

GRADING PAIN

Introduction

On this ward we register pain. We do this to gain better insight into the ranges in which patients experience pain. This may be useful in adjusting the suppression of pain to the patient's needs as efficiently as possible. To this effect we will ask all patients on the ward daily to grade the extent to which they experience pain.

A thermometer is a reliable instrument for determining whether a patient has a fever. But there is no instrument to measure pain. You are the only person who can tell whether you have any pain, and how serious the pain is. Many people find it difficult to explain to others how much pain they have. This is quite understandable, as others cannot feel your pain. Grading the pain may help in this. In this folder we explain how you can grade pain.

The pain grade

A nurse will ask you daily to indicate your pain, if any, with a grade between 0 and 10 on the pain scale.

no pain	0 – 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 – 8 – 9 - 10	the worst possible pain
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Grade "0" means no pain, and grade "10" is the worst pain you can imagine. It is impossible to rate wrongly, because as it is, you yourself feel that pain and pain is an individual experience. If, for example, you think that the pain you feel must be graded with 5, then you should be graded with 5, even if you assume that another person may rate the pain with grade 3 or with grade 7. If you don't feel any pain, you indicate with "0".

Changes in pain

If you feel pain in several places, we suggest you to take the pain you experience as the worst as your point of departure.

Some people feel pain only at given times, e.g. when moving or when passing urine. If this is the case, please inform the nurse and rate the pain for that certain painful moment.

Questions

You can, of course, talk about your pain with the doctor or the nurse, and you need not wait for the moment the nurse asks you to rate your pain. Should you have any questions about grading your pain, please feel free to ask.