

Clinical Opiate Withdrawal Scale (COWS)

Flowsheet for measuring symptoms over a period of time during buprenorphine induction.

For each item, write in the number that best describes the patient's signs or symptom. Rate on just the apparent relationship to opiate withdrawal. *For example:* If heart rate is increased because the patient was jogging just prior to assessment, the increased pulse would not add to the score.

Patient name: _____ Date: _____				
Buprenorphine Induction: _____				
Enter scores at time zero, 30 minutes after first dose, 2 hours after first dose, etc.				
Times of Observation:				
<i>Resting Pulse Rate: Record Beats per Minute</i>				
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				
<i>Sweating: Over Past 1/2 Hour Not Accounted for by Room Temperature or Patient Activity</i>				
0=no report of chills or flushing 1=subjective report of chills or flushing 2=flushing or observable moistness on face 3=beads of sweat on brow or face 4=sweat streaming off face				
<i>Restlessness Observation During Assessment</i>				
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				
<i>Pupil Size</i>				
0=pupils pinned or normal size for room light 1=mild diffuse discomfort 2=pupils moderately dilated 5=pupils so dilated that only the rim of the iris is visible				
<i>Bone or Joint Aches if Patient was Having Pain 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				
<i>Runny Nose or Tearing 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				
<i>GI Upset: Over Last 1/2 Hour</i>				
0=no GI symptoms 1=stomach cramps 2=nausea or loose stool 3=vomiting or diarrhea 5=multiple episodes of diarrhea or vomiting				
<i>Tremor 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				
<i>Yawning 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				
<i>Anxiety or Irritability</i>				
0=none 1=patient reports increasing irritability or anxiousness 2=patient obviously irritable/anxious 4=patient so irritable or anxious that participation assessment is difficult				
<i>Gooseflesh Skin</i>				
0=skin is smooth 3=piloerection of skin can be felt or hairs standing up on arms 5=prominent piloerection				
Score: 5-12 Mild 13-24=Moderate 25-36=Moderately Severe More than 36=Severe Withdrawal	Total score			
Observer's initials				