

What do you need to know about **Your Symptoms Matter?**



Your Symptoms Matter is a tool used to tell your healthcare team about **how you are feeling**. When your healthcare team knows about your symptoms, they can give you treatments and advice to help you manage them. You will use this tool before, during and after your cancer treatment.

[This is a separate questionnaire from your COVID screening when you register.](#)

This is for your **cancer related symptoms** to let your healthcare team know about how **you** have been since your last appointment.

If you have no symptoms:

- Even if you don't have symptoms you should still fill out Your Symptoms Matter before your appointments
- If you start to have symptoms later, your healthcare team may look back at Your Symptoms Matter ratings over time to try to figure out what caused the change.

After Filling Out Your Symptoms Matter

- Your healthcare team should talk to you about Your Symptoms Matter with you during your appointment.
- If your healthcare team does not bring it up with you, tell them you filled out Your Symptoms Matter.

How Your Symptom Ratings Are Stored

- Your ratings will be saved in your health record. Your health record is where your medical information is stored.
- Cancer Care Ontario also stores your symptom ratings. This information helps in planning for a better cancer system.
- Your information is kept private and will not be shared with anyone.

How to Review or Change Your Past Symptom Ratings

Talk to a member of your healthcare team if you would like to see or change your past symptom ratings.

How to Stop Sharing Your Personal Symptom Ratings

- Your personal symptom ratings are personal health information
- If you no longer want to share your ratings through Your Symptoms Matter then your hospital can remove your information from the system.

Your Symptoms Matters asks you to rate **12 cancer related symptoms**:

- Pain
- Tiredness
- Anxiety
- Diarrhea
- Drowsiness
- Nausea
- Depression
- Constipation
- Lack of Appetite
- Shortness of breath
- Wellbeing
- Trouble Sleeping

You might be asked about other symptoms depending on what type of cancer you have.

How Your Symptoms Matter Can Benefit Your Care

Filling out Your Symptoms Matter can help you and your healthcare team to:

- notice and treat symptoms early on
- talk about symptoms that matter to you
- track your symptoms over time to figure out what may be causing them or any changes in them
- choose the best treatment and medications for your symptoms

When your symptoms are well managed you can:

- ✓ keep more of your regular routines
- ✓ do the things that are important to you
- ✓ keep up your strength so that you can continue with your treatments

Example of How It Works

1. Mary rated her shortness of breath high on the Your Symptoms Matter form. Mary's shortness of breath rating showed her healthcare team that it is a problem for her.
2. Mary and her healthcare team talked about her shortness of breath and how to treat it.
3. Mary's healthcare team gave her some breathing exercises to help. The healthcare team also gave Mary an appointment with a breathing specialist to help her feel better.

Where to Fill Out Your Symptoms Matter

After you register, you can fill out Your Symptoms Matter:

1. At the computer kiosks
2. On your personal device, go online to <https://isaac.ontariohealth.ca/>
or
3. Ask a Volunteer to help you with a clipboard and a questionnaire to fill it out by hand



How to Fill Out Your Symptoms Matter

- When you open Your Symptoms Matter, you will see 12 symptoms listed with the numbers 0 to 10 below each of them.

Example: The pain symptom rating question from Your Symptoms Matter is below

Pain

Please select the number that best describes how you feel **NOW**:

No Pain Worst Possible Pain

- For each symptom, choose a number between 0 and 10 **that best describes how you have been feeling since your last appointment.**
 - A score of **0 means** you **do not have any** symptoms.
 - A score of **10 means** that your symptom is at its **very worst.**
- It is important to be honest and tell your healthcare team exactly how you feel. If your healthcare team does not know about your symptoms, they may not know that you need help.
- It is best to do Your Symptoms Matter yourself if you are able. If someone is helping you, make sure they describe how you really feel not how they think you feel. This might prevent you from getting the help you need.

This document was adapted from CCO's 'Your Symptoms Matter' Patient Education Resource