

Respiratory Distress Observation Scale © (Margaret L. Campbell, PhD, RN 2/19/09)

Variable	0 points	1 point	2 points	Total
Heart rate per minute	<90 beats	90-109 beats	≥110 beats	
Respiratory rate per minute	≤18 breaths	19-30 breaths	>30 breaths	
Restlessness: non-purposeful movements	None	Occasional, slight movements	Frequent movements	
Paradoxical breathing pattern: abdomen moves in on inspiration	None		Present	
Accessory muscle use: rise in clavicle during inspiration	None	Slight rise	Pronounced rise	
Grunting at end-expiration: guttural sound	None		Present	
Nasal flaring: involuntary movement of nares	None		Present	
Look of fear	None		Eyes wide open, facial muscles tense, brow furrowed, mouth open, teeth together	
Total				

Instruction for use:

1. RDOS is not a substitute for patient self-report if able.
2. RDOS is an adult assessment tool.
3. RDOS cannot be used when the patient is paralyzed with a neuromuscular blocking agent.
4. Count respiratory and heart rates for one-minute; auscultate if necessary.
5. Grunting may be audible with intubated patients on auscultation.
6. Fearful facial expressions:

