

Many signs of chronic pain are non-specific. Make sure to see your vet to rule out other disease as a cause of these signs.

0
No Pain



- B:** Breathing normally
- E:** Eyes bright and alert
- A:** Walks normally and remains agile
- A:** Engages in play and all normal activities

- A:** Eating and drinking normally
- A:** Happy and content; interested in surroundings; playful behavior; seeks attention
- P:** Comfortable at rest and during play; perky ears; upright, alert tail; whiskers relaxed
- P:** Enjoys being touched, petted and brushed; no body tension present

1-2

Mild Pain

Speak to your vet during your next appointment



- B:** Breathing normally
- E:** Eyes bright and alert
- A:** Slightly more hesitant to jump onto very high places such as counter tops but still able to easily jump onto couch or bed
- A:** May show only subtle change in normal activity and behaviors

- A:** Eating and drinking normally
- A:** Will often still remain happy and interested in surroundings
- P:** Tail may be down just a little more; ears up; whiskers generally appear relaxed
- P:** Enjoys being touched, petted and brushed; no body tension present

3-4

Moderate Pain

See your vet to assess pain



- B:** Breathing generally normal but may be at slightly increased rate
- E:** Eyes may be slightly more dull in appearance; eyes may be held partially closed
- A:** Hesitant to jump to higher places; may also not jump onto lower places, such as couch or bed
- A:** Not eager to interact but still in tune with surroundings; changes in normal routine; may hide; decreased grooming

- A:** Appetite more finicky, such as wanting only treats or "junk" food such as canned food
- A:** Generally more subdued and quiet
- P:** Difficulty posturing to eliminate or cover waste; subtle changes in posture; tail held low and ears more flattened, whiskers slightly down
- P:** Does not mind touch except on painful area; turns head to look where touched; mild body tension

5-6

Moderate to Severe Pain

CONCERNING!
See your vet



- B:** Breathing rate and effort may be increased
- E:** Dull eyes; eyes may remain partially or fully closed; pupils may be more dilated
- A:** Moves more slowly or gingerly; no longer jumps up onto couch or bed; difficulty on stairs
- A:** Withdraws from family and other pets; seeks solitude; decreased grooming; may excessively lick painful area; may have "accidents" outside the litter box

- A:** Will frequently lose appetite
- A:** Very subdued and quiet; increased facial tension; decreased enjoyment of being brushed
- P:** "Meatloaf" position; whiskers move forward slightly from face; rough or fluffed up fur; difficulty posturing to eliminate or cover waste fully
- P:** Pulls away painful area or tries to escape; moderate body tension when being touched

7-8

Severe Pain

VERY CONCERNING!
See your vet



- B:** Faster breathing rate with more noticeable effort
- E:** Dull eyes; generally remain partially or fully closed; may have distressed look; pupils dilated
- A:** Unlikely to move if left alone
- A:** Avoids all interaction; will "go off" and hide, often in new places; stops grooming; frequently licks or chews at painful area, sometimes to the point of fur loss

- A:** Loss of appetite; may not want to drink
- A:** Reclusive; agitated; potentially aggressive; tail flicking; may be growling or hissing
- P:** Tail held close, ears flattened or pinned back, whiskers move forward and tend to bunch; "grimace face"; flattened posture
- P:** Significant body tension when painful area touched; may growl or hiss in pain; guards painful area by pulling away or trying to escape

9-10

Worst Pain Possible

EMERGENCY!
See your vet



- B:** Increased breathing rate and effort; may have periods of open-mouthed breathing or panting
- E:** Dull, closed eyes; eyes may also widen with a look of panic; pupils dilated
- A:** Unable or unwilling to walk
- A:** Difficulty in being distracted from pain, even with gentle touch or soothing voice; may bite or chew painful area; may eliminate where lying

- A:** No interest in food or water
- A:** Extremely depressed or minimally responsive ("flat out"); quiet, growling or hissing; distressed
- P:** Lying on side; tail may appear "fluffed"
- P:** Rigid body tension when touched; will not tolerate touch of painful area; hissing when other areas that are not painful are touched

Specific behaviors or physical changes I see:

Breathing: _____

Eyes: _____

Ambulation: _____

Activity: _____

Appetite: _____

Attitude: _____

Posture: _____

Palpation: _____