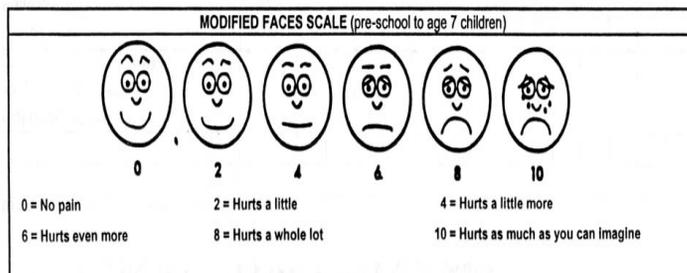


How Do We Measure Pain?

- ♥ Some children/youth can talk about their pain. Listening to your child/youth's report of pain is the best way to measure it.
- ♥ For children/youth who understand numbers, (for example, 4 is greater than one, but is less than 7) you can ask them to rate their pain on a scale from 0 to 10, with "0" being "no pain" and "10" being the "worst pain possible."

NUMERICAL RATING SCALE (NRS)										
No Pain	Mod. Pain				Worst Pain					
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

- ♥ At CHEO, we use drawings of a face to help younger children tell us the amount of pain they are having.



- ♥ For infants or non-verbal children/youth, the nurse may use an "Observational Pain Scale", and score behaviours such as facial expression, body movements, crying and ability to comfort your child/youth.

Why do we Measure Pain?

- ♥ Nurses and doctors measure pain so that we can know how much pain your child/youth is having, and also to know if the treatment for pain has worked well.



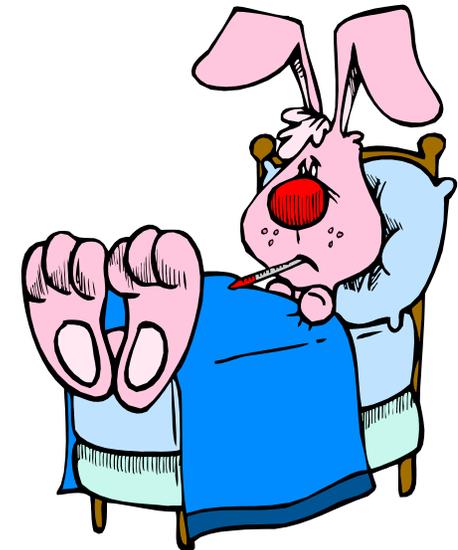
- ♥ You often know best how your child/youth reacts to pain, and when he or she is feeling better.
- ♥ Open communication between parents and health care workers helps to find the best pain management possible.

For more information on pain in children, see our companion pamphlets *Helping to Manage Pain in Children and Youth without Medication*, and *Using Medication to Manage Acute Pain in Hospital*.

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Disponible en français

Recognizing Pain in Hospitalized Children and Youth



CHEO

Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario
Centre hospitalier pour enfants de l'est de l'Ontario

401 Smyth Road, Ottawa K1H 8L1
www.cheo.on.ca

This Pamphlet can Help you Learn about Pain in Children and Youth



- ♥ Why pain should be measured and treated.
- ♥ How children and Youth of different ages often respond to pain.

Pain in Children/Youth

- ♥ You play an important role in helping your child/youth understand and cope with his or her pain.
- ♥ Children/youth may feel better and may recover more quickly from an illness if you help them cope with pain.
- ♥ Untreated pain may cause fear, loss of appetite, anxiety, poor sleep, depression, and other distressing feelings
- ♥ Good pain relief results in earlier return to normal activities such as eating, walking, playing and can result in a faster recovery.
- ♥ **If the cause of the pain is not known, or the amount of pain is more than expected, then your doctor or nurse should be informed.**

Children of Different Ages Respond Differently to Pain

- ♥ For all children and youth, it is important to listen to their concerns and offer comfort. There may be reasons other than pain, causing your child/youth's behavior, such as hunger, fatigue, or emotions (such as fear or anger).
- ♥ Children may revert to more immature behavior, like sucking their thumbs, or acting/talking like a younger child when under stress.
- ♥ Pain may cause your child/youth to become pale, flushed, or sweaty. Your nurse or doctor can best assess whether these symptoms are due to pain, or other causes.
- ♥ **Infants** cannot say where and how much they hurt. Infants may cry, clench their fists, be very fussy and they may eat and sleep poorly. Sometimes they might even sleep too much.
- ♥ **Toddlers** (1-3 years old) use only a few words to describe pain, but they may touch or point to a part of the body that hurts. Often they become fussy, uncooperative, or lose interest in toys



- ♥ **Preschoolers** (3-5 years old) have a hard time understanding why they hurt and when the pain will stop. Some children will create fantasy reasons for their pain. Like toddlers, preschoolers can often be difficult to comfort no matter how hard you try.
- ♥ **School-age children** (5-12 years old) can tell you they hurt, show you where, and say how much they hurt. They can understand explanations about why they have the pain and how long it will last.
- ♥ **Youth** (12-18 years old) can use many words to describe their pain. They might not choose to describe their pain well because they may feel awkward about their body, they may fear losing control of the situation, or they may try to be brave. They might even ignore their pain or deny it. Look for other clues such as tense muscles, lower activity level and nightmares.

Health care workers always want to help you and your child/youth manage pain.



