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Pain assessment and PQRST method

Core Nursing Essentials Core Clinical Concepts

PQRST explores provocation, quality, region or radiation, severity and timing. The patient's report and response to relief measures guide reassessment.

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Introduction & key concepts

PQRST explores provocation, quality, region or radiation, severity and timing. The patient's report and response to relief measures guide reassessment.

Nursing responsibilities

- Check identity, consent, the relevant observations and the purpose of the assessment.
- Record the finding, context and response using the approved clinical record.
- Escalate uncertainty or deterioration to the responsible professional; do not use a study note as a standing treatment order.

Clinical example & examination focus

In a viva, explain pain assessment and pqrst method in your own words, identify the observations needed and state a limitation. Compare the finding with the patient's baseline rather than assuming one number or label gives a diagnosis.

Quick Revision

PQRST explores provocation, quality, region or radiation, severity and timing. The patient's report and response to relief measures guide reassessment.

Frequently asked question

Can this summary replace practical training?

No. Use your prescribed learning material and the institution's current protocol with qualified supervision.

References & review status

- OpenStax - Fundamentals of Nursing: Pain Assessment (https://openstax.org/books/fundamentals-nursing/pages/30-4-pain-assessment) - Online textbook accessed 26 November 2026. Original brief explanation of the factual PQRST framework; no scale artwork.

Sources checked for the stated scope on 26 November 2026. Original study synthesis; independent clinical review is not claimed. Source attribution is not a copyright-clearance certificate.

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