

**Full source reference:**

Lee, R. R., Rashid, A., Ghio, D., Thomson, W., & Cordingley, L. (2017). Chronic pain assessments in children and adolescents: a systematic literature review of the selection, administration, interpretation, and reporting of unidimensional pain intensity scales. *Pain Research and Management*, 2017.

**Free access link:**

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5585620/pdf/PRM2017-7603758.pdf>

**Article Overview:**

This review synthesises evidence on measures capturing chronic pain experiences in children and adolescents. The review included 46 studies in total

**Sample:** Children and adolescents (5 to 18 years) experiencing a chronic pain condition (including diagnoses of more specific chronic illness conditions in which pain is a recurring feature, e.g., cancer, headache, and juvenile arthritis).

**Key take home messages:**

1. This review found high variation in the administration of paediatric pain assessments among studies. Researchers gathered information through distinctively different approaches. There were 49 different pain measures/scales used. Of those:
  - 24 used a visual analogue scale (VAS)
  - 19 used a numerical rating scale (NRS)
  - 6 used an faces pain scale (FPS)

*See tables 4, 5 and 6 in the full article for administration, interpretation and reporting information of each of the articles to support your selection of pain scale*
2. None of the studies met the ten quality criteria identified by the review authors (addressing selection, administration and interpretation of pain scales).
3. **Thus, there is limited research evidence to suggest that any particular administrative methods are better than others.**
4. Standardisation of pain assessment methods (which measures are selected and how they are used) has been identified as priority.
5. The authors recommended that researchers use the quality criteria to report the differential impacts of methods and identify optimal approaches.