

9/3/10

## CLINICAL OPIATE WITHDRAWAL SCALE (COWS)

For Buprenorphine/naloxone induction: Enter scores at time zero, 1-2 h after first dose, and at additional times that buprenorphine/naloxone is given over the induction period.

	DATE/TIME:	DATE/TIME:	DATE/TIME:
<b>Resting Pulse Rate:</b> (record beats per minute) <i>Measured after patient is sitting/lying for one minute.</i> <b>0</b> pulse rate 80 or below <b>1</b> pulse rate 81-100 <b>2</b> pulse rate 101-120 <b>4</b> pulse rate greater than 120			
<b>Sweating:</b> <i>Over past ½ hour not accounted for by room temperature or patient activity.</i> <b>0</b> no report of chills of flushing <b>1</b> one subjective report of chills or flushing <b>2</b> flushed or observable moistness on face <b>3</b> beads of sweat on brow or face <b>4</b> sweat streaming off face			
<b>Restlessness:</b> <i>Observation during assessment.</i> <b>0</b> able to sit still <b>1</b> report difficulty sitting still, but is able to do so <b>3</b> frequent shifting or extraneous movements of legs/arms <b>5</b> unable to sit still for more than a few seconds			
<b>Pupil Size:</b> <b>0</b> pupils pinned or normal size for room light <b>1</b> pupils possibly larger than normal for room light <b>2</b> pupils moderately dilated <b>5</b> pupils so dilated that only rim of the iris is visible			
<b>Bone or Joint aches:</b> <i>If patient was having pains previously, only the additional component attributed to opiate withdrawal is scored.</i> <b>0</b> not present <b>1</b> mild diffuse discomfort <b>2</b> patient reports severe diffuse aching of joints/muscles <b>4</b> patient is rubbing joints or muscles and is unable to sit still because of discomfort			
<b>Runny nose or tearing:</b> <i>Not accounted for by cold symptoms or allergies.</i> <b>0</b> not present <b>1</b> nasal stuffiness or unusually moist eyes <b>2</b> nose running or tearing <b>4</b> nose constantly running or tears streaming down cheeks			
<b>GI Upset:</b> <i>Over last ½ hour</i> <b>0</b> no GI symptoms <b>1</b> stomach cramps <b>2</b> nausea or loose stools <b>3</b> vomiting or diarrhea <b>5</b> multiple episodes of diarrhea or vomiting			
<b>Tremor:</b> <i>Observation of outstretched hands</i> <b>0</b> no tremor <b>1</b> tremor can be felt, but not observed <b>2</b> slight tremor observable <b>4</b> gross tremor or muscle twitching			
<b>Yawning:</b> <i>Observation during assessment</i> <b>0</b> no yawning <b>1</b> yawning once or twice during assessment <b>2</b> yawning three or more times during assessment <b>4</b> yawning several times/minute			
<b>Anxiety or Irritability</b> <b>0</b> none <b>1</b> patient reports increasing irritability or anxiousness <b>2</b> patient obviously irritable, anxious <b>4</b> patient so irritable or anxious that participation in the assessment is difficult			
<b>Gooseflesh skin</b> <b>0</b> skin is smooth <b>3</b> piloerection of skin can be felt or hairs standing up on arms <b>5</b> prominent piloerection			
<b>Total Score</b>			
<b>Observers Initials</b>			
<b>Blood Pressure/Pulse</b>			
<b>Dose of Buprenorphine/naloxone Given</b>			

**Note: Give first dose when COWS score  $\geq 7$**

**SCORE:**      **5-12 = Mild**  
                   **13-24 = Moderate**  
                   **25-36 = moderately severe**  
**More than 36 = severe withdrawal**