

The Discomfort Scale (DS-DAT)

Behavioral Indicators	Frequency #episodes	Intensity* Low/High	Duration Short<1, Long>1 min
Noisy Breathing: negative sounding noise on inspiration or expiration; breathing looks strenuous, labored, or wearing; respirations loud, harsh, or gasping; difficulty breathing or trying hard at attempt to achieve a good gas exchange; episodic bursts of rapid breaths or hyperventilation			
Negative Vocalization: noise or speech with a negative or disapproving quality; hushed low sounds such as constant muttering with a guttural tone; monotone, subdued, or varying pitched noise with a definite unpleasant sound; faster rate than a conversation or drawn out as in a moan or groan; repeating the same words with a mournful tone; expressing hurt or pain			
Content Facial Expression: pleasant calm looking face; tranquil, at ease, or serene; relaxed facial expression with a slack unclenched jaw; overall look is one of peace.			
Sad Facial Expression: troubled looking face; looking hurt, worried, lost or lonesome; distressed appearance; sunken, "hang dog" look with lackluster eyes; tears; crying.			
Frightened Facial Expression: scared, concerned looking face; looking bothered fearful or troubled; alarmed appearance with open eyes and pleading face.			
Frown: face looks strained; stern or scowling looks; displeased expression with a wrinkled brow and creases in the forehead; corners of mouth turned down.			
Relaxed Body Language: easy openhanded position; look of being in a restful position and may be cuddled up or stretched out; muscles look of normal firmness and joints are without stress; look of idle, lazy or "laid back" appearance of "just killing the day"; causal.			
Tense Body Language: extremities show tension; wringing hands, clenched fist, or knees pulled up tightly; look of being in a strained and inflexible position.			
Fidgeting: restless impatient motion; acts squirming or jittery; appearance of trying to get away from hurt area; forceful touching, tugging, or rubbing of body parts.			

*Intensity, Low=barely to moderately perceptible; high=present in moderate to great magnitude
Scoring; 1 point for each episode; 1 for high intensity, 1 for long duration.

Reference: Hurley, A.C., Volicer, B.J., Hanrahan, S.H., & Volicer, L. (1992). Assessment of Discomfort in advanced Alzheimer Patients. *Research in Nursing & Health*, 15, 369-377.