

The Amputee Diary



Limbs 4 Life™
Empowering Amputees

Making a real
difference together

We empower amputees with knowledge and support to make a real difference, **because no one should have to go through limb loss alone.**



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Introduction

Learning that you are facing an amputation can be a frightening prospect. Coming to terms with the idea of surgery and limb loss is not always easy and can lead to many questions. For many people being in hospital can be a stressful time for you and your family.

This diary has been developed to help you to record some of the questions you may have, the names of your healthcare providers and the achievements and goals that you want to achieve along the pathway to your recovery.

Hospitals are usually very busy places. Healthcare staff come into, and out of, your room on a regular basis. Sometimes it can be difficult to remember the staff who are looking after you and the questions that you would like to ask. Questions may come to your mind when things are quiet. For example you may think of a question or something you want to discuss during the night and/or when your regular healthcare team is not working. It can be difficult to remember all the things that may be concerning you, which is something that many people experience.

For those reasons Limbs 4 Life has developed the Amputee Diary. You can use this diary to:

- write down the names of the individual healthcare staff involved in your care (in hospital and rehabilitation);
- record the questions you might be thinking of when staff are not available; and,
- write down your goals or things that you would like to do.



About Limbs 4 Life

Limbs 4 Life is the peak body for amputees in Australia and works to provide information and support to people in the community living with and/or facing amputation. Limbs 4 Life supports amputees by providing access to information and services such as:

- A Practical Guide for Amputees Handbook
- Amplified Magazine
- Information Fact Sheets
- Amputee Health Sheets
- Peer Support visits from other amputees.

All of Limbs 4 Life's resources are free. You can subscribe to receive free updates from Limbs 4 Life by visiting our website.

The magazines and resources listed above can be downloaded from our website at www.limbs4life.org.au or you can request hard copies by contacting Limbs 4 Life.

Limbs 4 Life provides access to Peer Support for people in the community prior to, or following amputation surgery. Speaking to another amputee is an important part of the recovery process. Peer Support Volunteers are amputees like you, people who have experienced and lived with limb loss for a number of years. Peer Support Volunteers have successfully adapted to their amputation, regained their mobility, re-joined their community and live independently.

There are a number of ways that you can access Peer Support through Limbs 4 Life:

- Face to face support - will enable you to meet with an amputee peer volunteer
- Phone support - speak to a Peer Support Volunteer over the phone (available to anyone at any time)
- Virtual support - is for people with internet access, where you can register to join our online support group and post your questions and comments.

How to use this diary

It can sometimes be overwhelming dealing with surgery, and all of the new information given to you following an amputation.

The Amputee Diary is a useful tool that can help you and your family record and keep track of important details. The Amputee Diary can also be used by your healthcare providers to record information relevant to you.

The Amputee Diary can help to empower you to be more involved with your own healthcare and progress. It can also help family members and caregivers know when there are issues that need to be addressed.

Use the Amputee Diary to: record the names of the people caring for you;

- the questions that you wish to ask them;
- any concerns that you may have regarding your treatment or care; and,
- any other matters you would like to discuss.

The Amputee Diary can help you to work towards goals and health practices that can lead to positive outcomes.



My healthcare providers are:

During the course of your hospital stay, there will be a number of different people involved in your care. A list of healthcare providers is listed below. You can simply add their name and any contact numbers to help you to remember who the members of your care team are.

Healthcare Team	Hospital	Rehabilitation
My surgeon/doctor is:		
My nurse/s are:		
My prosthetist is:		
My occupational therapist is:		
My physiotherapist is:		
My social worker is:		
My podiatrist is:		
My dietitian is:		

The questions I want to ask are:

Question

For example: How long will I stay in hospital / rehabilitation for?

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

Answers/notes

My goals are:

Your goals may be short or long-term ones. Identifying the goals you want to work towards can help you to take control, keep motivated and set realistic future plans. Your healthcare team may also ask you to set goals in the future and provide you guidance when setting them.

	Goals and how I plan to achieve these	By when
1	<i>For example: I would like to be able to transfer safely by the end of the week.</i>	<i>This Friday - 10 March</i>
2		
3		
4		
5		

6

7

8

9

10

Goals and how I plan to achieve these	By when

My achievements are:

Writing down your achievements, no matter how small you think they are, will help you to see your progress. It can also help you to stay motivated and working towards achieving your goals.

	Achievements	Comment
1	<i>For example: Today I went out on day leave with my family.</i>	
2		
3		
4		
5		

	Achievements	Comment
6		
7		
8		
9		
10		

Preparing to leave hospital or rehabilitation:

Write down the things that you need to think about when preparing to leave hospital or rehabilitation. You may find it useful to sit down with a support person or a member of your healthcare team when filling this out.

See our Amputee Checklist - Important things to consider prior to leaving rehabilitation.

1

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2

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3

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4

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My Assistive Technology

Assistive Technology is the name for devices which help you with your functionality and mobility. These can include things like: prosthetic devices - arms and legs, wheelchairs, crutches, walking aids - walkers and walking sticks, vehicle modifications among other things. It's important to know which devices you need to manage your care.

If you are being fitted with an interim prosthesis (first limb) it's important that you know what the devices are that support your outcomes. Ask your prosthetic provider to fill out the details below. Usually your interim prosthesis will have basic/standard components, this is to help to get you used to using the device, regain your confidence and/or balance and to help you to learn.

	Assistive technology	Comment
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		

Questions

You may have some questions after receiving your interim (first) prosthesis. The questions below are only a guide. If you have other questions write them down so that you remember to ask at your next appointment or before you take your prosthesis home.

	Questions	Response/Comment
1	How long should I wear my prosthesis for?	
2	What should I do if my prosthesis is causing me pain?	
3	What should I do if my prosthesis feels loose and unsafe?	
4	When will I receive my definitive prosthesis? How long does it usually take?	
5	Will your prosthetist contact you to make an appoint to be fitted for your definitive prosthesis or do you need to contact them?	
6		
7		
8		

Definitive Prosthesis

When your residual limb (stump) is stabilised in size you, and your prosthetist will discuss your goals about your definitive (final) prosthesis.

The things that you should consider are your:

- Lifestyle, recreation activities or hobbies
- Employment, the kind of work you do
- Family life and what you need to achieve from your device.

Speak to your prosthetist about trialling different prosthetic options so that you can achieve the best possible outcome.

Remember: your definitive prosthesis is not going to be the last one that you receive; it may be one of a number you receive during your lifetime.

	Assistive technology	Comment
1	My prosthetic device is made up of the following:	
2	My suspension system is:	
3	The type of foot / arm I use is:	
4		
5		

Funding for prosthetics and assistive technology

People are often concerned about the costs associated with prosthetic limbs. If you are an Australian citizen, the following funding applies:

National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS):

The NDIS funds the costs associated with prosthetic devices if you are 65 years or under. The type of prosthesis you will receive depends on your goals.

Public funding (National Limb Scheme):

If you are over the age of 65 years you will be funded for a prosthesis under the state-based funding schemes.

Department of Veterans Affairs / Defence Force (DVA):

If you were serving in the military forces and lost a limb or limbs as a result of your job, funding for your prosthesis will be covered by DVA.

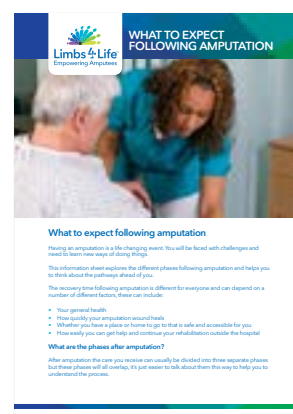
Insurance funding:

If your limb loss was as a result of a motor vehicle accident or workplace accident, you will receive financial support via the insurance company or transport scheme in your state or territory.

If you are unsure of which funding source relates to your circumstance, speak to your healthcare provider for more information.

Contact Limbs 4 Life if you would like more information about how we can help you. If you would like to receive regular updates, subscriptions are free.

- A Practical Guide for Amputees
- Amplified Magazine
- Fact sheets



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Making a real
difference together



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