CLINICAL OPIATE WITHDRAWAL SCALE (COWS)

For Buprenorphine/naloxone induction: Enter scores at time zero, 1-2 h after first dose, and at additional times that buprenorphine/naloxone is given over the induction period.

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**Resting Pulse Rate**: (record beats per minute) *Measured after patient is sitting/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

**Sweating**: *Over past ½ hour not accounted for by room temperature or patient activity.*
- 0 no report of chills or flushing
- 1 one 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

**Restlessness**: *Observation during assessment.*
- 0 able to sit still
- 1 report 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

**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 rim of the iris is visible

**Bone or Joint aches**: *If patient was having pains previously, only the additional component attributed to opiate 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

**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

**GI Upset**: *Over last ½ hour*
- 0 no GI symptoms
- 1 stomach cramps
- 2 nausea or loose stools
- 3 vomiting or diarrhea
- 5 multiple episodes of diarrhea or vomiting

**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

**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

**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

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

**Total Score**
- **Observers Initials**
- **Blood Pressure/Pulse**
- **Dose of Buprenorphine/naloxone Given**

Note: Give first dose when COWS score ≥ 7

**SCORE**:
- 5-12 = Mild
- 13-24 = Moderate
- 25-36 = moderately severe
- More than 36 = severe withdrawal