

## Comparative Pain Scale for CAM Providers

### Zero Pain

0 - *No Pain*. Feeling perfectly normal

### Minor Pain

Does not interfere with most activities. Able to adapt to pain psychologically and with medication or devices such as cushions.

- 1 **Very Mild:** Very light barely noticeable pain, like a mosquito bite or a poison ivy itch. Most of the time you never think about the pain.
- 2 **Discomfort:** Minor pain, like lightly pinching the fold of skin between the thumb and first finger with the other hand, using the fingernails. Note that people react differently to this self-test.
- 3 **Tolerable:** Very noticeable pain, like an accident cut, a blow to the nose causing a bloody nose, or a doctor giving you an injection. The pain is not so strong that you cannot get used to it. Eventually, most of the time you don't notice the pain. You have adapted to it.

### Moderate Pain

Interferes with many activities. Requires lifestyle changes but patient remains independent. Unable to adapt to pain.

- 4 **Distressing:** Strong, deep pain, like an average toothache, the initial pain from a bee sting, or minor trauma to part of the body, such as stubbing your toe real hard. So strong you notice the pain all the time and can't completely adapt. The pain is initially piercing but becomes dull..
- 5 **Very Distressing:** Strong, deep, piercing pain, such as a sprained ankle when you stand on it incorrectly, or mild back pain. You notice the pain all the time, and so preoccupied with managing it that your normal lifestyle is curtailed. Temporary personality disorders are frequent.
- 6 **Intense:** Strong, deep, piercing pain so strong it seems to partially dominate your senses, causing you to think somewhat unclearly. At this point you begin to have trouble holding a job or maintaining normal social relationships. Comparable to a bad non-migraine headache or a bad back pain.

### Severe Pain

Unable to engage in normal activities. You are disabled and unable to function independently.

- 7 **Very Intense:** Same as 6 except the pain completely dominates your senses, causing you to think unclearly about half the time. You are effectively disabled and frequently cannot live alone. Comparable to an average migraine headache.
- 8 **Utterly Horrible:** Pain so intense you can no longer think clearly at all, and have often undergone severe personality change if the pain has been present for a long time. Comparable to childbirth or a real bad migraine headache.
- 9 **Excruciating and Unbearable:** Pain so intense you cannot tolerate it and demand pain killers or surgery, no matter what the side effects or risk. Comparable to cancer.
- 10 **Unimaginable and Unspeakable:** Pain so intense you will go unconscious shortly. Most people have never experienced this level of pain. Those who have suffered a crushed hand, kidney stone or lost consciousness as a result of the pain have experienced level 10.