

Numeric Rating Scale (NRS) Instructions

Instructions detailing the use of the numeric rating scale (NRS) to assess pain intensity for persons able to self-report

Purpose: To assess pain intensity in persons who are able to self-report¹.

When to Use: Use the Numeric Rating Scale

- At admission
- At each quarterly nursing review
- Each shift in resident with pain
- Each time a change in resident pain status is reported
- Following a pain intervention to evaluate treatment effectiveness

How to Use: Ask the patient to point to the number on the Numeric Rating Scale that best represents the intensity of their pain NOW.

Documentation: Document/record all scores in a location that is readily accessible by other health care providers.

Note: To use as a pocket guide, print the NRS and directions document front to back on card stock paper to create two tools. Cut to size and laminate for increased durability.

¹ Self-report of pain is defined as the ability to indicate presence and/or severity of pain verbally, in writing, or by other means such as finger span, pointing, head movement, or blinking eyes to answer yes or no questions.