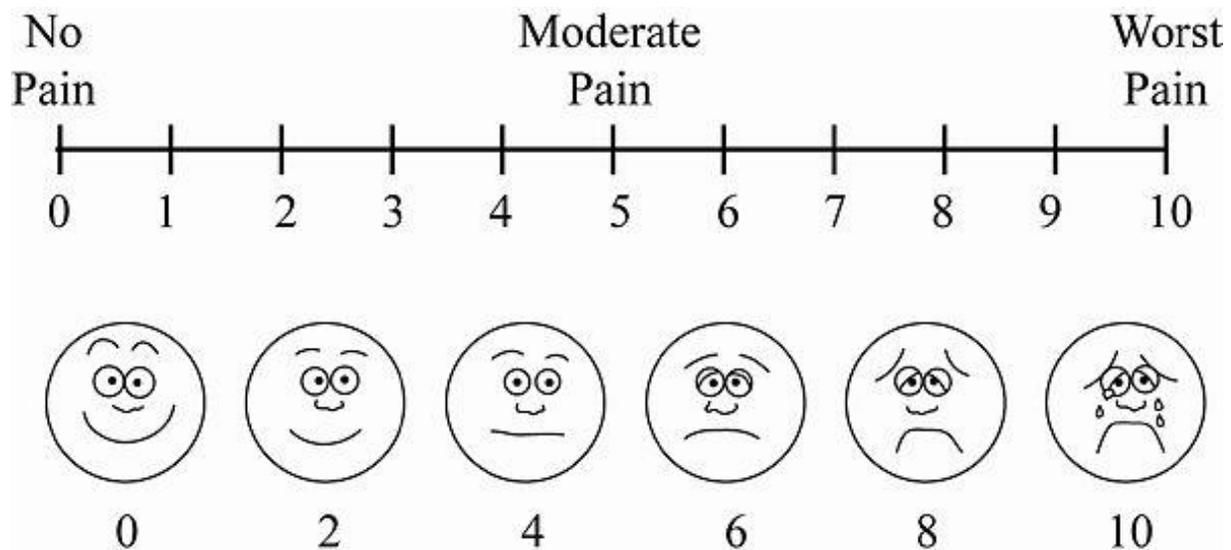


Talking About Pain (or Hurt)

At most doctor's office visits, patients are asked if they are feeling any pain. Practice answering these questions to help the person with an intellectual or developmental disability (IDD) participate more in their visit and improve communication about what they are feeling.

Pain Scales

If a patient is feeling pain, providers will want to know what level of pain it is. Sometimes they will use a Faces Pain Scale:



You can teach the pain scale and how to use it by asking the person with IDD to point to which face shows how much pain or hurt they are feeling.

You can also point to the different faces and connect the face with a personal story of pain that you know the person with IDD has felt. Then ask them which face shows their current pain.

Most doctor's offices have some version of this scale available, but it may help to bring this one with you if you have practiced with it.

Image credit for pain scale: https://butyoudontlooksick.com/articles/pain_description/

This handout is from "My Health Toolkit: For Individuals with IDD and Their Families" 2017
<http://myhealthtoolkit.weebly.com>

Telling the Story

The Health care provider will want to know the story of the pain.

Practice telling the story in a way that answers these questions:

Where is the pain on your body?

Does the pain move?

(Starts in one place and then shoots to another place)

What does it feel like?

(Words that health care providers use are burning, stabbing, aching, throbbing, squeezing...)

When did the pain start?

How did the pain start?

What were you doing when it happened?

Is the pain getting better, worse, or staying the same?

What makes it feel better? Worse?

How long does it last?

Is it there all of the time, does it come and go?

Is there something that will cause the pain to start again? (For example, knee pain may get worse walking up stairs)



<http://chicago-physicaltherapy.com/knee-pain-2/>