

What is this diary for?

Understanding the pattern of your mood symptoms is critical to successful treatment. During a visit with your doctor, trying to remember your symptoms over the past few weeks or months can be difficult, especially if you are ill. By recording your mood daily, you will have much more reliable information to help your doctor decide what treatment is best for your condition.

The mood charts in this diary are intended to provide you with a simple way of monitoring your illness. Mood charting will allow you to bring together important pieces of information such as your mood state, medication levels, and stressful events.

Recording this information on your chart generates a simple graph on which you can see emerging patterns that otherwise might be difficult to identify.

Mood charting is a good way to record events chronologically and will help you to report your mood to your doctor more efficiently. After a few months the mood chart can be a useful tool for looking to the future. Once you begin to track your mood and become accustomed to the chart, you will find it very quick and easy to enter information each day.





Recognize your symptoms

The symptoms of bipolar disorder can be different for each person. The most common symptoms of elevated and depressed mood (mania and depression) are listed below. Please make a note of the symptoms that you usually experience and those which tend to occur early during an episode of elevated or depressed mood.

Elevated mood

	Usual for me	Early sign
Full of energy		
Easily annoyed		
Decreased need for sleep		
Feel more important than usual		
Full of new or exciting ideas		
More talkative		
Excessive spending		
Doing things uncharacteristically		

Depressed mood

	Usual for me	Early sign
Increased need for sleep		
Insomnia		
Feeling guilty		
Decreased energy		
Loss of interest or pleasure		
Indecisiveness		
Difficulty concentrating		
Feeling useless or inadequate		
Restlessness or agitation		
Change in appetite		
Thoughts about death		

How do I use this diary?

The diary is designed to be simple to use. Each month is divided into two sections. The first section contains the chart for monitoring your mood and the second provides additional space for you to record any events that affected your health or mood.

When do I use this diary?

Please complete the chart daily. Ideally you should fill in the chart before bedtime so you can think about your day. The more information you include in your diary, the more useful it will be for your doctor.

Instructions for recording information

The first month in this diary is an example of a completed mood chart.

General instructions

Fill in your name, and the month and year at the top of the page. Each page charts 1 month at a time. Begin on the appropriate day of the month and continue charting until the end of that month.

Mood ratings

Please see the Mood Scale, on the ruler insert, for different ratings. For each day mark the appropriate boxes that describe the **highest** and **lowest** moods you experienced. The Mood Scale is divided into three sections: elevated, normal and depressed mood. The sections for elevated and depressed moods are designed to rate how the severity of these moods impaired your ability to function normally. **SEE MONTHLY MOOD CHART EXAMPLE.**

Record your anxiety/irritability

On a scale of 0–3, rate your level of anxiety and irritability for the day (where 0=none, 1=mild, 2=moderate, and 3=severe). **SEE MONTHLY MOOD CHART EXAMPLE.**



Medication

At the beginning of each month, please record the name and dosage of your prescribed medication with the help of your doctor. At the end of each day write in the number of tablets that you have taken that day. Leave the box blank if the medication was not taken. **SEE MONTHLY MOOD CHART EXAMPLE.**

You will also find space to record additional medications on the next page of the diary.

Indicate your menstrual period (for female patients)

Circle the dates to indicate the days of your menstrual period.

Hours slept

Estimate the number of hours of sleep you had the previous night.

Weight

Please record your weight on the 28th day of each month.

Further information

A blank row has been provided so that you can record any additional problems you have experienced (e.g., panic attacks, alcoholism, binge eating).

Daily notes

The next page in the diary provides space for you to note any significant events that occurred each day and may have contributed to your mood state. **SEE MONTHLY MOOD CHART EXAMPLE.**

Stopping mood swings from happening – helping yourself

This section of the diary has been provided so that you and your family, friends and doctor can create an action plan, which can be used if your mood symptoms reappear. Designing a plan may help to ensure that the next time you develop any symptoms you and your family are prepared, and all those involved will have an idea of what course of action should be followed.

Coping with mood elevation

When my doctor or friends and family point out to me that I have an elevated mood, I will do the following things to help myself:

1. Contact my doctor as soon as possible

Name _____

Tel no _____

2. Identify any changes in my medication

3. Identify any triggering events

Physical _____

Emotional _____

4. Avoid alcohol and drugs
5. Maintain my regular daily activities
6. Reduce the amount of lost sleep
7. Contact my support team

Please fill in the names of people that you could speak to if you were going through a difficult time.

Name _____

Tel no _____

Name _____

Tel no _____

Name _____

Tel no _____

Name _____

Tel no _____



8. Coping skills – what I should do

Fill in any coping strategies that have been helpful during previous episodes of mood elevation. For example, staying in a darkened room when you are feeling overwhelmed or overstimulated.

I will

9. Coping skills – what I should **NOT** do

Fill in any coping strategies that you know are **NOT** helpful during periods of mood elevation. For example, consuming large amounts of alcohol can make people even more compulsive and likely to do things that are uncharacteristic.

I will NOT

10. When my mood is elevated, people can help me by:

Space has been provided so that you can add any of your own suggestions.

- Letting me be alone in a darkened room when I am feeling agitated.
- Stopping me from driving by confiscating my car keys.
- Preventing me from shopping by confiscating my bank and credit cards.
- Not arguing with me, especially when I am irritable.
- Calling my doctor if my symptoms are serious enough and I am not aware of what is happening to take care of myself.

Coping with depression

When I am depressed, I will do the following things to help myself:

1. Contact my doctor as soon as possible

Name _____

Tel no _____

2. Identify any changes in my medication

3. Identify any triggering events

Physical _____

Emotional _____

4. Avoid alcohol and drugs
5. Maintain my regular daily activities
6. Reduce the amount of lost sleep
7. Contact my support team

Please fill in the names of people that you could speak to if you were going through a difficult time.

Name _____

Tel no _____

Name _____

Tel no _____

Name _____

Tel no _____

Name _____

Tel no _____

8. Coping skills – what I should do

Fill in any coping strategies that have been helpful during previous episodes of depression. For example, taking short daily walks or listening to music.

I will _____



9. Coping skills – what I should **NOT** do

Fill in any coping strategies that you know are **NOT** helpful during periods of depression. For example, consuming large amounts of alcohol can make people even more depressed once the alcohol wears off. Other people want to stay in bed all day when they start to get depressed.

I will NOT

10. When I am depressed, people can help me by:

Space has been provided so that you can add any of your own suggestions.

- Trusting me to be the best judge of when I am depressed and not contradicting me when I tell them that I am depressed.
 - Calling my doctor if my symptoms are serious enough and I am not aware of what is happening to take care of myself.
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PLEASE KEEP THIS DIARY WHERE YOU CAN SEE IT EVERY DAY