How to Make Your Own Bladder Journal

by OLIVIA ROBBIN

Monitoring Your Diet and Fluid Intake With a Bladder Diary

Something you might be hearing a lot of when you visit your urologist is to keep a “voiding diary” or “bladder diary” for a few days to a week before seeing them next.

This diary includes useful information for your doctor. It gives them an in-depth look into your washroom habits, without them being beside you whenever you go. You are also going to benefit from the information you record.

As much as I know I have an overactive bladder and I visit the washroom frequently, I do not necessarily know how many times a day, nor do I know the volume of each void. So, it is very insightful knowledge to have when you complete one week.

How to Create a Bladder Diary

Finding a printable bladder diary chart is easy. You can Google the phrase and a million sites and images will show up. But they are not all the same. They range from very simplistic, to unnecessarily, complicated.

I’ve done a few voiding diaries before, so I know what I want and do not want it to be. Below I have created a bladder diary example you can use:

- **Date/time:** This is very important. Writing down the time for that visit is much better than just having one line per hour of the day, as many charts online show. You may need to visit the washroom multiple times in an hour. Seeing the frequency of visits is important information.
- **An urgency scale:** This is also very important because this is going to help the doctor know what symptoms of overactive bladder you have. Use the scale 1 to 5, with one being the least amount of urgency, to five being if you were driving a vehicle you would pull over on the side of the road to go.
- **Leaks:** When you void your bladder, you do not always leak on the way to the washroom. So it is good to write yes or no for each visit. For some people, this may be useful if you leak after you leave the washroom.
- **Pad changes:** Doctors also want to know that if you leak, if you are leaking to the point of changing pads multiple times a day, and what level of absorbency they are. With each time you go to the washroom, was the leaking bad enough that you needed to change the pad? This applies to everyone, as men have pads available to them even though it is mostly online.
- **Volume mL:** This is the tricky part. With a voiding container, you can easily tell how much you have voided, and you can now record it in mL on your chart. When you’re away from home, just try and gauge how much you voided in estimated mL, or using low, middle, high.
- **Notes:** Having a notes section is important too because you might want to record your fluid intake or if you were sick that week or the type of day you had. Notes are not mandatory, but it can be helpful to write down somewhere what you drink per day or what types of drinks you do consume. All this information is very useful for your doctor.

Can I Use a Bladder Diary App Instead of Pen and Paper?

What might have already occurred to you is that it is not very convenient to carry around a pen and paper with you every time you need to urinate, nor is it exactly discreet.

What I would recommend is keeping this bladder diary chart on your phone, so you can record it, or just keeping a note on your phone that you can write it down as point form notes. That's how I started doing them. When your doctor wants to see your voiding diary, you can write it all out on the paper.

If you have a smartphone, you can also search for bladder diaries in the app store or the play store, depending on your type of phone.

Are Bladder Diaries Useful?

The main takeaway from all of this is that you may have an overactive bladder or another urinary concern, that your doctor wants to treat you for.

This information is sensitive and delicate and very personal. Having to do something like track your voiding habits is routine for the doctor to request but might be difficult for you. That's normal.

If you forget to write down one of your voids, it is not the end of the world, but it would be good to put a question mark and an estimation of the time of day in the next row.

However, sticking to the doctor's request and filling a few of these sheets out is going to help you in the long run. Happy voiding!