

[PAIN DESCRIPTORS](http://www.painmanagement.org.au/descriptors)

PAIN INTENSITY SCALE & WORDS TO DESCRIBE PAIN

Pain is a subjective experience. Only the person suffering with the pain will know how it feels and how severe it is. There is no way to measure pain or feel someone else's pain so a method to describe the pain you are experiencing is important as it gives you a way to describe your pain and gives others an understanding of what you are experiencing.

The intensity of pain can be described where the pain is rated using a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 is the presence of no pain, and 10 is excruciating pain.

The diagram below may help you to grade the pain you are feeling;

Pain Descriptors

Pain can be experienced in different ways.

Below is a list of words which may describe your pain. Choose the word which most accurately describes the pain you are feeling.

There may be no true pain but a feeling of altered sensation - this may produce a feeling of numbness, a tingling sensation, a crawling sensation like ants walking over you, a sensation of heat or cold, or a feeling of tightness.

Dull pain - this may be a feeling of pressure or tightness, a heavy feeling, or a tingling sensation.

Sharp pain - this may feel like a stabbing, shooting, tearing, or piercing pain.

The pain may be constant, throbbing (pounding), or come and go at regular or irregular intervals of time (intermittent).

The pain may be felt only when the area is touched - this is called tenderness.

PAIN DIARY

The Pain Diary is a tool you can use to chart your pain. This information can, in turn, assist your GP, specialist or other health professional by providing data on:

* When and where (on your body) the pain is felt
* The level of pain you have at different times
* The type of pain you have
* The activities you find difficult or easy to do
* The amount of sleep you are getting

WORDS USED TO DESCRIBE PAIN

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| * Aching * Burning * Crawling * Crushing * Heaviness * Icy coldness * Intermittent | * Numbing * Piercing * Pounding * Pressure * Sharp * Shooting | * Sore * Stabbing * Tearing * Tenderness * Throbbing * Tightness * Tingling |