

SYMPTOM DIARY



Keeping a symptom diary can help you;

- manage arthritis in daily life,
- find patterns to see if things are changing,
- communicate with your healthcare team.

Funded by

phn
COUNTRY SA

An Australian Government Initiative

Arthritis
SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Keeping a symptom diary can help you;

- manage arthritis in daily life
- communicate with your healthcare team
- find patterns to see if things are changing

Using your symptom diary

Try to record things the same way each time. This makes it easier for you to compare. Some examples are shown on the next page.



Date/ Time

Record the day, date and time when you experienced the symptom.

? What you were doing at that time?

Record the activity you were doing when you experienced the symptom.



Describe it?

What was it? Where was it on your body?
Some examples could be; pain, trouble moving, tiredness.



How long did it last?

Roughly how long did the symptom or side effect last?

1 10 How it felt?

You could use words, a number scale, symbols, or faces like below.

- Symbols could be...



- Number scale could be...



- Words could include...

mild moderate severe
stiff
red swollen
hot sore tiring
sharp

? What you tried?

Did you do anything to try and make it ease. E.g. did you use hot/cold packs, stretch/move around? If you tried a few things, write them all down.

1 10 Did it help? How did it feel after?

Use the same scale as you did before. This will help you compare.








On the final page, we have included some ideas to help you plan what you may want to do once you have recorded in your diary.

If a paper diary isn't for you there are many apps available for download.

Photos might also help, especially if you have joints that swell or are red at different times of the day.

You could also use your calendar to keep a brief record.

Record any symptoms or side effects in the table below

 Date/ Time	 What you were doing at that time?	 Describe it	 How long did it last?	 How it felt?	 What you tried?	 Did it help? How did you feel?
1/1	Shopping all day	Fatigue	6 hours	7	Rested	5
2/1 7am	In the morning	Stiffness in both knees	1 hour		Stretching/ walking/ moving around	
3/1 1pm	Working at the computer	Pain in shoulders and neck	From lunchtime onwards	Moderate	Warm shower	Mild
4/1	Gardening for 2 hours	Red swollen elbow (took a photo)	30 mins	Hot, sharp pain	Rested, and used a cold pack (took a photo to compare)	No longer hot or as swollen, mild pain

Comments








Funded by

phn
COUNTRY SA

An Australian Government Initiative








Arthritis
SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Record any symptoms or side effects in the table below

 Date/ Time	 What you were doing at that time?	 Describe it	 How long did it last?	 How it felt?	 What you tried?	 Did it help? How did you feel?








Comments

Record any symptoms or side effects in the table below

 Date/ Time	 What you were doing at that time?	 Describe it	 How long did it last?	 How it felt?	 What you tried?	 Did it help? How did you feel?








Comments

Record any symptoms or side effects in the table below

 Date/ Time	 What you were doing at that time?	 Describe it	 How long did it last?	 1 10 How it felt?	 What you tried?	 1 10 Did it help? How did you feel?

Comments

Record any symptoms or side effects in the table below

 Date/ Time	 What you were doing at that time?	 Describe it	 How long did it last?	 1 10 How it felt?	 What you tried?	 1 10 Did it help? How did you feel?

Comments

Next Steps...

Now that you have filled out your symptom diary, tick the boxes below to think about where to start. Then go back and number them in order of priority to you.

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Make a plan for action | <input type="checkbox"/> Set a goal for change |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Talk to physio | <input type="checkbox"/> Make sure I take breaks every 30 minutes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Investigate online shopping | <input type="checkbox"/> Do my 30 minutes of physical activity each day |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Find out if there are tools to make gardening easier | <input type="checkbox"/> Attend all group classes each week |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Talk to GP | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |

Tips if you're talking to your healthcare team

- Write a summary
- Try and keep it to 3-5 dots points
- Tell them what matters to you most on that list
- Let them know what you have already tried
Did it help? How much?
- Take an extra copy

Contact us

1800 011 041

Our free information line is available between 9am-5pm Monday to Friday for arthritis-related health information.

www.arthritissa.org.au

Visit our website for more information, fact sheets, videos, and eLearnings.

Remember...

- This diary is designed for you to use in a way that best suits you.
- You may wish to use it again in the future to help find other patterns and changes.
- A short symptom diary video is available on our website and you can download and print more recording sheets.