

Bladder Diary Assessment Tool



What is a Bladder Diary?

A bladder diary is an assessment tool you may use with your health care provider to better understand your urinary incontinence symptoms. Urinary incontinence is the uncontrollable leakage of urine. A diary can help you track a number of things:

- when and how much fluid you drink,
- when and how much urine you pass,
- how often you have that “gotta go” urgency feeling, and
- when and how much urine you may leak.

When is a Bladder Diary Used?

You can use a bladder diary before or after visiting with your health care provider. Having a bladder diary during your first visit may be helpful to describe your daily habits, your urinary symptoms and how they may be affecting your life. Your doctor may use this information to help treat you.

How Do You Use a Bladder Diary?

1. **Wake up.** Begin writing in your diary when you wake up each day. Take notes throughout the day, and continue until you complete 24 hours. For example, if you wake up at 6 a.m. on the first day of your diary, take notes until 6 a.m. the next day.
2. **Note your drinks.** Write down what you drink (i.e., water, juice, coffee, wine) and how much. It is helpful to measure the amount. If you are unable to measure your drinks, then it is of great value to take a good guess about the number of ounces every time you drink something. Most containers will list the number

of ounces they contain. Use these listings to help you make an estimate—for example, an 8 oz. cup of juice, 12 oz. can of soda, or 20 oz. bottle of water.

3. **Measure urine.** During both the day and night, write down when and how much urine you pass. Doctors often provide a special collection device to use. It sits under your toilet seat and is marked with measurements to let you know how much urine you pass.

If you are keeping the diary on your own before visiting a health care professional, then you may want to collect your urine in a cup from your home, such as a kitchen measuring cup. You could also choose a cup that you know holds a certain amount of liquid, such as 8 ounces.

Rinse the collection device with water after each use. Keep the device close to your toilet until you have finished your bladder diary.

4. **Three days.** It is best to keep a diary for at least three days. A one-day diary may not provide enough information to give a true picture of your bladder control. Also, the three days you keep your diary do not have to be three days in a row. Any three days you choose will be fine, as long as they represent three “typical days” for you.
5. **Start tracking.** Get started by using the attached bladder diary to start tracking! Print as many pages you need to complete the three days. Also, don’t forget to bring your completed diary with you to your first office visit.

Urology Care Foundation

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