



Flare up Management Worksheet

1. Understanding flare ups.

An important first step in managing flare ups is understanding what they are and what causes them.

What is a flare up? : A period of increased pain or other symptoms such as muscle spasm, stiffness or fatigue, which could just last a few hours or days.

What causes or triggers a flare up? : Common causes include having overdone things or done something different or being under stress.

Use the space below to record some **typical flare up triggers** and highlight which ones are common for you.

Triggers

2. Early Warning Signs

Early warning signs are those things which often precede your triggers. For example if 'overdoing' and not being able to say 'no' are common triggers for you, you may find that requests from family and friends or planned events often cause you to do too much and then suffer with increased pain or flare up.

Giving thought to your typical triggers can help you to start to notice these early warning signs and consider how you could approach things differently so you don't end up doing too much.

List below some of your typical triggers from above and write alongside them some things that tend to precede these triggers, i.e. your early warning signs.

My Common Triggers	Early Warning Signs



Now consider how you can tackle your Early Warning Signs so that Triggers for flare ups can be reduced.

Use this space to note down ideas for recognising and tackling your Early Warning Signs

Ideas for recognising and tackling my Early Warning Signs

3. What Helps

As well as understanding flare ups and what causes them, it makes sense to know what most effectively helps you to manage them.

Over the course of this Pain Management Programme you will have been gaining understanding and gathering tips, advice and support which you can add to your Flare up Management Plan.

Use the boxes below to record what you have already found helpful and what you plan to try when next in flare up

What I find helpful for managing a flare up

What I would like to try when next in a flare up

It is also important to consider who you will turn to for support when you are having a flare up. This might be a family member, a friend who is supportive, an online support group, a health professional, etc.

My sources of support include:



4. Action Plan

The final step is to put together your Action Plan to put to use when next in a Flare up. This will largely include your ideas from the previous section above. Here is an example action plan.

My Flare Up Action Plan	
1. Refer to my Action Plan	d. Relaxation practice – short and frequent
2. Check my thinking – am I catastrophizing / worrying?	e. Contacting my sources of support
3. Review and reprioritise plans for the day; include: <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Remember to pace and not overdob. Gentle stretches and movementc. Regularly changing position	f. Planning in some 'me time'
	4. Let family know
	5. Use top up medication as necessary

My Flare up Action Plan
1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.
7.
8.