

My Recovery Journal After an Accident

A Daily Symptom and Progress Tracker

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IMPORTANT NOTICE

This recovery journal is provided solely for general educational and organizational purposes. It is not medical advice, legal advice, an offer of treatment, a guarantee of outcome, or a substitute for an in-person evaluation by an appropriately licensed healthcare professional. Reading, downloading, or relying on this recovery journal does not create a doctor-patient relationship with Dr. Mark Mulak, Cityside Chiropractic, or any affiliated provider. A provider-patient relationship is established only after appropriate intake, consent, examination, and acceptance by the practice. Tracking symptoms may help identify patterns, support communication, and improve continuity of care — but it does not diagnose any condition or replace professional judgment. Symptoms and recovery patterns vary considerably from person to person. If there is concern for a medical emergency, call 911 or seek immediate emergency medical evaluation. Do not delay emergency care based on anything in this journal.

WHY TRACK YOUR RECOVERY?

Symptoms after an accident often change from day to day. Keeping a simple daily record may help you:

- Identify patterns and triggers that make symptoms better or worse
- Monitor progress over time and recognize improvement
- Communicate more clearly and specifically with your healthcare providers
- Remember important questions before appointments
- Support continuity of care between visits
- Create a contemporaneous record of your symptoms and functional limitations

Your daily entries — combined with objective clinical findings from your provider — create the most complete picture of your recovery and your personal injury case. Bring this journal to every appointment.

HOW TO USE THIS JOURNAL

Daily tracking:

Complete the daily entry each evening or at the end of your day — while the day is fresh. Consistency matters more than perfection. Even a brief entry is better than no entry.

Weekly review:

Complete the weekly progress review every seven to fourteen days. This gives your provider a clear picture of your trajectory over time.

Bring it to appointments:

Your provider can review your entries at each visit and use them to track functional progress alongside objective clinical findings.

For your attorney:

Your daily entries provide a contemporaneous record of how your symptoms affected your daily life — which supports the functional limitations component of your personal injury case.

Pattern awareness:

Pay attention to what consistently makes symptoms worse — specific positions, activities, screen time, driving — and what consistently helps. Share these patterns with your provider.

ACCIDENT INFORMATION

Date of accident: _____

Time of accident: _____

Location of accident: _____

Type of incident:

- Rear-end collision
- Side impact
- Head-on collision
- Rollover
- Work-related incident
- Slip, trip, or fall
- Other: _____

Direction of impact (if car accident):

- From behind
- From the front
- From the driver's side
- From the passenger's side
- Multiple impacts

Were you wearing a seatbelt? Yes No Did airbags deploy? Yes No N/A

Did your head contact any surface? Yes No

Primary treating provider: _____

Provider phone: _____

Attorney (if applicable): _____

Attorney phone: _____

Insurance claim number: _____

Questions I want to remember to ask my provider:

RED FLAG SYMPTOMS — SEEK EMERGENCY CARE

Call 911 or go to the emergency department immediately if you experience:

- Severe or rapidly worsening headache

- Loss of consciousness or significant confusion
- Repeated vomiting
- Significant weakness or numbness — especially in both arms or both legs simultaneously
- Trouble breathing or chest pain
- Seizures
- Inability to wake up normally
- Rapidly worsening symptoms of any kind that feel concerning or unusual

Do not wait for your next appointment if symptoms are significantly worsening. Contact your provider directly.

DAILY ENTRY

Date: _____ Day number since accident: _____

Overall pain level today (0–10): _____ / 10

Energy level: Very Low Low Moderate Good Excellent

Sleep quality last night: Very Poor Poor Average Good Excellent Hours slept: _____

SYMPTOMS TODAY

Rate each symptom: 0 = None | 1 = Mild | 2 = Moderate | 3 = Severe

- Neck pain _____
- Headache _____
- Upper back pain _____
- Lower back pain _____
- Shoulder pain _____
- Dizziness _____
- Brain fog _____
- Fatigue _____
- Numbness/tingling _____
- Anxiety/stress _____

ACTIVITIES TODAY (check all that apply)

Worked Drove Walking Exercise Screen work Household tasks Childcare

What made symptoms worse today? _____

What seemed to help today? _____

Medications/Treatment today: _____

Notes or questions for provider: _____

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WEEKLY PROGRESS REVIEW

(Complete every 7 to 14 days)

Week ending: _____ Days since accident: _____

Compared to last week, my overall symptoms are:

- Much Better
- Somewhat Better
- About the Same
- Somewhat Worse
- Much Worse

Overall pain level this week — average (0–10): _____ / 10

Best day this week: _____

Most difficult day this week: _____

Biggest improvements I have noticed this week:

Biggest challenges I am still facing:

Activities I was able to do this week that I could not do before:

Activities I am still unable to do or that remain difficult:

How has this affected my work this week? _____

How has this affected my home life this week? _____

New symptoms that developed this week: _____

New questions for my provider: _____

QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR PROVIDER

Use this list at your next appointment — check off what you want to discuss:

- How is my progress being measured objectively?
- What symptoms concern you most right now?
- What activities are safe right now, and what should I avoid?
- When should I follow up if I am not improving?
- What can I do at home to support recovery?
- Am I on track with my recovery or should we adjust the plan?
- When do you expect to reach a re-evaluation point?
- What does Maximum Medical Improvement (MMI) mean for my case?
- Will you be providing a narrative report for my attorney?

TIPS FOR USING THIS JOURNAL

- **Be consistent** — Complete entries at the same time each day. Evening entries capture the full day's experience.
- **Be specific** — "My neck hurt when I drove for more than 20 minutes" is more useful than "neck pain." Specificity helps your provider and your attorney.
- **Track function, not just pain** — Note what you could not do, what you did with difficulty, and what you missed. Functional limitations often matter as much as pain scores.
- **Do not skip days** — A gap in the journal is harder to explain later. If you had a good day, record it — improvement is part of the story too.
- **Bring it to every appointment** — Your provider can review entries alongside objective clinical findings. Your attorney can use your entries to support the functional limitations component of your claim.
- **Pay attention to patterns** — Certain activities, positions, times of day, or weather changes may consistently affect your symptoms. These patterns are clinically and legally relevant.

ABOUT DR. MARK MULAK

Dr. Mark Mulak, DC, MBA, MS, DACBSP®, DACRB, DAIPM, RMSK®, ICSC has more than 20 years of experience evaluating and managing injuries following motor vehicle collisions, workplace injuries, and slip and fall accidents in Rhode Island. His advanced certifications include Diplomate of the American Chiropractic Board of Sports Physicians (DACBSP®), Diplomate of the American Chiropractic Rehabilitation Board (DACRB), Diplomate in Integrative Pain Management (DAIPM), Registered Musculoskeletal Sonography specialist (RMSK®), and International Certified Chiropractic Sports Clinician (ICSC). Dr. Mulak is Expert Witness Qualified through Cleveland University, serves as Rhode Island's ACA State Delegate, and is the author of *The Objective Injury Model: A Plaintiff Attorney's Guide to Objective Documentation in Motor Vehicle Injury Cases*. At Cityside Chiropractic, objective testing — including PostureRay CRMA, RightEye, BTrackS, and CNS Vital Signs — tracks measurable clinical progress alongside your daily symptom journal entries, giving both your provider and your attorney the most complete picture of your recovery.

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Hours: Monday – Friday: 8:30 AM – 6:00 PM | Saturday: 8:30 AM – 12:00 PM

Same-day appointments available. No referral required. Lien basis — no out-of-pocket cost for personal injury patients.

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