

Bowel Symptom Doctor Visit Guide

Bring this worksheet to a medical visit if bowel symptoms no longer feel routine.

Symptom Timeline

- When did symptoms start?
- Has the bowel pattern changed compared with your normal baseline?
- Are symptoms persistent, intermittent, or clearly worsening?

Red-Flag Checks

- Any rectal bleeding?
- Any dark or black stool?
- Any unexplained weight loss?
- Any recent blood test showing anemia or low iron?
- Any severe weakness, dizziness, or faint feeling?

Pattern Questions

- Does pain improve after a bowel movement, stay the same, or worsen?
- Is diarrhea or constipation new compared with your usual pattern?
- Are symptoms still explainable by a familiar IBS pattern, or do they feel clearly different?

History to Mention

- family history of colorectal cancer or polyps
- prior colonoscopy or stool testing
- hemorrhoids, fissures, or other known causes of bleeding
- medicines that may affect bowel habits or bleeding risk