

NEUROPATHIC PAIN SCALE[®]
(NPS[®])

Instructions: There are several different aspects of pain which we are interested in measuring: pain **sharpness**, **heat/cold**, **dullness**, **intensity**, overall **unpleasantness**, and **surface vs. deep** pain.

The distinction between these aspects of pain might be clearer if you think of taste. For example, people might agree on how **sweet** a piece of pie might be (the **intensity** of the sweetness) but some might enjoy it more if it were sweeter while others might prefer it to be less sweet. Similarly, people can judge the loudness of music and agree on what is more quiet and what is louder, but disagree on how it makes them feel. Some prefer quiet music and some prefer it more loud. In short, the **intensity** of a sensation is not the same as how it makes you feel. A sound might be unpleasant and still be quiet (think of someone grating their fingernails along a chalkboard). A sound can be quiet and “dull” or loud and “dull”.

Pain is the same. Many people are able to tell the difference between many aspects of their pain: for example, **how much** it hurts, and **how unpleasant** or annoying it is. Although often the intensity of pain has a strong influence on how unpleasant the experience of pain is, some people are able to experience more pain than others before they feel very bad about it.

There are scales for measuring different aspects of pain. For one patient, a pain might feel extremely hot, but not at all dull, while another patient may not experience any heat, but feel like their pain is very dull. We expect you to rate very high on some of the scales below, and very low on others. We want you to use the measures that follow to tell us exactly what you experience.

Place an “X” through the number that best describes your pain.

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|---|----|---|---|
| 1. Please use the scale below to tell us how intense your pain is. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 10%; padding-right: 10px;">No pain</td> <td style="text-align: center; border: 1px solid black;"> <table style="display: inline-table; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">0</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">1</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">2</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">3</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">4</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">5</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">6</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">7</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">8</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">9</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">10</td> </tr> </table> </td> <td style="width: 10%; padding-left: 10px; vertical-align: middle;">The most intense pain sensation imaginable</td> </tr> </table> | No pain | <table style="display: inline-table; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">0</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">1</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">2</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">3</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">4</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">5</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">6</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">7</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">8</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">9</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">10</td> </tr> </table> | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | The most intense pain sensation imaginable |
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| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | | | | |
| 2. Please use the scale below to tell us how sharp your pain feels. Words used to describe “sharp” feelings include “like a knife”, “like a spike”, “jabbing”, or “like jolts”. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 10%; padding-right: 10px;">Not sharp</td> <td style="text-align: center; border: 1px solid black;"> <table style="display: inline-table; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">0</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">1</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">2</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">3</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">4</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">5</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">6</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">7</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">8</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">9</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">10</td> </tr> </table> </td> <td style="width: 10%; padding-left: 10px; vertical-align: middle;">The most sharp sensation imaginable (“like a knife”)</td> </tr> </table> | Not sharp | <table style="display: inline-table; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">0</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">1</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">2</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">3</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">4</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">5</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">6</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">7</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">8</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">9</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">10</td> </tr> </table> | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | The most sharp sensation imaginable (“like a knife”) |
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| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | | | | |
| 3. Please use the scale below to tell us how hot your pain feels. Words used to describe very hot pain include “burning” and “on fire”. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 10%; padding-right: 10px;">Not hot</td> <td style="text-align: center; border: 1px solid black;"> <table style="display: inline-table; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">0</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">1</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">2</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">3</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">4</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">5</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">6</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">7</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">8</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">9</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">10</td> </tr> </table> </td> <td style="width: 10%; padding-left: 10px; vertical-align: middle;">The most hot sensation imaginable (“on fire”)</td> </tr> </table> | Not hot | <table style="display: inline-table; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">0</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">1</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">2</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">3</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">4</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">5</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">6</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">7</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">8</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">9</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">10</td> </tr> </table> | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | The most hot sensation imaginable (“on fire”) |
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| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | | | | |
| 4. Please use the scale below to tell us how dull your pain feels. Words used to describe very dull pain include “like a dull toothache”, “dull pain”, and “like a bruise”. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 10%; padding-right: 10px;">Not dull</td> <td style="text-align: center; border: 1px solid black;"> <table style="display: inline-table; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">0</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">1</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">2</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">3</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">4</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">5</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">6</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">7</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">8</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">9</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">10</td> </tr> </table> </td> <td style="width: 10%; padding-left: 10px; vertical-align: middle;">The most dull sensation imaginable</td> </tr> </table> | Not dull | <table style="display: inline-table; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">0</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">1</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">2</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">3</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">4</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">5</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">6</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">7</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">8</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">9</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">10</td> </tr> </table> | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | The most dull sensation imaginable |
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| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | | | | |
| 5. Please use the scale below to tell us how cold your pain feels. Words used to describe very cold pain include “like ice” and “freezing”. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 10%; padding-right: 10px;">Not cold</td> <td style="text-align: center; border: 1px solid black;"> <table style="display: inline-table; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">0</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">1</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">2</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">3</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">4</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">5</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">6</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">7</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">8</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">9</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">10</td> </tr> </table> </td> <td style="width: 10%; padding-left: 10px; vertical-align: middle;">The most cold sensation imaginable (“freezing”)</td> </tr> </table> | Not cold | <table style="display: inline-table; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">0</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">1</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">2</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">3</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">4</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">5</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">6</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">7</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">8</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">9</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; text-align: center;">10</td> </tr> </table> | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | The most cold sensation imaginable (“freezing”) |
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10-item NPS – US English

For information on, or permission to use the NPS, please contact the Information Resources Centre of Mapi Research Trust, 27 rue de la Villette, 69003 Lyon, FRANCE
Tel: +33 (0) 472 13 65 75 - Fax: +33 (0) 472 13 66 82 - E-mail: trustdoc@mapi.fr - Internet: www.mapi-trust.org

6. Please use the scale below to tell us how **sensitive** your skin is to light touch or clothing. Words used to describe sensitive skin include “like sunburned skin”, and “raw skin”.

Not sensitive

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|

The most **sensitive** sensation imaginable (“raw skin”)

7. Please use the scale below to tell us how **itchy** your pain feels. Words used to describe itchy pain include “like poison oak” and “like a mosquito bite”.

Not itchy

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|

The most **itchy** sensation imaginable (“like poison oak”)

8. Which of the following best describes the **time** quality of your pain? Please check only one answer.

I feel a background pain all of the time and occasional flare-ups (break-through pain) some of the time.

Describe the background pain: _____

Describe the flare-up (break-through) pain: _____

I feel a single type of pain all the time. Describe this pain: _____

I feel a single type of pain only sometimes. Other times, I am pain free.

Describe this occasional pain: _____

9. Now that you have told us the different physical aspects of your pain, the different types of sensations, we want you to tell us overall how **unpleasant** your pain is to you. Words used to describe very unpleasant pain include “miserable” and “intolerable”. Remember, pain can have a low intensity, but still feel extremely unpleasant, and some kinds of pain can have a high intensity but be very tolerable. With this scale, please tell us how **unpleasant** your pain feels.

Not unpleasant

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|

The most **unpleasant** sensation imaginable (“intolerable”)

10. Lastly, we want you to give us an estimate of the severity of your deep versus surface pain. We want you to rate each location of pain separately. We realize that it can be difficult to make these estimates, and most likely it will be a “best guess”, but please give us your best estimate.

HOW INTENSE IS YOUR DEEP PAIN?

No deep pain

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|

The most **intense deep** pain sensation imaginable

HOW INTENSE IS YOUR SURFACE PAIN?

No surface pain

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|

The most **intense surface** pain sensation imaginable