

OASIS Alert

Try Using the Pain Interview Approach

Ask probing questions to better understand pain.

Many common pain assessment tools miss the mark when you're caring for patients with unfamiliar cultural backgrounds. In these situations, a pain interview can yield more accurate results. Try these pain interview formats to see if you are able to gain a better understanding of your patient's pain.

Kleinman's Approach

1. What do you think is causing the pain?
2. When did it start? Why do you think it happened when it did?
3. What problems is the pain causing you?
4. Who else have you consulted?
5. What treatments do you think will help?
6. What are the most important results you hope to receive from this treatment?
7. What do you fear most about your pain?

Note: These questions are based on Kleinman's original questions for describing illness, modifying them to be useful for describing pain. Kleinman, A., Eisenberg, L., & Good, B. (1978). Culture, illness, and care: Clinical lessons from anthropologic and cross-cultural research. *Annals of Internal Medicine*, 88(2), 251-258.

ABCDE and PQRST Mnemonics

Ask about pain regularly; assess pain systematically.

Believe the patient and family in their reports of pain.

Choose pain control options appropriate for the patient, family, and setting.

Deliver interventions in a timely, logical, and coordinated fashion.

Empower patients and their families.

Palliative/provocative factors: What makes the pain better or worse?

Quality: Describe the pain.

Radiation: Where is the pain?

Severity: Compare this pain to other pain.

Temporal factors: Does the intensity of the pain change with time?