

# Pasero Opioid-Induced Sedation Scale (POSS) with Interventions<sup>1</sup>

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## **S = Sleep, easy to arouse**

Acceptable; no action necessary; may increase opioid dose if needed.

## **1 = Awake and alert**

Acceptable; no action necessary; may increase opioid dose if needed.

## **2 = Slightly drowsy, easily aroused**

Acceptable; no action necessary; may increase opioid dose if needed.

## **3 = Frequently drowsy, arousable, drifts off to sleep during conversation**

Unacceptable; monitor respiratory status and sedation level closely until sedation level is stable at less than 3 and respiratory status is satisfactory; decrease opioid dose 25% to 50% or notify prescriber or anesthesiologist for orders; consider administering a non-sedating, opioid-sparing nonopioid, such as acetaminophen or an NSAID, if not contraindicated.

## **4 = Somnolent, minimal or no response to verbal or physical stimulation**

Unacceptable; stop opioid; consider administering naloxone; notify prescriber or anesthesiologist; monitor respiratory status and sedation level closely until sedation level is stable at less than 3 and respiratory status is satisfactory.

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<sup>1</sup> Pain Assessment and Pharmacologic Management, by C. Pasero and M. McCaffery, 2011, St. Louis, MO: Mosby/Elsevier. Copyright (1994) by Chris Pasero.