

Managing Chronic Illness: Tools for Daily Living

Chronic illness can be unpredictable, exhausting, and isolating—but it doesn't have to control your life. This guide offers practical strategies to help you stay organized, track patterns, and advocate for yourself day to day.

Track Your Symptoms

- Write down when symptoms occur, their severity, and what helps or worsens them.
- Patterns help your provider make better decisions.
- Use a notebook, app, or this printable tool.

Conserve Energy

- Use the “Spoon Theory” if you need help explaining your limits.
- Prioritize tasks that matter most each day.
- Don't feel guilty for resting—it's part of managing your health.

Build a Support Team

- Identify your go-to people for emotional, practical, and medical support.
- Share your needs openly—people often want to help but don't know how.
- Ask your provider about case managers or chronic care coordinators.

Know When to Speak Up

- If something changes suddenly—call.
- If you're not improving—ask what's next.
- If you're overwhelmed—say so.
- → “I'm having trouble managing everything. Can we talk about support or options?”

Daily Symptom & Self-Care Tracker

Date: _____

Energy Level (1–10): _____

Time Symptom/Note

Severity (1–10)

Meds Taken? (Y/N)

Mood Today: _____

Self-Care Check-In:

☐ Ate something nourishing

☐ Drank enough water

☐ Moved my body gently

☐ Rested without guilt

Notes: _____
