



THE MIND REWIRE

The Delay Map

*Why your gut flares two days after
the thing that actually caused it*

A 7-day tracker · 2 minutes a day

A FREE TOOL · [THEMINDREWIRE.COM](https://themindrewire.com)

START HERE

Your symptoms are real

Nothing in this guide says otherwise. This is not medical advice and it is not a diagnosis. It is a way of **noticing a pattern** that is very easy to miss.

SEE A DOCTOR FIRST — AND KEEP SEEING THEM

Some symptoms need investigating, not journaling: blood in your stool, unexplained weight loss, persistent vomiting, difficulty swallowing, fever alongside gut symptoms, symptoms that wake you from sleep, anaemia, or anything that is steadily getting worse.

This tool is for people who have already been checked and told everything came back normal.

The problem this solves

Most people with ongoing gut symptoms describe them the same way: **random**.

They arrive without warning. There is no reliable pattern. Which means you can never fully relax, because the next one could be tomorrow or an hour from now — and that bracing is itself part of the loop.

Here is the thing almost nobody is told:

Gut symptoms often lag their trigger by 12 to 48 hours.

That delay is the single biggest reason symptoms look random when they aren't. You had a difficult conversation on Monday. You felt fine. You got hit on Wednesday — so you blamed Wednesday's lunch.

You cannot see a two-day delay while it is happening. You can only see it on paper, afterwards. **That is all this tool does.**

Why food diaries miss it

Food gets blamed for a great deal it did not do, for one specific reason: **eating is the most memorable thing you do before a flare**. It collects the blame that belongs elsewhere.

THE GIVEAWAY QUESTION

Is there a food that hurts you sometimes, but not always?

If the same meal is fine on holiday and agony on a Tuesday before a hard meeting, that food is not the whole cause. Something is changing how *sensitive* you are to it.

A food diary has no column for what was happening in your life. So the real trigger never gets written down, and the pattern stays invisible no matter how carefully you track.

Three small steps

The whole method is two pages of writing. You do not need to journal, and you do not need to be tidy about it. One line a day is enough.

WHAT YOU ARE GOING TO DO

- 1 Fill in the log for seven evenings.** Page 4. Takes about two minutes. Score your worst gut pain out of 10, and write one line about what your day was actually like.
- 2 On day 8, fill in the map.** Page 5. You look back at your bad days and write down what was happening in the *two days before* each one.
- 3 Start the breathing practice today.** Page 6. Ninety seconds before meals. You do not need to wait for the seven days to finish.

What to write in the log

The third column is the one that matters, and it is the one a food diary does not have. You are not recording what you ate. You are recording **what your day asked of you**.

- Who you were around — and who you had to be careful around
- What you had to do that you were not looking forward to
- Anything tense, rushed, unresolved, or held in
- Also the good stretches: a genuinely easy day is information too

KEEP IT HONEST, NOT NEAT

“Dreaded the call all morning. It went fine.” is a perfect entry. “Stress 6/10” is not — in three weeks it will mean nothing to you.

Fill it in each evening rather than the next morning. A day is much harder to remember accurately once you have slept.

PRINT TIP

Print pages 4 and 5 and keep them somewhere you will see them — beside the bed works best. If you would rather not print, copy the three columns into your phone's notes app. The tool is the columns, not the paper.

Your seven-day log

One line each evening. Two minutes. Do not skip a day because nothing happened — the calm days are half of the pattern.

DAY	DATE	WORST GUT PAIN 0 = none, 10 = severe	WHAT WAS HAPPENING TODAY Who you were around, what you had to do, anything tense
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			

When you have seven days, put a circle around every day you scored **6 or higher**. Those are your flare days. Then turn the page.

The Delay Map

Take each day you circled. Look at the **two days before it** in your log, and write what was happening then. Not what you ate — what was *happening*.

FLARE DAY _____

The day before — what was happening?

Two days before — what was happening?

FLARE DAY _____

The day before — what was happening?

Two days before — what was happening?

FLARE DAY _____

The day before — what was happening?

Two days before — what was happening?

Now read those lines back. Is anything repeating? A person, a place, a kind of demand, a time of week?

Finish this sentence with what you actually see — not what you expected to see.

“My gut tends to flare about _____ hours after _____.”

That sentence is your working idea. It does not have to be right yet. It has to be **written down**, so you can test it instead of guessing.

READING YOUR MAP

What people usually find

Almost everyone lands on one of three results. All three are useful.

A clear repeating trigger

Now you know what to work on — and you can see it coming instead of being ambushed by it. That alone takes a surprising amount of the fear out.

A pattern around *transitions*, not events

The end of the working day. The first quiet evening after an intense stretch. Sunday. This one is very common and it confuses people, because it means symptoms arrive when the pressure **lifts**, not while it lasts. That is a real physical effect, not a failure of nerve.

Nothing obvious yet

Some patterns need three or four weeks of notes before they surface. Keep going. This is not failure — and a written log is genuinely useful to take to your doctor.

START TODAY

The one practice worth starting now

Whatever your map ends up showing, this is the highest-return thing in the whole method — and it takes ninety seconds.

4

BREATHE IN

Through the nose,
for a count of four

8

BREATHE OUT

Through the mouth, slowly,
for a count of eight

Repeat **six times, before every meal.**

THE OUT-BREATH MUST BE LONGER THAN THE IN-BREATH

That is the entire mechanism. Your vagus nerve — the main line between brain and gut — is more active on the out-breath. Lengthening it is a direct physical input to the system that runs digestion. This is not a metaphor; it is plumbing. Digestion works properly in a settled state; eating while braced means eating with your digestion partly switched off.

WHERE THIS COMES FROM

You are not imagining it

This is one exercise from **The Mind-Gut Reset Workbook** — a four-week programme working the nervous-system side of gut symptoms, *alongside* medical care rather than instead of it.

The approach is not fringe.

WHAT THE GUIDELINES ACTUALLY SAY

Gut-directed therapy appears in current European and North American gastroenterology guidelines as a recommended second-line treatment for IBS. A 2025 meta-analysis found every included study favoured it over its comparator. Controlled trials report meaningful improvement in roughly **50–70%** of people.

Mainstream medicine does not reject the idea that the mind affects the gut. It endorses it. It just does a poor job of explaining it inside a ten-minute appointment.

*If your tests came back normal, that was not the end of the story.
It was the start of a different one.*

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