

Measuring Acute Pain in the Cat with the Glasgow Composite Measure Pain Scale (CMPS-Feline) <http://www.newmetrica.com>

Background

The Glasgow Composite Measure Pain Scale was developed for cats in acute pain (surgical, medical, inflammatory or traumatic) and was designed as a clinical decision-making tool. It was constructed using psychometric methods and has been shown to be valid and reliable. It is easy to use and quick to complete.

What is it?

It is a questionnaire containing 22 descriptor options within 6 categories. Within each category, the descriptors are ranked numerically according to their associated pain severity. The tool also contains a 'faces' component with 3 faces for each of two areas of the face, ears and mouth/ muzzle.

The person carrying out the assessment chooses the descriptor within each category which best fits the cat's behaviour/condition, and when looking at the faces chooses the face which best reflects the cats ear position or mouth/ muzzle position.

There is a protocol which should be followed closely when carrying out the assessment procedure (described on the questionnaire).

The output

The output is a pain score which is the sum of the rank scores. The maximum score for the categories is 20.

Do I treat?

The total CMPS-F score is a useful indicator of analgesic requirement. The *recommended analgesic intervention level is 5/20*. Therefore, if an animal scores 5 or above, analgesic administration should be considered.

Guidance on use of the tool

- Follow the protocol as described in the questionnaire
- The scale can be used in all cats in acute pain or where the owner or professional considers the cat might be in pain
- Where cats have been anaesthetised or sedated, the scale should be used only when they have recovered sufficiently to be fully conscious. A general rule of thumb is to wait 2 hours after endotracheal extubation following anaesthesia, but each case should be treated according to its individual circumstances.
- Where analgesia is provided after assessment, the cat should be re-assessed within 15 – 30 minutes of drug administration. If comfortable then re-assess every 2 – 4 hours (depending on the drug used and clinical context)
- In the immediate postoperative period assessments should not be carried out more frequently than hourly to avoid unnecessary stress to the cat.

- The scale should be used as an adjunct to clinical judgement: no cat should be denied analgesia based on the scores alone.
- It should be noted that acute pain associated with many surgical and medical conditions lasts longer than 24 hours. Analgesic protocols should reflect this ([link to guidance in WSAVA treatise](#))