## **Clinical Opiate Withdrawal Scale (COWS)**

## Flow-sheet for measuring symptoms over a period of time during buprenorphine induction.

For each item, write in the number that best describes the patient's signs or symptom. Rate on just the apparent relationship to opiate withdrawal. For example, if heart rate is increased because the patient was jogging just prior to assessment, the increase pulse rate would not add to the score.

Patient's Name:	Date:
Buprenorphine induction:	
Enter scores at time zero, 30min after first dose, 2 h at	fter first dose, etc.
Times:	
Resting Pulse Rate: (record beats per minute)	
Measured after patient is sitting or 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 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> hour not accounted for by room	
temperature or patient activity.	
0 no report of chills or flushing	
1 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 reports 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 the rim of the iris is visible	
Bone or Joint aches If patient was having pain	
previously, only the additional component attributed	
to opiates 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	

	1	1	 r
GI Upset: over last ½ hour			
0 no GI symptoms			
1 stomach cramps			
2 nausea or loose stool			
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 piloerrection of skin can be felt or hairs standing up on			
arms			
5 prominent piloerrection			
Total scores			
with observer's initials			

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

 $D: \verb|bup curr update|Cl Tools fr ECS| CS COWS induction flow sheet.doc$