

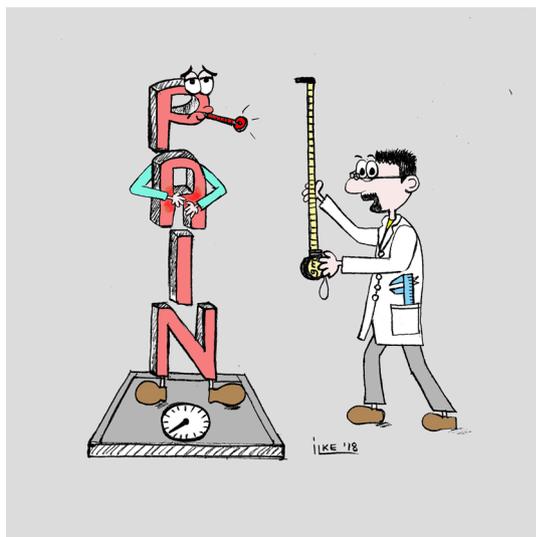


## Is pain measurable?

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Pain is an unpleasant sensation, which is experienced by every individual at least once during the lifespan. It might appear in various forms, at different levels and on several parts of the body. Pain can be musculoskeletal or visceral in origin and might be perceived as peripheral or central in nature.



### Is pain measurable? What if we can measure it? What if we cannot?

Yes, it is measurable, but barely on some occasions. Measuring pain would provide a better baseline understanding of the painful condition, as well as a better assessment of the treatment efficacy. Inadequate assessment of the measurable features of pain might interfere with the effectiveness of pain management.

### How is pain measured?

Pain is measured by uni-dimensional or multi-dimensional scales. There are several measurable features of pain which can be categorized into two, as the qualitative and the quantitative properties. Pain intensity, duration/continuity, severity and type, as well as its interference with daily activities and psychological well-being can be assessed by multi-dimensional scales. Thus, these tools are able to provide a comprehensive evaluation of pain. On the other hand, there are uni-dimensional scales which focus on a certain feature of pain. They provide limited data for pain, but are simple, easily understandable/applicable and less time-consuming.

It is a matter of fact that patient-reported measures are of great value when evaluating and treating a painful condition. Since, the better defined, the better managed!

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### Compliance with ethical standards

**Conflict of interest** The author declares no conflicts of interest.

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