

Documenting Pain for Disability Claims

A guide to creating documentation that supports WorkSafeBC, insurance, and government benefit claims.

Start Before You File

Begin tracking immediately. Records that predate your claim are more credible. Even if you're months from filing, daily entries starting now build a stronger case.

Document Functional Impact

Adjusters care most about what pain prevents you from doing. "Couldn't lift laundry basket" is more powerful than "pain was 8/10." Be specific about limitations.

Be Consistent, Not Perfect

Daily brief entries beat weekly detailed ones. If you miss a day, don't backfill—it looks fabricated. Gaps are normal; consistency demonstrates persistence.

Include Good Days

Documenting better days shows honesty. Constant 10/10 ratings destroy credibility. A pattern of mostly difficult days with occasional better ones is believable.

Connect to Work/Function

Every entry should relate to ability or inability to perform tasks. For WorkSafeBC: connect symptoms to work duties. For disability: describe daily living impact.

Align with Medical Records

Your diary should complement, not contradict, your medical records. Note appointment dates, treatments, and outcomes. Bring diary summaries to appointments.

Disability Documentation Checklist

- Consistent daily pain diary (30+ days minimum)
- Functional impact documented for each day
- Medication log with response tracking
- Medical appointment dates and outcomes noted
- Good days AND bad days recorded
- Specific activities affected (not just pain ratings)
- Summary prepared for adjudicator review