Pain Tracking Journal

Use the person’s words · notice patterns · record daily impact

A caregiver journal for describing pain, its effect on daily life, and what the person and care team want to discuss next.

The person’s description · context · tracking plan

Start with how the person says the pain feels.

Pain can vary in location, intensity, timing and daily impact. Use the person’s own words when possible, and keep your observations separate from their self-report. [1]

THIS JOURNAL IS FOR (NAME)

PRIMARY CAREGIVER

TRACKING DATES

CLINICIAN / PHONE

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1 DESCRIBE THE MAIN CONCERN [1]

LOCATION / SIDE OF BODY

WHEN IT BEGAN / USUAL PATTERN

THE PERSON'S WORDS FOR THE PAIN / WHAT THEY WANT HELP WITH

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2 AGREE HOW TO RECORD IT

DESCRIPTION OR SCALE THE CARE TEAM WANTS US TO USE

When the person uses a 0–10 scale, 0 means no pain and 10 means the worst pain they can imagine. Do not assign a self-reported score on their behalf. [2]

WHAT TO RECORD IF THE PERSON CANNOT DESCRIBE OR RATE THE PAIN

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WHEN TO CALL / WRITTEN PLAN LOCATION

AFTER-HOURS CONTACT

Pain entries · function · response

3 CAPTURE THE PATTERN WITHOUT DIAGNOSING IT [1]

Record location, timing and the person's words or rating. Include what became harder to do and what happened after a measure already in their care plan.

DATE / TIME / DURATION	LOCATION / WORDS / RATING	EFFECT ON DAILY LIFE	MEASURE TAKEN / RESPONSE

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DATE / TIME / DURATION	LOCATION / WORDS / RATING	EFFECT ON DAILY LIFE	MEASURE TAKEN / RESPONSE

CAREGIVER OBSERVATIONS, SEPARATE FROM THE PERSON'S REPORT

Examples may include changes in movement, sleep or facial expression. Observations are not a diagnosis or a substitute for a clinician's assessment.

Priorities · questions · advice received

4 CHOOSE WHAT MATTERS MOST AT THE NEXT CONTACT

ACTIVITY OR COMFORT GOAL THE PERSON MOST WANTS HELP WITH

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PATTERN / SPECIFIC EPISODE TO DISCUSS

5 KEEP THE EXPLANATION AND NEXT STEP TOGETHER

DATE / CLINICIAN	ADVICE / NEXT STEP / WHO / BY WHEN

Do not increase, stop or share pain medicines based on this journal. Seek prompt guidance for new or worsening pain; call 911 for a life-threatening emergency. [3]

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Sources informing this resource · Original worksheet prompts by TCC

[1] MedlinePlus — Pain

[2] National Institute on Aging — Pain: You Can Get Help

[3] MedlinePlus — Emergency Medical Services

Sources checked September 10, 2026. Use the person's individualized care instructions.

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