

NEW PATIENT GUIDE

BEFORE YOUR FIRST VISIT

Relief Guide

Gentle, safe ways to feel more comfortable before your first visit, plus what to expect, what to bring and when to get help right away.

Start here → Read the red flags on page 3, then turn to the area that bothers you most.

INSIDE THIS GUIDE

01 **Welcome + your first visit**
What to expect and what to bring

02 **Red flags**
ER, urgent care, or wait for your visit

03 **Gentle relief by area**
Neck, low back, shoulder, mid-back, headaches, hip, leg

04 **Desk and driving setup**
Small changes for long sits

05 **Your pain diary**
Fill it in and bring it with you

General education only. Not a diagnosis or a treatment plan for you.

JOSEPH FAIR CHIROPRACTIC · 1421 STANDIFORD AVE, SUITE B, MODESTO, CA 95350 · (209) 521-1122 · INFO@JOSEPHFAIRCHIROPRACTIC.COM

WELCOME

We're glad you're here

Hi, and welcome. I'm Dr. Joey Fair. Thank you for booking with us.

Whether you're dealing with a stiff neck, a sore back, or something that's been bothering you for years, my goal at your first visit is simple: listen, find out what's going on, and give you a clear plan.

Until then, this guide has gentle things you can do at home to stay more comfortable. Keep it simple, go easy, and bring your questions. We'll take it from there.

Dr. Joey Fair, DC

OUR OFFICE
Joseph Fair Chiropractic
1421 Standiford Ave, Suite B
Modesto, CA 95350
(209) 521-1122
info@josephfairchiropractic.com

WHAT TO EXPECT AT YOUR FIRST VISIT

01 **Check-in.** Please arrive 10–15 minutes early to finish any paperwork.

02 **Conversation.** We talk about what's bothering you, when it started, what helps and your health history.

03 **Exam.** Posture, range of motion, and simple orthopedic and neurological tests.

04 **Imaging, if needed.** Only when your history and exam call for it. Bring any X-rays or MRIs you already have.

05 **Your plan.** I explain what I found and what I recommend, in plain language, and answer your questions.

06 **Care, if appropriate.** Many patients get their first treatment the same day.

WHAT TO BRING

- ☐ Photo ID and insurance card
- ☐ A list of your medications and supplements
- ☐ Any X-rays, MRIs or reports from other doctors
- ☐ Claim info if this is an auto or work injury
- ☐ Your pain diary (page 13 of this guide)
- ☐ Your questions
- ☐ Comfortable clothes you can move in

READ THIS FIRST

Red flags: when not to wait

Most aches can wait for your visit. These can't. When in doubt, get checked.

Call 911 or go to the ER now

- Loss of bladder or bowel control, or new trouble urinating
- Numbness in the groin, buttocks or inner thighs
- Sudden or worsening weakness in an arm or leg, or foot drop
- Pain after a major injury, like a car crash or bad fall
- Chest pain, shortness of breath, or pain in the jaw or left arm
- A sudden, severe "worst headache of my life"
- Headache with confusion, vision changes, trouble speaking, face drooping, or a stiff neck with fever
- A swollen, red, warm or tender calf, especially with shortness of breath

Same day: urgent care or your physician

- Fever, chills or feeling sick along with back or neck pain
- Back pain with burning urination or blood in the urine
- A fall or minor injury if you have osteoporosis
- Pain that keeps you up all night and doesn't change with position
- New back pain with a history of cancer, or unexplained weight loss

Call us at (209) 521-1122

- Pain is spreading further down your arm or leg
- Numbness or tingling is increasing
- You're not sure whether to wait for your visit
- You want to move your appointment sooner

Usually OK to wait for your visit, if none of the above apply

- Stiffness or soreness that changes with movement and position
- Pain that eases with rest, gentle movement, ice or heat
- Mild tension headaches that respond to your usual care
- Aches that are about the same or slowly improving

SKIP THE EXERCISES UNTIL YOUR VISIT IF

You are pregnant, had surgery or a fracture in the last year, had a recent car crash or fall, or have osteoporosis or a history of cancer. Use only the ice/heat, sleep and desk tips.

This list isn't complete. If something feels seriously wrong, trust your gut and get medical care right away.

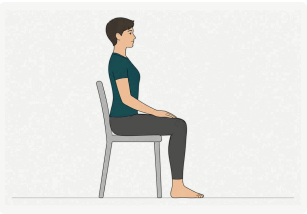
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GENTLE RELIEF · 01 OF 07

Neck pain

Neck pain often comes from stiff, overworked muscles. Your exam will tell us what's going on for you. Until then, gentle motion and good positions may help.

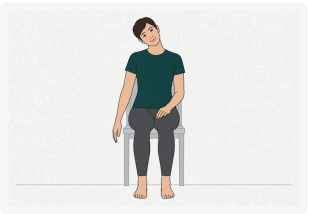
STOP RULE: READ FIRST
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01 Chin Tuck

NECK · **5 × 3-SEC HOLD**

Sit tall. Glide your chin straight back, eyes level. Relax and repeat.



02 Gentle Side Tilt

NECK · **3 × 15 SEC EACH SIDE**

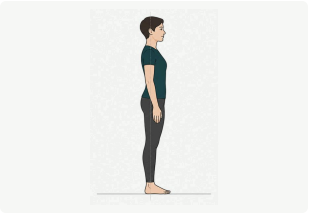
Ear toward shoulder, only as far as comfortable. Keep the opposite shoulder down.



03 Shoulder Rolls

NECK + UPPER BACK · **10 SLOW ROLLS BACK**

Lift shoulders up, roll them back and down. Breathe out as they drop.



04 Posture Reset

WHOLE SPINE · **3 BREATHS, HOURLY**

Ears over shoulders over hips. Breathe in, then let your shoulders drop.

Ice or heat?

First 48 hours or after activity: ice 10–15 min, with a thin towel between ice and skin. **Stiff and achy:** moist heat 15–20 min, warm, not hot. Use whichever feels better; many people prefer heat for neck stiffness.

Sleep



Back or side. One pillow that keeps your neck level with your spine. Side sleepers need a slightly thicker pillow.

Avoid for now

- Sleeping on your stomach
- Looking down at your phone for long stretches; raise it to eye level
- Cracking or forcefully stretching your own neck
- Carrying a heavy bag on one shoulder

HOW OFTEN

Once or twice a day, slow and easy, about 5 minutes. Small, comfortable moves are enough. If you feel worse the next morning, do less. Note what helps in your pain diary on page 13.

QUESTIONS FOR DR. FAIR

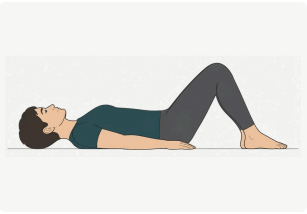
GENTLE RELIEF · 02 OF 07

Lower back pain

Gentle movement usually beats bed rest. Short walks and easy positions are your friends.

STOP RULE: READ FIRST

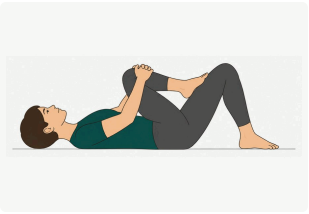
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01 Pelvic Tilt

LOW BACK · **10 SLOW REPS**

Lie on your back, knees bent. Gently flatten your low back, then relax.



02 Single Knee to Chest

LOW BACK + HIP · **3 × 20 SEC EACH SIDE**

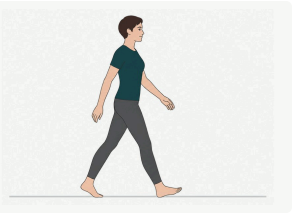
Lying down, hug one knee gently toward your chest. Keep the other foot flat.



03 Cat-Cow

WHOLE SPINE · **8 SLOW REPS**

On hands and knees, gently round, then gently sag. Small and comfortable.



04 Easy Walk

WHOLE BODY · **5–10 MIN, 2–3× A DAY**

Flat ground, comfortable shoes, relaxed pace. Shorter and more often is better.

Ice or heat?

First 48 hours or after activity: ice 10–15 min, with a thin towel between ice and skin. **Stiff and achy:** moist heat 15–20 min, warm, not hot. Heat often feels best for muscle tightness after the first day or two.

Sleep



On your back with a pillow under your knees, or on your side with a pillow between your knees. Use the log roll to get out of bed.

Avoid for now

- Bed rest for more than a day
- Heavy lifting, twisting while lifting, and bending to pick things up with straight legs
- Sitting for more than 30–45 minutes without getting up
- Sit-ups and toe-touches

HOW OFTEN

Once or twice a day, slow and easy, about 5 minutes. Small, comfortable moves are enough. If you feel worse the next morning, do less. Note what helps in your pain diary on page 13.

QUESTIONS FOR DR. FAIR

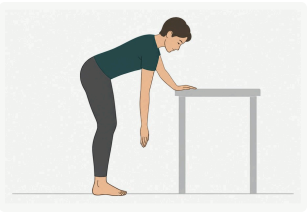
GENTLE RELIEF · 03 OF 07

Shoulder pain

Keep the shoulder gently moving within a comfortable range. Small motions are enough.

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01 Pendulum Swing

SHOULDER · **30 SEC EACH DIRECTION**

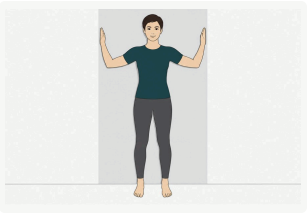
Lean on a table with your good arm. Let the sore arm hang and swing it in small circles.



02 Shoulder Rolls

SHOULDER + NECK · **10 SLOW ROLLS BACK**

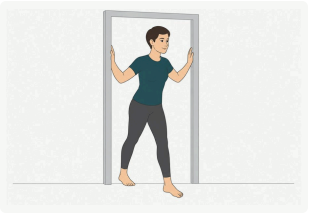
Roll shoulders up, back and down. Keep it easy.



03 Wall Slide

SHOULDER · **8 REPS**

Back to a wall, arms in a goalpost shape. Slide up only as high as is easy.



04 Doorway Chest Stretch

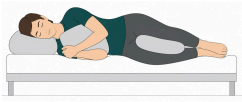
CHEST + FRONT SHOULDER · **3 × 15 SEC**

Forearms on the door frame at shoulder height. Step through gently until you feel a mild stretch.

Ice or heat?

First 48 hours or after activity: ice 10–15 min, with a thin towel between ice and skin. Ice often helps a shoulder that's sore after activity. **Stiff and achy:** moist heat 15–20 min, warm, not hot.

Sleep



Sleep on your back, or on the other side hugging a pillow so the sore arm is supported. Don't sleep on the sore shoulder.

Avoid for now

- Lifting overhead or reaching behind you
- Sleeping on the sore side
- Carrying heavy bags with the sore arm
- Pushing through pinching pain

HOW OFTEN

Once or twice a day, slow and easy, about 5 minutes. Small, comfortable moves are enough. If you feel worse the next morning, do less. Note what helps in your pain diary on page 13.

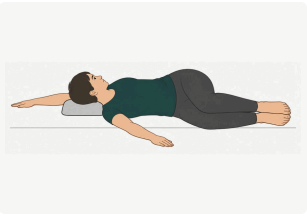
QUESTIONS FOR DR. FAIR

GENTLE RELIEF · 04 OF 07

Mid-back pain and posture

Mid-back aches have many possible causes; long hours of sitting are a common one. Your exam will tell us what's going on for you. Gentle opening moves may help.

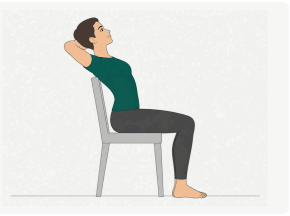
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01 Open Book

MID-BACK · **6 SLOW REPS EACH SIDE**

Lie on your side, knees bent. Open your top arm like a book and follow it with your eyes.



02 Seated Extension

MID-BACK · **5 × 3-SEC HOLD**

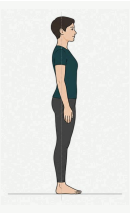
Hands behind head, sit tall and gently lift your chest toward the ceiling. Small motion.



03 Cat-Cow

WHOLE SPINE · **8 SLOW REPS**

On hands and knees, gently round, then gently sag.



04 Posture Reset

WHOLE SPINE · **3 BREATHS, HOURLY**

Ears over shoulders over hips. Breathe and let your shoulders relax.

Ice or heat?

Stiff and achy: moist heat 15–20 min, warm, not hot. Most people find heat helps a tight mid-back.
First 48 hours or after activity: ice 10–15 min, with a thin towel between ice and skin.

Sleep



On your back or side with a supportive pillow. A rolled towel along your spine is not needed; keep it simple.

Avoid for now

- Slouching on the couch or in bed with a laptop
- Long screen sessions without breaks
- Heavy backpacks or purses
- Forcing your back to "pop"

HOW OFTEN

Once or twice a day, slow and easy, about 5 minutes. Small, comfortable moves are enough. If you feel worse the next morning, do less. Note what helps in your pain diary on page 13.

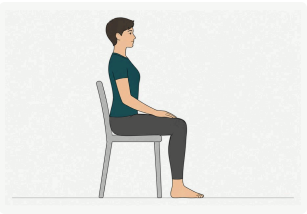
QUESTIONS FOR DR. FAIR

GENTLE RELIEF · 05 OF 07

Tension headaches

Headaches have many possible causes. Tension-type headaches are often linked to tight neck and shoulder muscles, stress and screens. Your exam will help sort out what's going on for you.

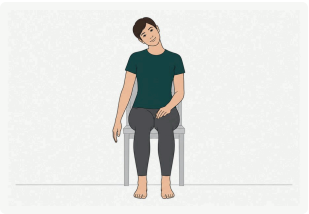
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01 Chin Tuck

NECK · **5 × 3-SEC HOLD**

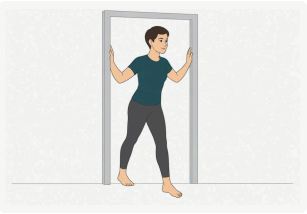
Glide your chin straight back, eyes level. Relax and repeat.



02 Gentle Side Tilt

NECK + UPPER SHOULDERS · **3 × 15 SEC EACH SIDE**

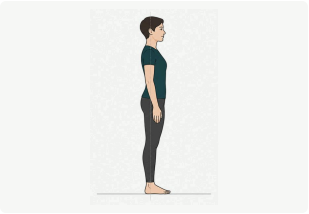
Ear toward shoulder. Let the opposite shoulder drop.



03 Doorway Chest Stretch

CHEST + SHOULDERS · **3 × 15 SEC**

Forearms on the door frame. Step through gently.



04 Breathing Reset

WHOLE BODY · **2 MIN, TWICE A DAY**

Sit tall. Breathe in through your nose for 4, out for 6. Let your jaw and shoulders relax.

Ice or heat?

Many people like heat on the neck and shoulders, or a cool cloth on the forehead. Try both and use what helps.

Sleep



On your back or side with your neck level. Keep a regular sleep schedule; short sleep can trigger headaches.

Avoid for now

- Skipping meals and not drinking enough water
- Long screen time without breaks
- Clenching your jaw
- Too much, or suddenly stopping, caffeine

Get care right away for a sudden, severe headache, or a headache with confusion, vision changes, weakness, trouble speaking, fever and stiff neck, or after a head injury.

HOW OFTEN

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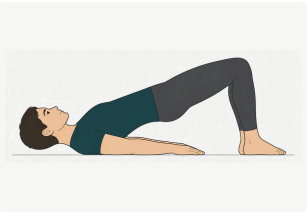
QUESTIONS FOR DR. FAIR

GENTLE RELIEF · 06 OF 07

Hip pain

The hips love gentle movement. Keep stretches mild and avoid positions that pinch.

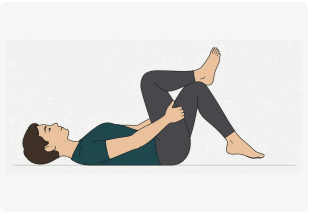
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01 Glute Bridge

HIPS + LOW BACK · **8 REPS, 3-SEC HOLD**

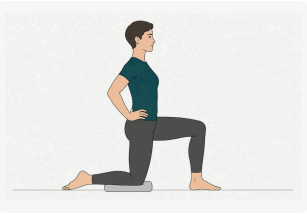
On your back, knees bent. Squeeze your glutes and lift your hips a few inches.



02 Figure-4 Stretch

BACK OF THE HIP · **3 × 20 SEC EACH SIDE**

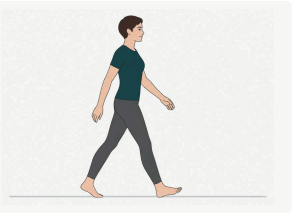
On your back, cross one ankle over the other knee. Gently pull the bottom leg in.



03 Kneeling Hip Flexor

FRONT OF THE HIP · **3 × 20 SEC EACH SIDE**

Half-kneel on a cushion. Tuck your tailbone slightly and shift forward a little. Skip if kneeling hurts your knees.



04 Easy Walk

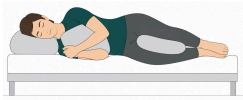
WHOLE BODY · **5–10 MIN, 2–3× A DAY**

Flat ground, relaxed pace, comfortable shoes.

Ice or heat?

First 48 hours or after activity: ice 10–15 min, with a thin towel between ice and skin. **Stiff and achy:** moist heat 15–20 min, warm, not hot. Ice often helps the outside of the hip after activity.

Sleep



On your back, or on the non-sore side with a pillow between your knees so your top leg stays level.

Avoid for now

- Sleeping on the sore hip
- Crossing your legs for long periods
- Deep squats and lunges that pinch
- Standing with your weight on one hip

HOW OFTEN

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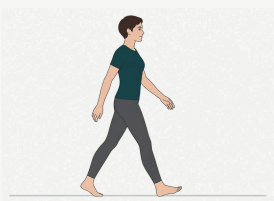
QUESTIONS FOR DR. FAIR

GENTLE RELIEF · 07 OF 07

Leg pain that starts in the back

Pain, tingling or numbness that travels from the low back into the buttock or leg can have several causes, so it calls for gentle care and close watching until your exam.

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01 Easy Walk

WHOLE BODY · **5–10 MIN, 2–3× A DAY**

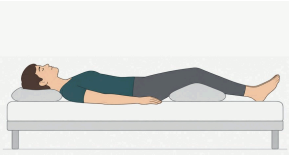
Short, easy walks often feel better than sitting. Stop if leg symptoms increase.



02 Pelvic Tilt

LOW BACK · **10 SLOW REPS**

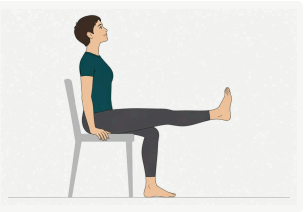
On your back, knees bent. Gently flatten your back, then relax. Keep it tiny.



03 Rest Position

LOW BACK + LEG · **5–10 MIN**

Lie on your back with pillows under your knees or calves. Breathe slowly.



04 Seated Leg Glide

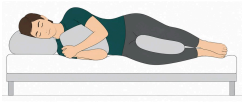
ONLY IF DR. FAIR CLEARS IT · **WAIT FOR YOUR VISIT**

We'll show you this at your visit if it's right for you. Don't start it on your own.

Ice or heat?

First 48 hours or after activity: ice 10–15 min, with a thin towel between ice and skin. on the low back, not the leg. **Stiff and achy:** moist heat 15–20 min, warm, not hot. on the low back may also feel good. Keep sessions short.

Sleep



On your back with pillows under your knees, or on your side with a pillow between your knees. Find the position where your leg feels calmest.

Avoid for now

- Long sitting, especially in soft couches and car seats
- Lifting, bending and twisting
- Toe-touch and hamstring stretches that pull into the leg
- A wallet in your back pocket

Go to the ER for loss of bladder or bowel control, numbness in the groin or inner thighs, or sudden or worsening leg weakness.

HOW OFTEN

Once or twice a day, slow and easy, about 5 minutes. Small, comfortable moves are enough. If you feel worse the next morning, do less. Note what helps in your pain diary on page 13.

QUESTIONS FOR DR. FAIR

THE BASICS

Ice, heat and sleep

Simple tools that help almost every area.

STOP RULE: READ FIRST
These are general, gentle movements, not a treatment plan for you; Dr. Fair hasn't examined you yet. Keep every move small, slow and easy, skip anything you're unsure about, and stop if anything increases your symptoms. **Stop and call us at (209) 521-1122** if pain spreads or travels, numbness or tingling increases, you feel sharp or catching pain, or you notice new swelling or weakness.

ICE OR HEAT?

	ICE	HEAT
Best for	New aches (first 48 hours), after activity, swelling	Stiffness, muscle tightness, ongoing aches
How long	10–15 minutes	15–20 minutes
How often	Every 2–3 hours as needed	2–3 times a day
How	Ice pack or frozen peas in a thin towel	Moist heat pack, warm towel or warm shower

SAFETY
Never put ice or heat directly on skin, and don't sleep on a heating pad. Skip ice and heat on numb areas, and talk with your physician first if you have diabetes or circulation problems.

Not sure? Use whichever feels better. If neither helps, or either makes it worse, stop and tell us at your visit.

SLEEP POSITIONS



Back
Pillow under knees, thin pillow under head



Side
Pillow between knees, neck level



Stomach
Hardest on neck and back; try to avoid

GETTING OUT OF BED: THE LOG ROLL



1. Roll onto your side, knees bent



2. Drop your feet off the bed



3. Push up with your arms

MATTRESS CHECK
Supportive but comfortable. If you wake up stiffer than you went to bed most mornings, mention it at your visit.

OTHER THINGS THAT HELP

Keep moving, gently
Short walks and changing position every 30–45 minutes usually beat lying still all day.

Breathe and relax
Pain tightens muscles. Two minutes of slow breathing (in for 4, out for 6) helps your body let go.

Over-the-counter medicine
Follow the label. Ask your physician or pharmacist what's safe for you, especially if you take other medications.

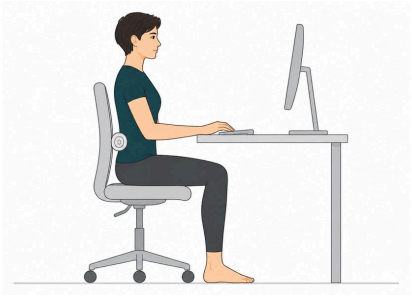
EVERYDAY SETUP

Desk and driving

Long sitting stirs up most neck, back and leg discomfort. These small changes add up.

STOP RULE: READ FIRST

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AT YOUR DESK

- [ ] Feet flat, knees about level with hips
  Use a footrest or box if needed.
- [ ] Low back supported
  Small rolled towel at belt level.
- [ ] Screen at eye level, an arm's length away
  Laptops: raise the screen, use a separate keyboard.
- [ ] Elbows by your sides, wrists straight
- [ ] Phone at eye level, not in your lap
- [ ] Get up every 30–45 minutes
  Walk, refill water, do a posture reset.

IN THE CAR

- [ ] Seat close enough that knees stay slightly bent
- [ ] Seat back fairly upright, about 100–110°
- [ ] Headrest at the back of your head
- [ ] Wallet and phone out of your back pocket
- [ ] Hands at about 9 and 3 o'clock, shoulders relaxed
- [ ] On long drives, stop every 45–60 minutes
  Walk 2–3 minutes.

LIFTING BASICS

- Get close to the load and keep it against your body
- Bend at your hips and knees, not your low back
- Turn with your feet; don't twist
- Ask for help or split heavy loads

YOUR MOVEMENT BREAK

Every time you stand up: 3 slow shoulder rolls, 3 chin tucks, and a short walk. Keep it gentle, and stop if anything increases your symptoms.

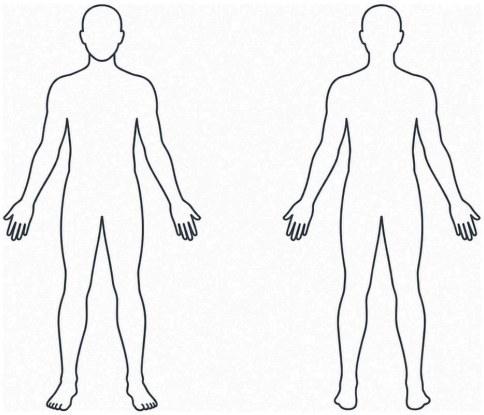
BRING THIS TO YOUR VISIT

My pain diary

Fill it in for a few days before your visit. It helps us understand what's going on faster.

NAME: _____

SHADE WHERE YOU FEEL IT



FRONT BACK

Use **///** for ache, **xxx** for sharp, **ooo** for numbness or tingling.

ABOUT YOUR PAIN

When did it start? Was there an injury?

What makes it worse?

What makes it better?

Does it travel anywhere? Any numbness or tingling?

What have you tried so far (meds, ice, heat, other care)?

What do you most want to get back to doing?

DAY	DATE	PAIN AM 0–10	PAIN PM 0–10	SLEEP (HRS)	WHAT I DID TODAY	NOTES
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						
6						
7						

Pain scale: 0 = no pain · 5 = noticeable, distracting · 10 = worst imaginable.