

- Remember: you cannot interpret a patient’s nonverbal response based on observation or use the response of any other person such as a staff or family member (excluding the use of qualified interpreters) to substitute as a self-report answer to this question.
  - This question should be asked during the initial nursing assessment and it is this question that will trigger the 48-hour comfort “countdown.” **In other words, the 48-hour time frame for the measure should reflect the 48-hour period following the initial nursing assessment, not the admission to hospice, if these two events occurred at different times.**
3. **Ask the follow-up comfort question.** After asking the initial comfort question, contact the patient 48 to 72 hours after initial pain assessment and ask the follow-up question “Was your pain brought to a comfortable level within 48 hours?”
- This question will generate the data that will be included in the measure numerator (the top portion of the fraction).
    - **Please note: this question will only be asked of patients who answered “yes” to the initial comfort question. If a patient was originally excluded from the measure or answered “no” to the initial comfort question, do not ask the follow-up question for the measure.**
  - As above, you cannot interpret a patient’s nonverbal response or use the response of any other person as a substitute for patient self-report (excluding the use of qualified interpreters).
  - If at the time you ask the follow-up question, the patient is no longer able to self-report, document the reason; these patients will be excluded from the numerator. Reasons include
    - Discharge (live or due to death)
    - Condition deteriorated—patient no longer able to communicate/self-report
    - Other (with explanation)
  - Hospice providers must contact the patient at some point between 48 to 72 hours after the initial assessment to ask the follow-up question.
    - The follow-up question cannot be asked earlier than 48 hours after the initial assessment
    - Hospices should make every effort to contact the patient sometime between 48 and 72 hours after the initial pain assessment to ask the measure follow-up question. At times it may not be possible to contact the patient within 72 hours (e.g., the patient is sleeping and the family caregiver asks that the hospice call back later). Therefore, the endpoint for asking the follow-up question can be defined as 3 days. Given this time frame, hospices should ask patients the follow-up question by midnight of the third day.
      - For example, if a patient is asked the initial question on 11/6/12 at 2 pm, the follow-up question should *not* be asked prior to 2 pm on 11/8/12 (or 48 hours after the initial comfort question was asked). The hospice thus has from 2 pm on 11/8/12 until 11:59 pm on 11/9/12 (midnight of the third day) to ask the follow-up question.