

# Glasgow Coma Scale (GCS)

Coma severity based on **Eye** (4), **Verbal** (5), and **Motor** (6) criteria.

## Why?

- Provides a **standardized** way to communicate and trend a patient's level of consciousness and neurologic status.

## When?

- Use in patients with **head trauma, altered mental status**, or suspected **neurologic injury** to document and track changes over time.

## How?

Access clinical tool here!



## Pearls

- Well-validated and **widely recognized**.
- **Serial** GCS exams are often more informative than a single score.

## Pitfalls

- Unusable in **intubated/sedated** patients.
- **Inter-observer variability** exists.
- A **GCS of 8** alone shouldn't determine the need for intubation, but it warrants careful evaluation.

### Primary Resource

Teasdale G, Jennett B. Assessment of coma and impaired consciousness. A practical scale. Lancet. 1974 Jul 13;2(7872):81-4.