

NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH  
WARREN GRANT MAGNUSON CLINICAL CENTER

PAIN INTENSITY INSTRUMENTS  
JULY 2003

**COMFORT Scale** (page 1 of 2)

		<b>DATE/TIME</b>						
<b>ALERTNESS</b>	1 - Deeply asleep 2 - Lightly asleep 3 - Drowsy 4 - Fully awake and alert 5 - Hyper alert							
<b>CALMNESS</b>	1 - Calm 2 - Slightly anxious 3 - Anxious 4 - Very anxious 5 - Panicky							
<b>RESPIRATORY DISTRESS</b>	1 - No coughing and no spontaneous respiration 2 - Spontaneous respiration with little or no response to ventilation 3 - Occasional cough or resistance to ventilation 4 - Actively breathes against ventilator or coughs regularly 5 - Fights ventilator; coughing or choking							
<b>CRYING</b>	1 - Quiet breathing, no crying 2 - Sobbing or gasping 3 - Moaning 4 - Crying 5 - Screaming							
<b>PHYSICAL MOVEMENT</b>	1 - No movement 2 - Occasional, slight movement 3 - Frequent, slight movements 4 - Vigorous movement 5 - Vigorous movements including torso and head							
<b>MUSCLE TONE</b>	1 - Muscles totally relaxed; no muscle tone 2 - Reduced muscle tone 3 - Normal muscle tone 4 - Increased muscle tone and flexion of fingers and toes 5 - Extreme muscle rigidity and flexion of fingers and toes							
<b>FACIAL TENSION</b>	1 - Facial muscles totally relaxed 2 - Facial muscle tone normal; no facial muscle tension evident 3 - Tension evident in some facial muscles 4 - Tension evident throughout facial muscles 5 - Facial muscles contorted and grimacing							
<b>BLOOD PRESSURE (MAP) BASELINE</b>	1 - Blood pressure below baseline 2 - Blood pressure consistently at baseline 3 - Infrequent elevations of 15% or more above baseline (1-3 during 2 minutes observation) 4 - Frequent elevations of 15% or more above baseline (> 3 during 2 minutes observation) 5 - Sustained elevations of 15% or more							
<b>HEART RATE BASELINE</b>	1 - Heart rate below baseline 2 - Heart rate consistently at baseline 3 - Infrequent elevations of 15% or more above baseline (1-3 during 2 minutes observation) 4 - Frequent elevations of 15% or more above baseline (> 3 during 2 minutes observation) 5 - Sustained elevations of 15% or more							
	<b>TOTAL SCORE</b>							

Instructions for use of the Comfort Scale on page 2 of 2

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**Indications:** Infants, children and adults in a critical care or operative setting who are unable to use the Numeric Rating Scale or the Wong-Baker Faces Pain Rating Scale

**Instructions:**

1. Each of the nine (9) categories is scored from 1-5, which results in a total score between 9 and 45.
  - Alertness
  - Calmness
  - Respiratory Distress
  - Crying
  - Physical Movement
  - Muscle Tone
  - Facial Tension
  - Blood Pressure Baseline
  - Heart Rate Baseline
2. The interdisciplinary team in collaboration with the patient/family (if appropriate), can determine appropriate interventions in response to COMFORT Scale scores.

**Reference**

Ambuel, ., Hamlett, KW, Marx, CM, & Blumer, JL (1992). Assessing distress in pediatric intensive care environments: the COMFORT Scale. *Journal of Pediatric Psychology*, 17(1): 95-109.