

Clinical Practice Guideline
Alcohol Withdrawal
Alcohol Withdrawal Scale



Alcohol withdrawal scores calculated from the Alcohol Withdrawal Scale should be recorded in the Progress Notes.

Item no. and score	Signs/Symptoms	Item no. and score	Signs/Symptoms
Item 1:	PERSPIRATION	Item 6:	HALLUCINATION
0	No abnormal sweating	0	No evidence of hallucinations
1	Moist skin	1	Distortion of real objects – aware these are not real if pointed out
2	Localized beads of sweat (e.g. on face, chest)	2	Appearance of new objects/perceptions – aware these are not real if pointed out
3	Whole body wet from perspiration	3	Believes hallucinations are real, still oriented in place and person
4	Profuse maximal sweating: clothes, linen etc are wet	4	Believes him/herself to be in non-existent environment, preoccupied, cannot be diverted and reassured
Item 2:	TREMOR	Item 7:	ORIENTATION
0	No tremor	0	Patient is oriented to time, place and person
1	Slight intention tremor	1	Patient is fully orientated in person, but is unsure about time and place
2	Constant slight tremor of upper extremities	2	Patient is oriented in person but disoriented in time and place
3	Constant marked tremor of extremities	3	Doubtful personal orientation, disoriented in time and place, there may be short periods of lucidity
Item 3:	ANXIETY	4	Disoriented in time, place and person, no meaningful contact can be obtained
0	No apprehension or anxiety	Item 8:	HEADACHE
1	Slight apprehension	0	Not present
2	Apprehension or understandable fear e.g. of withdrawal symptoms	1	Mild
3	Anxiety occasionally accentuated to a state of panic	2	Moderate
4	Constant panic-like anxiety	3	Severe
Item 4:	AGITATION	Item 9:	FACIAL FLUSHING
0	Rest normally during day, no signs of agitation	0	None
1	Slight restlessness, cannot sit or lie still, awake when others sleep	1	Mild to moderate
2	Moves constantly, looks tense, wants to get out of bed but obeys request to remain in bed	2	Severe
3	Constant restlessness, gets out of bed for no obvious reason, returns to bed if escorted	Item 10:	SEIZURES
4	Maximally restless, aggressive, ignores requests to stay in bed	0	None
Item 5:	NAUSEA AND VOMITING	1	Generalised seizures
0	No nausea and no vomiting		
1	Mild nausea and no vomiting		
2	Intermittent nausea and dry retching		
3	Constant nausea, frequent dry retching and vomiting		