

Pain Assessment with the
"None—Mild—Moderate—Severe"
or Simple Descriptive
Pain Intensity Scale

The none-mild-moderate-severe pain scale is used when the patient or nursing home resident cannot understand the other scales, as can happen in dementia. In essence, this is the scale of last resort.

To use this type of scale, ask the person if they are in pain. Ask them how much pain they have, such as:

- "Is your pain 'mild', 'moderate' or 'severe'?"

The figure below depicts how the words reflect a range of pain intensity levels.



Other commonly used words can be substituted. Here are two examples of substitutions:

- "Is your pain 'a little,' 'in the middle,' or 'a lot'?"
- "Is your pain 'small,' 'medium,' or 'large'?"