

FAST FACTS: Using a Pain Diary

A Pain Diary is used to monitor pain over time, collect data on possible pain triggers, and provide information for a healthcare provider to make best treatment decisions. It is often said the patient is the most important person in the pain management process. Documenting your pain and related information in a Pain Diary is an important support to the healthcare provider.

✓ **Why Complete a Pain Diary**

- Healthcare provider has asked you to track pain
- Provides a written history of pain issues that can be shared with your healthcare provider leading to better treatment decisions

✓ **When to Complete a Pain Diary**

- On a routine basis to track pain, preferably daily
- For additional acute pain episodes as they occur

✓ **What to Track on a Pain Diary**

- Date/Time
- Location of pain
- Intensity of pain
- Impact of pain on function
- Aggravating factors (what were you doing when pain started/increased?)
- Treatments tried
- Other problems or side effects

See an example of a Pain Diary on the next page.

PAIN DIARY EXAMPLE

Document your pain experience on the Pain Diary once per day or any time you see a change in behavior or suspect a new or different pain problem. Bring the Pain Diary to the next appointment with your healthcare provider.

- Use the [Iowa Pain Thermometer-Revised](#) to provide a self-report of your pain severity.
- The [PAINAD](#) a tool which can be used by caregivers for individuals that are unable to provide a self-report of pain. If you need this tool, please click this link to access on Geriatricpain.org. <https://geriatricpain.org/painad>

NOTE: Where a pain rating is requested, 0 is the lowest level and 10 is the highest level.

Date/ Time	Pain Location (Note any areas causing pain)	Self-Report Pain Rating (0-10)	PAINAD no self-report (0-10)	What triggered the pain report or behavior?	Treatments Tried medicine (specify drug and dose) non-drug treatment (e.g., heat, cold, exercise, massage, distraction, music, splinting)	Pain Rating 1hr after treatment (0-10)	Additional Comments

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References

- MyHealth.Alberta.ca. August 4, 2020. Learning about a Pain Diary. Healthwise. <https://myhealth.alberta.ca/Health/aftercareinformation/pages/conditions.aspx?hwid=abk1346>.
- University of Michigan Health. August 4, 2020. *Pain Diary*. <https://www.uofmhealth.org/health-library/abg7017>.