

# Visual Analogue Scale

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Source: Huskisson EC. Measurement of pain. *Lancet*. 1974 Nov 9;2(7889):1127-31.

The Visual Analogue Scale (VAS) is a subjective measure of pain. It consists of a 10cm line with two end-points representing 'no pain' and 'worst pain imaginable'. Patients are asked to rate their pain by placing a mark on the line corresponding to their current level of pain. The distance along the line from the 'no pain' marker is then measured with a ruler giving a pain score out of 10.

## Interpretation of score

The score can be used as a baseline assessment of pain with follow-up measures providing an indication of whether pain is reducing. Where pain does not reduce significantly during the first one to five weeks, the practitioner may wish to consider referral to an allied health practitioner. The scores can also be used to evaluate treatment effectiveness.



**No pain**

**Worst pain  
imaginable**