



KEEPING A PAIN DIARY



A pain diary is a useful tool to help you and your chiropractor understand your pain patterns, triggers, and how well you're progressing. By recording your pain levels and associated factors regularly, you can better understand and manage your condition. Here's how to maintain a comprehensive pain diary.

By recording your pain levels and associated factors regularly, you can better manage your condition, lets you keep track of your progress and can assist your health care team to plan accordingly.

What do I include in a pain diary?

- *Pain intensity:* Rate your pain intensity out of 10, with zero (0) as having no pain at all to ten (10) as having the worst possible pain.
- *Location and Character of the pain:* Is it sharp, dull or aching? Is it in one single point or does it travel to another location? Is there any hot or cold areas?
- *Effect on your Function:* How did it affect you? How much did it affect you? What did it stop you from doing?
- *Were you able to complete the activity?*
- *How many times did it affect your activity?*
- *How did you manage the pain?*
- *Relieving steps:* Did you take painkillers? Did you apply ice or heat or a combination?
- *Did you rest it or apply pressure?*

How do I keep a pain diary?

You can print the table on the next page OR:

If you have a physical diary, jot down the details there,

Use your phone. In your Notes app (on iPhone or Samsung) or Google Keep (on Android).

Note: We don't recommended using loose pieces of paper or committing to memory.

Instructions for Using the Pain Diary

Record the Date and Time: Log the date and time every time you experience pain. It's helpful to track pain throughout the day and not just when it's at its worst.

Pain Level (0-10): Use a scale from 0 (no pain) to 10 (worst imaginable pain) to rate the intensity. This helps measure the severity of your pain and its fluctuations.

Location of Pain: Be as specific as possible about where you are feeling pain. For example, "lower back," "left knee," or "right side of the head". Note if the pain moves or shoots from one place to another.

Description of Pain: Use words that best describe your pain (e.g., sharp, dull, burning, stabbing, throbbing). This gives more detail about the nature of your discomfort.

Activities Before the Pain: Note what you were doing before the pain started (e.g., sitting, walking, eating, exercising). This can help identify potential triggers.

Pain Triggers: If you can identify what might have triggered your pain (e.g., stress, certain foods, physical activity), write it down. If you're unsure, write "unknown."

Steps Taken: Record any steps you took or any pain relief medications or treatments you took, including the name and dose. This could include prescribed medications, over-the-counter drugs, or other therapies like ice, heat, or massage.

Relief Percentage: Estimate how much relief (in percentage) you experienced after taking medications or using other treatments. For example, 50% relief means your pain reduced by half.

Additional Notes: Include any relevant details like your mood, energy levels, sleep quality, appetite, or if there are any other symptoms (e.g. nausea, dizziness).

Tips for an Effective Pain Diary

- **Be consistent:** Track your pain daily or multiple times a day if needed.
- **Bring it to your appointments:** Share the diary with your healthcare provider to discuss patterns, medication efficacy, and future treatment plans.
- **Stay honest:** Even if the pain seems insignificant, record it. Every detail can help in understanding the broader picture of your health.

By following these guidelines, your pain diary can provide valuable insights into your condition, allowing for better management and treatment.

Print the next page to use as your Pain Diary

The first line has been filled with a sample entry

PAIN DIARY

NAME:

DATE STARTED:

[illegible]