

Clinical Opiate Withdrawal Scale (COWS)

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

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

Note: Given first dose when COWS score > 7

SCORE: 5-1 = Mild
 13-24 = Moderate
 25-36 = Moderately Severe
 More than 36 = Severe Withdrawal