

CLAIMING PIP: KEEPING A DIARY

When applying for PIP, you may want to keep a diary to remind you of your difficulties with daily activities. This is an example diary entry to help you think about what you could include.

A diary may help you spot patterns or difficulties in your daily life. It's easy to forget or not notice these. Especially if you're used to managing them.

A diary may also be useful evidence if you challenge the decision you are given.

In your diary, you could write about:

- What you do on a typical day.
- The symptoms you have and how they affect you.
- How other people help you. This could be physical help, prompting you to do things or staying nearby in case you need help.
- What you can do for yourself but find difficult.
- How long it takes you to do things like taking a shower or getting dressed.
- What you do not do because:
 - There is no one to help.
 - It would be too difficult.
 - You are in too much pain or too tired.
- Any difficult situations, such as incontinence, falls or injuries, or being unable to complete an activity.
- How often you need to use the toilet.

Your moods and whether you have a mental health problem.

Tips for keeping a diary

Keeping a diary for a few weeks can help to show how your Crohn's or Colitis may vary over time.

- You do not need to write a lot. You may find that brief notes are enough to help you remember.

- When talking about a difficulty you have, try to explain what symptom or condition is causing the difficulty and how often this happens.

EXAMPLE DIARY ENTRY

Saturday 4 April

Morning

"Bad day today – one of three in the week. Woke up feeling totally exhausted – woke up in the night several times from stomach pain and needed to go to the toilet three times. Could not get back to sleep for at least 30 minutes each time.

My neck is stiff and painful and my hands and shoulders hurt. My hands are not very flexible. Normal for me to have this at least five days a week. Part of my Crohn's Disease.

Feel extremely depressed as I know I'll struggle with things today. I cannot think straight and I cannot find the strength to communicate with my partner except 'Yes', 'No' and 'Please do not talk to me now'.

First thing in the morning, sit for 20 minutes on the loo but just wind and pain in stomach. Go back upstairs, getting pains in my thighs by the time I get to the top of the stairs. I need to lie down. Go back to bed. Partner brings me cup of tea. Drink it, doze off for a while. 10.30, get up again. Partner reminds me to take medicine – I had forgotten.

Need to have a bath as it has been three days since last washing. Takes a long time, as I feel very sluggish and slow. Try to get out, feel faint and light-headed. Call to partner to come and help me. Dry myself, feel totally exhausted, need to lay down for 15 minutes.

Get dressed. Hands are still stiff, need some help with buttons and laces.

Partner helps to dry my hair as my arms become tired and painful holding hairdryer and trying to brush.

Have breakfast, feel very bloated and uncomfortable, have to change clothes to something looser.

Partner takes me shopping in car. By the time we get to town I need to get to the loo fast - explosive diarrhoea. No disabled loo with sink so I cannot clean myself up properly. Need to change underwear. No soap in loos, I'm feeling very dirty and not able to get clean. Ask partner to take me home as feeling very depressed. Partner is very reassuring, calms me down. We go home. Need to lie down, am upset and very tired."

Afternoon

"Partner makes lunch, but I cannot eat much. Too much stomach pain and bloating. No appetite. Back in the toilet soon after. Have to clean the toilet and myself. This leaves me feeling very tired and more depressed.

Watch TV in the afternoon till 5.30. Able to try taking dogs for walk after a long rest. Come back too tired to cook dinner. Sit in kitchen and tell partner how to do it. Too tired to sit up at table so meal brought to me on couch."

Evening

"Rest of day spent on sofa. Get up to go to bed very tired and stiff, partner helps me upstairs, helps me undress and into bed. Checks I've remembered my medicine. Helps me put on skin treatment to upper arms neck and shoulders as my arms hurt too much to stretch to these places."

During the night

"Stomach is feeling bloated, uncomfortable and painful. My neck is also very stiff and painful. Cannot get to sleep. Partner has to get up for medicine for my tummy pain. Also makes me a hot water bottle."