



INTRODUCTION

Using a Personal Daily Symptom Diary for 2–4 weeks can help you learn more about how your body may be reacting to certain things in your life, such as diet, exercise, stress, and sleep. The objective of a Daily Diary is to help you better understand your gastrointestinal illness. When you keep a detailed record of stool consistency, frequency, continence, pain, diet, medication, emotional status and exercise, a clearer understanding may start to emerge for you and help your healthcare provider determine the best treatment options available to you.

On the following page there is a chart for you to document these items which may show valuable insight into what triggers you may have. Please make multiple copies and use one page per day for at least two weeks. This will allow you to begin to see any symptom patterns.

The information is collected on this chart and the types of details you will want to make note of:

- **Bowel Movements (Description)** - Loose; diarrhea; formed; hard, pellet-like; ribbon-shaped
- **Symptoms** - Incomplete evacuation; strong urge; straining; incontinent; stain/smear
- **What were you doing?** - Daily obligations; employment; school; family; social; travel; shopping; medical appointments; illness; injury; trauma; surgery; personal/intimate
- **Pain** - Abdominal cramping; lower intestinal cramping; pain on either side of abdomen; tenderness (tender when touched); rectal pain (sharp dull, burning; feels like a hard object is in rectum; cramping sensation in rectum)
- **Emotional Status (How do you feel? Why?)** - Fine; happy; relaxed; anxious; nervous; sad; unhappy, depressed; fatigued; tired (wake up tired, wake up during the night) – mentally tired, physically tired
- **Medications** - Prescription/over the counter including herbs or supplements; and dosage
- **Food (List everything, be detailed.)** - Fruits; vegetables; dairy products; meat; fish; poultry; breads (whole grain, etc); pasta; dessert; condiments (salt, pepper, sauces, spices, oils)

- **Beverages** - Caffeine; decaffeinated; carbonated; diet/sugar free; alcohol; fruit juices
- **Exercise** - List what you did (walk, run, bike, swim, aerobic, other) and include times
- **Women** - Menstrual cycle; ovulation; menstruation
- **Other thoughts on your day** – was it a good day, a bad day – why?

About IFFGD

The International Foundation for Gastrointestinal Disorders (IFFGD) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit education and research organization. We work to promote awareness, scientific advancement, and improved care for people affected by chronic digestive conditions. Our mission is to inform, assist, and support people affected by gastrointestinal disorders. Founded in 1991, we rely on donors to carry out our mission. Visit our website at: www.iffgd.org.

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About the Publication

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