

# Keeping a pain record or diary

Sometimes keeping a record of the pain can be helpful and show a pattern. It helps to include information such as:

- the date and time you have pain
- how long it lasts
- where it starts
- if it is in just one area of the body, or more than one
- anything you were doing that has made the pain worse
- anything that helps make the pain better.

You should also record all the pain medicines and treatments you have tried and how well they worked. It is important to record these, even if your health care team did not prescribe or recommend them.

This information can help you talk about the pain with your doctor or nurse. Your healthcare team may give you a pain chart to use. Or you can use our pain diary. It has a diagram of the body so you can mark where you feel pain. And it gives examples of words that you may find helpful when describing your pain.

Keeping a record means you can see the progress you have made, and what does or does not help.

# Pain diary

If you want to use the diary more than once, you can photocopy it. Remember to photocopy all the pages. You can fill in the diary as often as you need to. If the pain is not well controlled, you may want to fill it in every 1 to 2 hours. If the pain is better controlled, you can fill it in every 4 to 6 hours. It may help your doctors and nurses if you fill it in at least twice a day. Use the body diagrams and word list to help. You can record:

- when you feel the pain
- where the pain is in your body
- what the pain feels like
- the level of pain on a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 means no pain and 10 means severe pain
- whether the pain stops you from sleeping or doing daily activities
- the medicines you have used, and any other treatments or therapies that help
- anything that makes the pain better
- anything that makes the pain worse.

You can print more copies of this diary from  
[macmillan.org.uk/paindiary](http://macmillan.org.uk/paindiary)

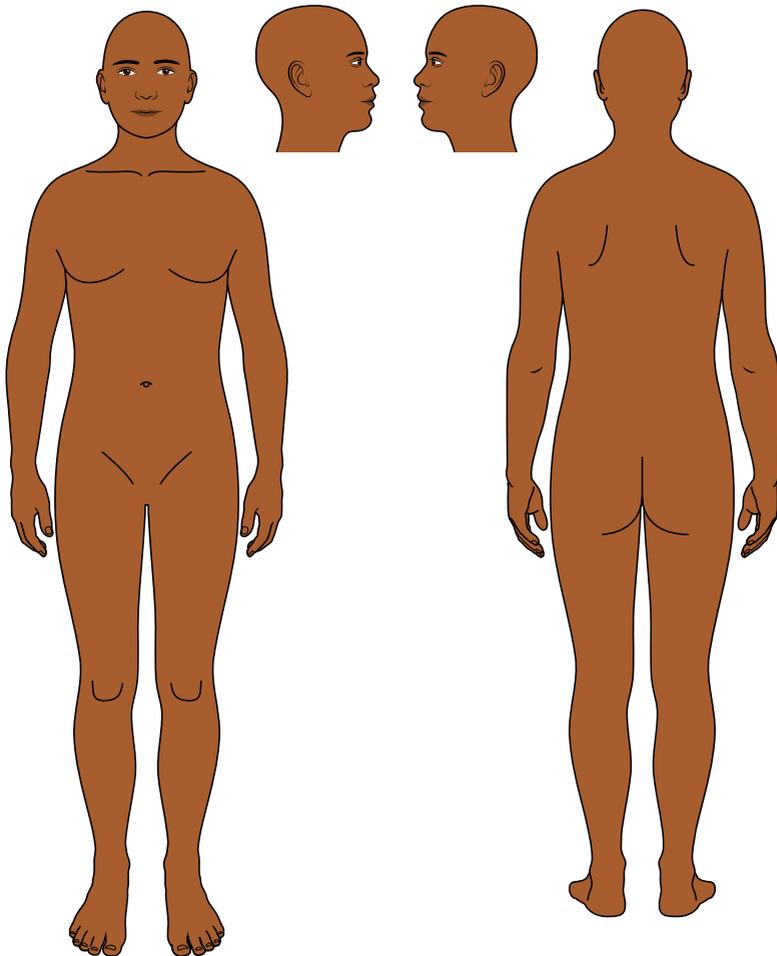


## Where the pain is

You can use the diagrams to mark where the pain is.

Is the pain in one part of your body or in more than one place?

If you have more than one area of pain, label them A, B, C, and so on. Put label A on the body is where it is most painful.



## What the pain feels like

The following words may help when describing the pain:

- aching
- burning
- constant
- crushing
- dragging
- dull
- gnawing
- intense
- nagging
- nauseating
- numb
- prickling
- sharp
- shooting
- sore
- spreading
- stabbing
- stinging
- tender
- throbbing
- tingling
- tiring
- unbearable.

## Numbered pain scale

If you measured the pain on a scale of 0 to 10, how would you rate it? 0 is no pain and 10 is the worst pain you have ever had.

Keeping a record of the pain will help you discuss it with your doctors and nurses. Photocopy this diary before you fill it in so that you can use it as often as you need to. If the pain is in more than one place, you may want to use an extra copy of this diary.

