# Appendix 9: The Clinical Opioid Withdrawal Scale

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| **Name:** |  |
| **Reason for this assessment:** |  |
| **Date and time:** |  |
| **Resting pulse rate:** (record beats per minute)*Measured after person is sitting or lying for one minute*0 pulse rate 80 or below1 pulse rate 81–1002 pulse rate 101–1204 pulse rate greater than 120 |  |  |  |  |
| **Sweating:***Over past half-hour not accounted for by room temperature or activity*0 no report of chills or flushing1 subjective report of chills or flushing2 flushed or observable moistness on face3 beads of sweat on brow or face4 sweat streaming off face |  |  |  |  |
| **Restlessness:***Observation during assessmen*t0 able to sit still1 reports difficulty sitting still, but is able to do so3 frequent shifting or extraneous movements of legs/arms5 unable to sit still for more than a few seconds |  |  |  |  |
| **Pupil size:**0 pupils pinned or normal size for room light1 pupils possibly larger than normal for room light2 pupils moderately dilated5 pupils so dilated that only the rim of the iris is visible |  |  |  |  |
| **Bone or joint aches:***If the person was having pain previously, only the additional component attributed to opiates withdrawal is scored*0 not present1 mild diffuse discomfort2 person reports severe diffuse aching of joints/ muscles4 person 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 present1 nasal stuffiness or unusually moist eyes2 nose running or tearing4 nose constantly running or tears streaming down cheeks  |  |  |  |  |
| **GI upset:***Over last half-hour*0 no GI symptoms1 stomach cramps2 nausea or loose stool3 vomiting or diarrhea5 Multiple episodes of diarrhea or vomiting |  |  |  |  |
| **Tremor:***Observation of outstretched hands*0 No tremor1 tremor can be felt, but not observed2 slight tremor observable4 gross tremor or muscle twitching |  |  |  |  |
| **Yawning:***Observation during assessment*0 no yawning1 yawning once or twice during assessment2 yawning three or more times during assessment4 yawning several times/minute |  |  |  |  |
| **Anxiety or irritability:**0 none1 patient reports increasing irritability or anxiousness2 patient obviously irritable or anxious4 patient so irritable or anxious that participation in the assessment is difficult |  |  |  |  |
| **Gooseflesh skin:**0 skin is smooth3 piloerection of skin can be felt or hairs standing up on arms5 prominent piloerection |  |  |  |  |
| **Total scores**The total score is the sum of all 11 items with observer’s initials |  |  |  |  |

Score: 5–12 = mild; 13–24 = moderate; 25–36 = moderately severe; more than 36 = severe withdrawal.

Source: Wesson and Ling 2003.