publication Type: Charts, Graphs, TablesTopic: Pain: Acute and Chronic - Publications ListPage Content: Synopsis - Introduction - MainSynopsis: Using numbers from 1 to 10, as well as a graphical chart with faces for children and those who are unable to speak, these pain scale charts from Disabled World provide a comprehensive breakdown of pain levels, offering detailed descriptions for each level that help individuals better articulate their pain experiences. This standardized scale aids healthcare professionals in assessing and managing patient pain more effectively. The article also includes information on different types of pain measurements, such as pain threshold and tolerance, and introduces the concept of dolorimetry. Additionally, it lists some of the most painful conditions, giving readers context for severe pain experiences. Overall, this resource serves as an educational tool for both patients and healthcare providers, promoting better communication and understanding of pain intensity and management - Disabled World (DW).IntroductionA pain scale measures a person's pain intensity and is based on self-report, observational (behavioral), or physiological data. Various pain scales are available for neonates, infants, children, adolescents, adults, seniors, and persons with impaired communication. Pain assessments are typically regarded as "the 5th Vital Sign." FocusUniversal pain screening is an increasingly common practice because of the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO) requirement that accredited hospitals and clinics routinely assess all patients for types and severity of pain. Pain screening is intended to improve the quality of pain management by systematically identifying patients with pain in clinical settings.Pain Scale Table with FacesThe pain scale chart below provides examples of the various levels that define the 0 - 10 pain scale. Service Personnel and Veterans may be better suited using the Defense and Veterans Pain Rating Scale DVPRS 2.0 - a pain assessment tool using a rating scale, word descriptors, color coding, pictorial facial expressions that match pain levels.Comparative 0 to 10 Pain Scale Continued below image.Pain scale assessment chart.Continued...See our printable pain scale faces chart you can print for your own use.No PainPain Level 0No pain at all; you feel perfectly normal.Minor Pain LevelsMinor pain levels generally do not interfere with most day-to-day activities. Able to adapt to pain psychologically and with medication or devices such as cushions.Pain Level 1Pain level one means very light, barely noticeable pain, like a mosquito bite or a poison ivy itch. Mostly, you never think about the pain.Pain Level 2Pain level two is minor discomfort, like lightly pinching the fold of skin between the thumb and first finger with the other hand, using the fingernails. People can react differently to this self-test.Pain Level 3Pain level three is tolerable but very noticeable, like an accidental cut, a blow to the nose causing a bloody nose, or a doctor giving you an injection. The pain is not so strong that you cannot get used to it. Eventually, you don't notice the pain as you have adapted to it.Moderate Pain LevelsModerate pain levels interfere with many daily activities. These pain levels usually require lifestyle changes, but you can remain independent. However, you are unable to adapt to the pain.Pain Level 4Pain level four is a distressing strong, deep pain, like an average toothache, the initial pain from a bee sting, or minor trauma to part of the body, such as stubbing your toe hard. So strong, you constantly notice the pain and cannot completely adapt. This pain level can be simulated by pinching the skin fold between the thumb and first finger with the other hand, using the fingernails, and squeezing hard. Note how the simulated pain is initially piercing but becomes dull after that.Pain Level 5Pain level five is a very distressing strong, deep, piercing pain, such as a sprained ankle when you stand on it wrong or mild back pain. Not only do you frequently notice the pain, but you are now so preoccupied with managing it that your normal lifestyle is curtailed. Temporary personality disorders are frequent.Pain Level 6Pain level six is an intense pain that is strong, deep, and piercing. The pain is so strong it seems to partially dominate your senses, causing you to think somewhat unclearly. At this point, you begin to have trouble holding a job or maintaining normal social relationships. Comparable to a bad non-migraine headache combined with several bee stings or a bad back painSevere Pain LevelsSevere pain levels mean you cannot engage in normal activities. The patient is considered disabled and unable to function independently.Pain Level 7Pain level seven consists of very intense pain. Much the same as level 6, except the pain, completely dominates your senses, causing you to think unclearly about half the time. At this point, you are effectively disabled and frequently cannot live alone. Comparable to an average migraine.Pain Level 8Pain level eight is horrible pain. The pain you feel is so intense you can no longer think clearly and have often undergone severe personality changes if the pain has been present for a long time. Suicide is frequently contemplated and sometimes tried. Comparable to childbirth or a horrible migraine.Pain Level 9Pain level nine is excruciating pain, so intense you cannot tolerate it and demand painkillers or surgery, regardless of the side effects or risk. If this doesn't work, suicide is frequent since there is no more joy in life whatsoever. Comparable to throat cancer.Pain Level 10Pain level ten means unimaginable pain. This pain level is so intense you will go unconscious shortly. Most people have never experienced this level of pain. Those who have suffered a severe accident, such as a crushed hand, and lost consciousness due to the pain and not blood loss, have experienced level 10.Measuring PainPain tolerance is the maximum level of pain a person can tolerate without passing out. Pain tolerance differs from the "pain threshold," which is the point at which pain begins to be felt.The threshold of pain (pain threshold) is the point along a curve of increasing perception of a stimulus at which pain begins to be felt. Pain threshold measurements include:The pressure at which sound becomes painful for a listener is called "pain threshold pressure."The temperature at which heat becomes painful for a person is known as the "heat pain threshold."What is a Dolorimeter?Dolorimetry has been defined as "the measurement of pain sensitivity or pain intensity". A dolorimeter is an instrument used to measure pain threshold and pain tolerance. Dolorimeters apply steady pressure, heat, or electrical stimulation to an area. Sometimes, the pressure applied uses a blunt object, or by increasing air pressure on an area of the body, and sometimes by pressing a sharp instrument against the body to move a joint or another body part to determine the level of heat, pressure, electric current, or amount of movement produces a sensation of pain.Several types of dolorimeter have been developed. A dolorimeter known as the Sonic Palpometer was developed at the University of Victoria in British Columbia, Canada. The Sonic Palpometer uses ultrasound and computer technology to automate the technique of palpation to determine the sensitivity of an area of the patient's body.What are the Most Painful Things You Can Experience?List is in alphabetical order, not by pain severity level: Author Credentials: Ian is an Australian-born writer, editor, and advocate who currently resides in Montreal, Canada. He is the founder and Editor-in-Chief of Disabled World, a leading resource for news and information on disability issues. With a global perspective shaped by years of travel and lived experience, Ian is a committed proponent of the Social Model of Disability-a transformative framework developed by disabled activists in the 1970s that emphasizes dismantling societal barriers rather than focusing solely on individual impairments. His work reflects a deep commitment to disability rights, accessibility, and social inclusion. To learn more about Ian's background, expertise, and accomplishments, visit his full biography.Citing and ReferencesFounded in 2004, Disabled World (DW) is a leading resource on disabilities, assistive technologies, and accessibility, supporting the disability community. Learn more on our About Us page.Cite This Page: Disabled World. (2016, May 20 - Last revised: 2025, February 2). Pain Scale Chart: 1 to 10 Levels with Faces. Disabled World (DW). Retrieved May 29, 2025 from www.disabled-world.com/health/pain/scale.phpPermalink: