

Symptoms Tracker Toolkit for Older Adults



A calm, practical way to spot patterns and explain symptoms clearly

Keep Well Nutrition & Health - Coach Cedric Murray

Welcome

If you're dealing with symptoms that come and go — aches, tiredness, dizziness, poor sleep, palpitations, tummy issues — it can be hard to explain what's happening when you finally speak to a GP or pharmacist.

This toolkit helps you **track your symptoms simply**, so you can:

- spot patterns (time of day, meals, activity, stress, medication)
- notice what helps and what makes it worse
- describe symptoms clearly without trying to remember everything on the spot

This isn't about worrying more. It's about **getting clearer**.

“If you can track it, you can understand it. If you can understand it, you can act.”
- Cedric, Keep Well

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Safety first (keep it sensible)

Tracking symptoms is useful - but some symptoms need **urgent help**, not a diary.

Call 999 if you think you or someone else is having a stroke

Use **FAST**:

- Face drooping
- Arm weakness
- Speech problems
- Time to call 999

Even if symptoms improve, get help straight away. [nhs.uk+1](https://www.nhs.uk+1)

Call 999 for chest pain that could be a heart attack

Especially if it doesn't go away, feels like pressure/tightness, spreads to arm/jaw/back, or you feel sweaty, sick, light-headed or short of breath. [nhs.uk+1](https://www.nhs.uk+1)

Call 999 / go to A&E for severe breathing difficulty

Gasping, choking, unable to speak properly, blue/grey lips/skin, sudden confusion, or chest tightness/heaviness. [nhs.uk](https://www.nhs.uk)

If it's urgent but not life-threatening, NHS 111 can guide you.

How to use this toolkit (simple steps)

The Keep Well way

1. **Track for 7-14 days** (enough to spot patterns)
2. Keep it **simple** - short notes beat long essays
3. Rate severity and note key triggers (food, stress, sleep, activity, medication)
4. Use the weekly review page to summarise patterns
5. Take your summary to your appointment

Tip: Tracking is for clarity - not obsession. If you notice tracking makes you more anxious, reduce it to once per day or only track when symptoms happen. (Keeping a diary can be helpful, but keep it basic.) [nhs.uk+1](https://www.nhs.uk+1)

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What to track (the essentials)

To make your notes useful, try to include:

- **Date + time** the symptom started
- **What it felt like** (sharp, dull, tight, burning, fluttering, heavy, dizzy, foggy)
- **Severity** (1–5)
- **Duration** (minutes/hours)
- **What you were doing** (resting, walking, after meal, after shopping, after stairs)
- **Notes / triggers** (stress, dehydration, poor sleep, foods, alcohol, new meds)
- **What helped** (rest, water, movement, heat, medication)
- **Any extra symptoms** (nausea, sweating, breathlessness, weakness, numbness)

These basics match what many health diaries recommend: date, duration, severity, associated symptoms, and medication taken. [The Migraine Trust](#)

Symptoms tracker sheet (printable)

(Use as many pages as you like)

SYMPTOMS TRACKER (Daily Log)

Eating window / meals: _____ Hydration: low ok good

Date	Time	Symptom	Severity (1–5)	Duration	What I was doing	Notes/Triggers	What helped
			1 2 3 4 5				
			1 2 3 4 5				
			1 2 3 4 5				
			1 2 3 4 5				
			1 2 3 4 5				

Sleep last night: poor ok good

Stress today: low medium high

Movement today: none light moderate

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Quick tick list (common symptoms)

Tick what applies (you can add your own):

Body

- joint pain / stiffness
- muscle pain / weakness
- cramps
- swelling ankles/feet
- balance issues

Head / mind

- headaches
- dizziness / lightheadedness
- brain fog / confusion
- anxiety / low mood

Heart / breathing

- palpitations
- breathlessness
- chest tightness (note: urgent if severe or new)

Digestion

- reflux / heartburn
- bloating
- nausea
- constipation / diarrhoea

Sleep & energy

- fatigue
 - poor sleep
 - waking often
 - daytime sleepiness
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Medication & supplements record

Bring this page to appointments.

Item Dose Time taken Started when? Any changes? Notes

New medication or dose change recently? Yes No

Any missed doses? Yes No

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Weekly pattern review

This is what helps you speak clearly in a short appointment.

WEEKLY REVIEW

- **Most common symptom:** _____
- **Times it tends to happen:** morning afternoon evening night
- **Top 3 likely triggers:**
 1. _____
 - 2) _____
 - 3) _____
- **What helped most:** _____
- **Any worsening over the week?** Yes No
- **Any new symptoms?** Yes No

Severity trend: improving same worsening

Sleep trend: improving same worsening

Energy trend: improving same worsening

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Questions to take to your GP

Use these (tick the ones you want):

- What might be causing this pattern?
- What should I watch for that would be urgent?
- Do I need tests (blood pressure, blood tests, ECG, etc.)?
- Could any medication be contributing?
- What can I do safely at home to improve this?
- When should I follow up?

My top 2 concerns (keep it focused):

1. _____
 2. _____
-

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Keep Well closing

Tracking symptoms doesn't mean you're becoming "a worrier". It means you're becoming **informed**.

The goal isn't to stare at every sensation.

The goal is to **spot patterns**, get the right help when needed, and build routines that support steadier health.

Small changes - hydration, movement, sleep rhythm, calmer meals, often make the biggest difference over time.

Disclaimer

This toolkit is for educational purposes only and does not replace medical advice. If you have urgent symptoms, seek medical help immediately.
