

Lessons 11–12 Doctor, doctor

- In groups of three, try to remember to the meanings of these words.

symptoms illness medication obesity treatment



1 **Reporter** We all feel ill every once and a while, and we are bound to get sick occasionally! Sometimes we get better on our own – we remember what our grandmother told us to do when we had a cold or we just go the pharmacy to buy over the counter medication. So when should we go to the doctor?

2 In our interview, we talk to Dr Hamad, a family doctor, who's going to explain to us the best ways to deal with the common illnesses that we face. Dr Hamad, what are the first steps we should take regarding illnesses?

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3 **Dr Hamad** Well, the first step is actually before you get ill. It's prevention. Of course different illnesses and diseases can be prevented in different ways, but there are general guidelines that we can follow to avoid some issues. Let's start with hygiene habits: by routinely washing your hands every time you go home you are less likely to catch colds. It has become easier to protect yourself, nowadays. Many supermarkets have free wipes and disinfectant soap at the door.

and disinfectant soap at the door. Use them to clean your trolley and you've already protected yourself from many germs.

4 People can also prevent health issues by adjusting their lifestyles. Food and exercise habits have a big influence on what chronic

diseases we get. You don't need to be an Olympic athlete – if you exercise 15–20 minutes a day, three days a week, you've already given your heart and body the exercise it needs. Taking the stairs or parking your car a bit further away makes a difference. Adding more vegetables and fruit in your diet also helps, as you'll get full faster with fewer calories. By making these small changes, you are more likely to avoid many diseases like diabetes, obesity and high cholesterol levels.

Rep Thank you Doctor, those are great tips. What about when we

get sick? What should we do?

6 **Dr H** It really depends on what symptoms you have, but a general recommendation I would give is to try to cure it at home using natural ingredients. Not everything needs medication – sometimes home remedies can be better. If you have a sore throat, the best thing you can do is have a spoon of honey when you wake up and before sleeping. But home remedies aren't only for colds and flu. We're bound to have physical injuries at some point in our lives and, in these cases, sometimes a pack of ice on the area, or a very hot bath, is enough.

7 **Rep** Does that mean we should always avoid taking medication?

Dr H No, we don't need to avoid medication, but if there are natural ways you can use to cure something, you should try them first because medications have been tried and tested by professionals to help us feel better when we need them.

However, you shouldn't let yourself suffer in pain if the remedy isn't working, and of course if you visit the doctor and he/she says that you must take a certain medication, then it's best to go with what he/she says. Although taking medicine helps with symptoms, it can have side effects such as headaches and

with symptoms, it can have side effects such as headaches and nausea. It's important to always read the instructions leaflet before you take medication in case you have an allergy to it. Also, if you take medicine for every small ache or pain then your body could get used to it and it won't have the same effect when you really need it.

Rep Thank you Dr Hamad, you've really provided us with some useful information today. Can you give one last piece of advice?

Dr H Take care of your body and your health. If you think about what you eat, and how you live, you can be healthier and happier. Everybody gets ill, but if we listen to our body, it can be much less often.

READING TASK

Read the interview and ask the questions. Choose the correct answer.

1. What is the reading about? (see end of para 2)
 - a. A Visit to the Doctor
 - b. Taking medication when sick
 - c. How to manage common illnesses

2. Doctor Hamad says that the first step to take when you feel ill is to: (see para 3)
 - a. Take medication
 - b. Prevention (to look after yourself so you don't become ill)
 - c. To stay at home and rest

3. To stop or reduce chances of catching a cold, Dr Hamad says: (see para 3)
 - a. Look after your hygiene (E.g. Wash your hands routinely)
 - b. Get plenty of rest at home
 - c. Take medication

4. Another way to prevent health issues according to Dr Hamad is to: (see para 4)
 - a. Get plenty of rest at home
 - b. Visit the doctor routinely
 - c. Taking exercise 3 days a week and adding fruit and vegetables to your diet

5. What final tip does Dr Hamad give about becoming healthier? (see para 10)
 - a. Take medication
 - b. Visit the doctor routinely
 - c. Think about what you eat (diet) and how you live (lifestyle)