

Kost-Byerly, Colantuoni, et al, 2014). Effective management of pain in children requires a comprehensive approach of assessment, pain intervention, and reassessment (Habich, Wilson, Thielk, et al, 2012).

Pain Assessment

The purpose of a pediatric pain assessment is to determine how much pain the child is feeling. The Pediatric Initiative on Methods, Measurement, and Pain Assessment in Clinical Trials (PedIMMPACT) recommends specific core domains to assess pain in children that include pain intensity, global judgment of satisfaction with treatment, symptoms and adverse events, physical recovery, and emotional response (McGrath, Walco, Turk, et al, 2008). Although pain assessment includes more than a number rating, understanding the intensity of the pain experienced by the child is essential for effective pain management. Numerous pediatric pain scales exist and are most commonly identified as behavioral pain measures, self-report pain rating scales, and multidimensional pain assessment tools.

Behavioral Pain Measures

Behavioral or observational measures of pain are generally used for children from infancy to 4 years old (Table 5-1). Behavioral pain assessment may provide a more complete picture of the total pain experience when administered in conjunction with a subjective self-report measure. Behavioral pain measurement tools may be more time consuming than self-reports because they depend on a trained observer to watch and record children's behaviors, such as vocalization, facial expression, and body movements that suggest discomfort. Distress behaviors, such as vocalization of sounds associated with pain, changes in facial expression, and unexpected or unusual body movements, have been associated with pain (Figs. 5-1 and 5-2). Understanding that these behaviors are associated with pain makes assessing pain in infants and small children with no or limited communication skills a little easier. However, discriminating between pain behaviors and reactions to other sources of distress, such as hunger, anxiety, or other types of discomfort, is not always easy. Behavioral pain measures are most