

Health Literacy

Health, Illness and Disease Vocabulary

pain

feeling in your body when you have been hurt or when you are ill, sick

- *Suddenly she felt a sharp **pain** in her neck, shoulder, waist, arm, leg, stomach.*
- *Take an aspirin to relieve the **pain**.*

ache

continuous pain; feel a continuous pain

- *I can't sleep because my head **aches** too bad.*
- *I have a terrible **headache, backache, stomach-ache**.*

ill

suffering from an illness or disease; not feeling well; sick

- *My elder sister is seriously **ill** in St John's hospital.*
- *The children started to feel **ill** an hour after the meal.*

sick

physically or mentally ill; wanting to vomit

- *I feel very **sick**, I don't think I can work today.*
- *Be careful with the cake, too much of it can make you **sick**.*

sore

painful (and often red) because of infection or because a muscle has been used too much

- *I have a **sore** throat, I mustn't take that cold drink.*
- *She says her stomach is still **sore** after the operation.*
- *His feet were **sore** after the bicycle trip.*

illness

the state of being physically or mentally ill

- *Our secretary missed a lot of work through **illness** last month.*
- *Flu can be a serious **illness** if you aren't careful enough.*

disease

serious illness, often caused by infection

*Peter's uncle suffers from a rare blood **disease**.*

*A fatty diet increases the risk of heart **disease**.*

- *The government is planning further health measures to prevent the spread of **disease**.*

heal

become healthy again; make something, somebody healthy again, make somebody feel happy again

- *As I see it will take a long time for your wounds to **heal**.*
- *This ointment will help to **heal** your scratches.*
- *The tea you made really **healed** me.*

cure

make somebody or something healthy again after an illness; make an illness go away

- *He was seriously ill for a long time, but the doctor **cured** him at last.*
- *Scarlet fever is a serious illness, but it can be **cured** fairly fast.*

cure

medicine or medical treatment that cures an illness; the act of curing or the process of being cured

- *There is no known **cure** for this illness but it can be treated.*
- *I'm afraid you must be taken to hospital for the **cure**.*

treat

give medical care or attention to somebody or something; deal with something or somebody

- *I was **treated** for flu, but later I was diagnosed with pneumonia.*
- *This illness is usually **treated** with antibiotics and a strict diet..*

treatment

(the way or process of) curing an illness or injury or making somebody look and feel good; the way of dealing with something or somebody

- *Doctors apply various **treatments** for this illness.*
- *My sister goes to a wellness center to receive beauty **treatments**.*

diagnose

define what an illness or the cause of a problem is

*The blood test is used to **diagnose** all kinds of diseases.*

*She was **diagnosed** (as) (a) diabetic in her early childhood.*

diagnosis

medical description of an illness or condition

*The doctors didn't share every detail of the **diagnosis** with the patient's family.*

- *We had to wait a lot for the exact **diagnosis** after the examination.*

injury

harm done to the body, for example in an accident

- *They were lucky to escape the fight without serious **injuries**.*
- *There were only minor **injuries** in the crash.*

injure

harm somebody or yourself physically, especially in an accident, receive/suffer an injury

- *He **injured** his finger when he was cutting the meat.*
- *Nobody was killed in the accident, but two people were seriously **injured**.*

wound

an injury to part of the body, especially one in which a hole is made in the skin

- *He died from the **wounds** that he had received in the crash.*
- *He was taken to hospital although his **wounds** didn't seem too serious.*

cut

a wound caused by something sharp

- *He had such a deep **cut** on his arm that he was taken to hospital.*
- *The victim had several **cuts** on his chest, still he survived.*

bruise

a blue, brown or purple mark on the skin after somebody has fallen

- *He was covered in **bruises** at the end of the football match.*
- *The man came to the surgery with a huge **bruise** over his eye.*

scratch

rub your skin with your nails, usually because it's itching; a mark or a small cut or injury made by scratching

- *The cat continuously **scratched** itself behind the ear.*
- *She had a long **scratch** on her arm when she came out of the rose garden.*

infection

illness caused by bacteria or a virus; the act or process of causing or getting a disease

- *Wash your hands carefully to decrease the risk of **infection**.*
- *She almost died from blood **infection**.*

inflammation

a condition when a part of the body becomes red, sore and swollen because of infection or injury

- *My knee was twice the size of the other one due to the **inflammation**.*
- *You had better not eat fatty food so soon after your stomach **inflammation**.*

symptom

a change in your body or mind that shows that you are not healthy

- *You don't necessarily need a doctor with **symptoms** like a headache or sore throat.*

- *Depression can cause physical **symptoms**, too.*

temperature

the measurement of how hot your body is

- *have a **temperature** – when your **temperature** is higher than normal due to illness*
- *I feel so weak, I think I have a **temperature**.*
- *She had such a high **temperature** that she was immediately taken to hospital.*

fever

a medical condition in which someone has a temperature that is higher than normal; a particular type of disease with high temperature

- *Did you take aspirin to reduce the **fever**?*
- *Our daughter has been diagnosed with scarlet **fever**.*

cold

illness affecting the nose and/or throat, making you cough and/or sneeze

- *I think I caught a **cold** on the ice rink yesterday.*
- *She can't come to school, she's in bed with a **cold**.*

flu

a very bad cold, an infectious disease with fever, pains and weakness

- *Please don't visit us this week, the whole family has the **flu**.*
- *If you're not careful enough and you don't take antibiotics, you may even die from the **flu**.*

vomit

discharge stomach contents through the mouth

- *There must have been something wrong with the food as both children **vomited** shortly after the meal.*
- *I'm afraid I'm pregnant; I **vomit** after getting up every morning.*

medicine

a substance that you drink or swallow so as to cure an illness

- *You look so pale. Haven't you taken your **medicine** this morning?*
- *The doctor prescribed three kinds of **medicine** for me.*

antibiotics

medicine that kills bacteria and cures infections

- *My mum's throat infection went away after she started the **antibiotics**.*
- *Hot tea won't be enough to cure your flu, I think you also need **antibiotics**.*

pain killer

kind of medicine that takes away some or all of the discomfort of an illness or injury

- *I had such a horrible headache last night that I took two **pain killers**.*
- *She says she doesn't think it's a good idea to take **pain killers** too often.*

blood pressure

the rate at which blood flows through the body

- *Drink some coffee if you feel your **blood pressure** is too low.*
- *High **blood pressure** increases the risk of having a heart attack.*

pulse

the regular beat of blood as it is sent around the body

- *The doctor started the examination with taking my **pulse** and blood pressure.*
- *He has such a weak **pulse** that it's hard to feel.*

x-ray

a photograph of a somebody's bones and organs

- *They took **x-rays** of my knee to make sure it wasn't broken.*
- *The doctor says that the **x-ray** has proved his suspicion of cancer, but I don't believe him.*

patient

a person staying in a hospital or medical facility

- *The doctor examined the **patient** very carefully but he didn't find any disorder.*
- *There were so many **patients** in the doctor's surgery that I didn't wait and I went home.*

surgery

a place where a doctor or dentist sees patients; medical treatment of injuries or diseases involving cutting open somebody's body

- *I wanted to see a doctor but the **surgery** was closed.*
- *I hope they can cure me with medicine and I don't need undergo **surgery**.*

operation

cutting open a part of somebody's body in order to remove or cure a part

- *The **operation** was successful but the patient died.*
- *The doctor says I can hardly escape an **operation**.*

operate on somebody (for something)

cut open a part of somebody's body in order to remove or cure a part

- *He soon recovered after he was **operated on for** appendicitis.*

- *The doctor ordered to take my brother to hospital and they will **operate on him** tomorrow.*

operating theatre

a room in a hospital used for medical operations

- *The patient died on the way to the **operating theatre**.*
- *She felt nervous as she looked round the **operating theatre**.*

pharmacy

a shop where medicine is sold

- *The doctor suggested to go to the pharmacy for the medicine straight from the surgery.*
- *This syrup is also sold in the supermarket, so you don't need to go to the pharmacy..*

prescription

an official piece of paper filled out by a doctor with which you can get medicine from a chemist's shop

- *Unfortunately, the doctor forgot to sign the **prescription** and so the chemist refused to give me the medicine.*
- *Keep this **prescription** even though you don't need the medicine now; you may need it later.*

Illness expressions

- feel ill, sick
- have a temperature
- have a pain in your back, chest, waist, arm, shoulder
- have a headache
- feel weak
- feel dizzy
- suffer from stomach cramps
- have a black eye
- have a swollen, sprained ankle, wrist, foot
- have a lump
- have a broken leg
- have a fracture
- burn, cut a finger
- sprain an ankle
- be allergic to antibiotics

- produce an allergic reaction
- come down with a cold
- be in bed with a cold
- have a heart attack, stroke
- suffer from asthma, malnutrition, diabetes
- fight cancer, depression, addiction, alcoholism
- (go to) see a doctor
- examine a patient
- take, feel your pulse
- take, measure your temperature
- diagnose an illness, disease
- diagnose a condition, disorder
- prescribe medicine
- make up a prescription
- take someone to hospital
- undergo an examination, operation
- dress a wound
- a bandaged arm, leg
- put on a plaster
- give an injection
- have a blood test
- prevent the spread of disease
- enhance, build immunity to a disease

Medical Specialists List

Allergist: **treats food and environmental allergies**

Anesthesiologist: **provides pain prevention during surgery**

Cardiologist: **heart specialist**

Dentist: **tooth specialist**

Dermatologist: **skin specialist**

Gynecologist: **specializes in women's needs**

Midwife: **helps women deliver babies**

Neurologist: **brain specialist**

Oncologist: **tumor specialist**

Ophthalmologist: **deals with eye diseases**

Pediatrician: **treats babies and children**

Physical therapist: **specializes in the body's movement**

Psychiatrist: **mental health specialist**

Radiologist: **specializes in imaging tests (x-ray, etc.)**

Common Illnesses and Diseases in English

- flu
- cold
- diarrhea
- pneumonia
- mumps
- measles
- chickenpox
- scarlet fever
- tonsillitis
- bronchitis
- indigestion
- ulcer
- appendicitis
- hepatitis
- heart attack
- heart disease
- stroke
- arthritis
- asthma
- lung cancer
- diabetes
- amnesia
- nervous breakdown

Medicine, Medical Equipment and Tools

- pill
- tablet
- capsule
- syrup
- ointment
- cream
- eye drops
- injection
- tranquilizer
- pain-killer
- antiseptic

- antifebrile
- dressing
- bandage
- cast
- brace
- gauze
- plaster
- elastic tape
- thermometer
- stethoscope
- syringe, forceps, scissors, oxygen mask, test tube, vial, IV bag, blood pressure monitor, crutches, wheelchair

What to say at the doctor?

Going to Doctor

- *I think you should see a doctor.*
- *You look very pale. Shall I call the ambulance?*
- *I'm ill. I don't feel well. I need a doctor. I must see a doctor.*
- *Doctor Bulb's surgery hours are from 9 to 12 every morning.*
- *Where do I find the GP's office? (general practitioner – a doctor who is trained in general medicine working in the local community)*
- *What are the consulting hours of the ENT (ear, nose and throat) specialist?*
- *Do I have to make an appointment?*

Doctor's Questions and Answers to Patient

- *What's the matter? Where's the pain? What do you complain of?*
- *Have you taken your temperature?*
- *For how long have you been feeling ill?*
- *Take your clothes off. I'll examine you. Let me take your pulse, please.*
- *I'll measure your blood pressure.*
- *Your blood pressure is rather high. Your blood pressure is too low.*
- *Let me sound your back. Take a deep breath. I'll check your lungs.*
- *Can I have a look? Where does it hurt?*
- *Does it hurt here? Breathe out slowly.*
- *Show me your tongue. Poke out your tongue.*
- *Have you got any other symptoms?*
- *What infectious diseases have you had?*

- *What have you eaten/drunk?*
- *Have you been injured?*
- *Don't worry. There's no serious problem.*
- *I don't think it's too serious.*
- *You've got to be vaccinated against tetanus.*
- *You must stay in bed and take this medicine three times a day, after meals.*
- *I'll dress the wound and put a plaster on your arm.*
- *You must follow a diet, you need to rest and you shouldn't worry.*
- *Your test results have come in. The blood test came back negative.*
- *The biopsy shows a tumor.*
- *You should consult a specialist.*
- *We'll know more in a few days.*
- *It would be better if you went to hospital.*
- *I think you'll have to stay in hospital for a week.*
- *Hopefully, there won't be any complications.*
- *I don't think you need chemotherapy.*
- *I'll give you a prescription. Take this medicine three times a day / after meals / an hour before lunch.*
- *You'll soon be well again.*
- *Come back next week if you don't feel better.*

Patient Symptoms

- *I've got a high temperature.*
- *I feel really rough. I'm shattered/exhausted.*
- *Could you check my blood pressure? I've got high blood pressure.*
- *There's a sharp pain here. I've got a pain in my limbs.*
- *I feel dizzy. I've got a kidney problem. I've lost weight.*
- *I always feel bad after meals. I've got a stomach ache.*
- *I've got a splitting headache. I often have nosebleeds.*
- *I have diarrhea. I've lost my appetite.*
- *I've got circulation problems. I sweat all night.*
- *My ears are buzzing. I've got an upset stomach.*
- *I've sprained my wrist/ankle. My hand/foot is badly swollen.*
- *I think I've pulled a muscle in my leg/arm.*
- *I've had scarlet fever, mumps, the measles.*
- *Is it something serious? Is this a common problem at my age?*

- *When will the tests results come in? Are you going to run more tests?*
- *Do I have to be operated on? Will I need surgery?*
- *How long do I have to stay in hospital?*
- *I hope there won't be any complications.*
- *Could you prescribe some medicine for me?*
- *How often should I take this medicine?*
- *Shall I come back next week if I don't get better?*

At the dentist's

- *I've got a pain in my back teeth and my gum is bleeding.*
- *I've lost a filling. My denture's broken.*
- *Does the tooth have to be extracted or can you replace the filling?*

At the pharmacy

- *Would you make up this prescription for me?*
- *Shake well before use. Not to be taken orally.*
- *Can I get a packet of vitamin tablets?*