Clinical Opioid Withdrawal Scale (COWS)

Times: 1. _______ 2. _______ 3. _______ 4. _______

1. Resting Pulse Rate: (record beats per 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

   Score 1. _______ 2. _______ 3. _______ 4. _______

2. Sweating: *over past ½ 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

   Score: 1. _______ 2. _______ 3. _______ 4. _______

3. 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

   Score: 1. _______ 2. _______ 3. _______ 4. _______

4. 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

   Score: 1. _______ 2. _______ 3. _______ 4. _______

5. 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

   Score: 1. _______ 2. _______ 3. _______ 4. _______

6. 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

   Score: 1. _______ 2. _______ 3. _______ 4. _______
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7. Gastrointestinal Upset: over last ½ hour
0 no gastrointestinal symptoms
1 stomach cramps
2 nausea or loose stool
3 vomiting or diarrhea
5 multiple episodes of diarrhea or vomiting

Score: 1. _______  2. _______  3. _______  4. _______

8. 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

Score: 1. _______  2. _______  3. _______  4. _______

9. 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

Score: 1. _______  2. _______  3. _______  4. _______

10. 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

Score: 1. _______  2. _______  3. _______  4. _______

11. Gooseflesh skin
0 skin is smooth
3 piloerection of skin can be felt or hairs standing up on arms
5 prominent piloerection

Score: 1. _______  2. _______  3. _______  4. _______

Total Scores: 1. _______  2. _______  3. _______  4. _______

Score:
___ 5-12 = mild opioid withdrawal
___ 13-24 = moderate opioid withdrawal
___ 25-36 = moderately severe opioid withdrawal
___ > 36 = severe withdrawal opioid withdrawal