



A flare up is when your pain is suddenly more intense than usual. Flare-ups are common, but temporary and can be managed.

Here are some things you can do to minimize flare-ups



When you have a flare-up plan, you can take control and have options to manage your pain.



How to reduce the chance of a flare-up

> MANAGE STRESS



- If you feel stressed or anxious, practice deep breathing, gentle yoga or meditation.



> EAT WELL AND STAY HYDRATED

- Eat healthy foods and avoid foods that can cause inflammation. Drink plenty of water.

> TAKE MEDICATION AS PRESCRIBED



- Taking more or less medication can lead to a flare-up. Talk to your provider about medications you can take safely.



> GET GOOD SLEEP

- Lack of sleep can make a pain flare-up worse. Getting enough sleep helps with pain and makes flare-ups less likely.



> KEEP MOVING BUT PACE YOURSELF

- If you stay active, but pace yourself, you can minimize the chances of overdoing it.

Create a flare-up plan



> FILL OUT YOUR FLARE-UP PLAN

You can manage flare-ups better if you can plan ahead. Fill out your plan on page 3 to help AVOID flare-ups and to MANAGE the pain when you have a flare-up. Write down things like:

- What activities can I do each day without overdoing it?
- How well am I taking care of myself (showering, dressing, brushing my teeth)?
- What positive things can I say to myself when I am not feeling well?

Take notes during a flare-up



> MY FLARE-UP NOTES

Taking notes during a flare-up helps you learn more about your pain. The flare-up notes sheet on page 4 can help. Write down things like:

- What may have been the trigger?
- What can I do better next time?
- What else was stressful at the time?

Create a flare-up kit



> BUILD YOUR OWN, PERSONAL FLARE-UP KIT

Include things you enjoy. Here are some examples:

- Books and magazines
- Heating pads and ice packs
- Playing cards
- Lists of movies and music
- Art and crafts supplies
- Phone apps for relaxation, mindfulness, and gentle stretching
- Photo books
- Gift cards to movies or restaurants
- People you can call for support
- Cards from friends and family
- Treats or snacks
- Greeting cards to write



MY FLARE-UP PLAN

Flare-ups happen! Write down what works for you before a flare-up happens. It will help you manage flare-ups in the future.

What are my triggers and how can I avoid them? _____

What in my life is causing stress and how can I manage it better?

How well am I taking care of myself (showering, dressing, brushing my teeth)?

How can I improve my sleep? _____

How can I eat better and make sure I'm drinking enough water? _____

Which relaxation techniques can I use (deep breathing, meditation)?

What positive things can I say to myself when I am not feeling well? _____

What activities can I do each day without overdoing it? _____

Who do I go to for support from family and friends? _____

What other things can I do to feel better? _____

FLARE-UPS



Find more ways to help with your pain:
www.oregonpainguidance.org/paineducationtoolkit



NOTES DURING A FLARE UP

Take notes to learn from each flare-up.
Share these notes with your provider.

DAY _____

TIME _____

Pain **INTENSITY**

Interferes with my **ACTIVITIES**

Interferes with **ENJOYING LIFE**

Rate from
0 – 10

What triggered my flare-up? _____

My flare-up pain descriptions (ex. sharp, burning, tingling, etc.)

Location: _____ Type of pain: _____

Location: _____ Type of pain: _____

Location: _____ Type of pain: _____

What was I doing shortly before my flare-up? _____

What was my mood before the flare-up? _____

What else was causing me stress before the flare-up? _____

Did I over-do something? How can I avoid this in the future? _____

What did I eat in the last 4 hours and did I drink enough water? _____

Was there a change in my medication or treatment? _____

What helped with this flare-up and what can I do better next time? _____

How did I reward myself when the flare-up was over? _____

