

The Mathers Recovery

COWS: Clinical Opiate Withdrawal Scale

Name: _____ Date: _____ Time: _____

Place the value for each question in the box. Add all 11 values for the total score.

Resting Pulse Rate: _____ beats/minute

Measured after patient is sitting or lying for one minute

- 0 pulse rate 80 or below
 1 pulse rate 81-100
 2 pulse rate 101-120
 4 pulse rate greater than 120

Sweating:

Over past 1/2 hour not accounted for by room temperature or patient activity

- 0 no report of chills or flushing
 1 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:

Observation during assessment

- 0 able to sit still
 1 reports 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 the rim of the iris is visible

Bone Or Joint Aches:

If patient was having pain previously, only the additional component attributed to opiates withdrawal is scored

- 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

Add all of the numbers in each column for the total score.

Total Score: _____

Runny Nose Or Tearing:

Not accounted for by cold symptoms or allergies

- 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:

Over last 1/2 hour

- 0 no GI symptoms
 1 stomach cramps
 2 nausea or loose stool
 3 vomiting or diarrhea
 5 multiple episodes of diarrhea or vomiting

Tremor:

Observation of outstretched hands

- 0 no tremor
 1 tremor can be felt, but not observed
 2 slight tremor observable
 4 gross tremor or muscle twitching

Yawning:

Observation during assessment

- 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 or 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

Value Meaning: 5-12 = mild 13-24 = moderate 25-36 = moderately severe >36 = severe withdrawal

Reference: California Society of Addiction Medicine

