



# 6 Symptoms

## LANGUAGE

### 1 Grammar

Choose the correct option to complete the sentences.

- 1 Who *prescribed* you / *did prescribe* you / *do prescribe* you that medication?
- 2 *Do you can* / *Can you* / *You can* move your fingers?
- 3 Has he *been* / *was* / *is* like this for a long time?
- 4 *Is the swelling* / *The swelling is* / *Do the swelling* going down?
- 5 You *won't* try to move, *will you* / *won't you* / *do you*?
- 6 *How long are you* / *How long have you been* / *What are you* waiting for your appointment?
- 7 The pain is in your arm, *hasn't* / *is* / *isn't* it?
- 8 *Could you to tell* / *Could you tell* / *Tell me* where it hurts?

### 2 Key words from the unit

Complete the sentences with the words from the list.

- 1 She suffered \_\_\_\_\_ and vomiting.
- 2 \_\_\_\_\_ is an external symptom.
- 3 She had a \_\_\_\_\_ abdomen.
- 4 \_\_\_\_\_ are a typical symptom of chicken pox.
- 5 A deep cut needs \_\_\_\_\_ to heal properly.
- 6 A \_\_\_\_\_ can cause itching.
- 7 He found a \_\_\_\_\_ above his ankle.
- 8 Her extreme \_\_\_\_\_ are difficult to live with.

stitches  
nausea  
mood swings  
rash  
bruising  
swollen  
lump  
spots

## READING AND VOCABULARY

Signs and symptoms are the tools for making a diagnosis, but what is the difference between the two?

The *signs* of an illness are the things that a doctor or nurse can see and measure. Signs are things like spots and bleeding. Temperature, heart rate, blood pressure and respiration rate are all signs because you can measure them. *Symptoms* are the things which a patient experiences, but others can't always see. Dizziness and nausea are examples of symptoms.

The symptoms which make a patient seek medical help in the first place are called the presenting symptoms. Medics describe them in terms of being either *strong*, *mild* or *weak*. Sometimes the symptoms of serious illnesses like cancer and diabetes are weak. They stay weak for a long time and the illness remains undiagnosed.

Many illnesses have the same symptoms. These symptoms are called *non-specific*. Fatigue is an example of this. It's a symptom of many kinds of illness, both chronic and acute, and of both physical and mental disorders.

Doctors ask patients about the onset of the symptoms, what they feel like, what relieves them and what makes them worse. The more detail they have, the faster they can make a diagnosis.



### 3 Comprehension

Decide whether these statements are true (T) or false (F) according to the text.

- 1 You need signs and symptoms for a diagnosis. \_\_\_\_\_
- 2 You can't see symptoms. \_\_\_\_\_
- 3 Patients presenting symptoms are either strong, mild or weak. \_\_\_\_\_
- 4 Killer diseases can have weak symptoms. \_\_\_\_\_
- 5 Non-specific symptoms help a lot with diagnosis. \_\_\_\_\_
- 6 Too much information slows up diagnosis. \_\_\_\_\_

### 4 Vocabulary

A nurse wants to know about symptoms and asks the questions a–g.

Write the number of the correct symptom 1–7 after each question.

The first is done for you.

- 1 diarrhoea
- 2 spots
- 3 **numbness**
- 4 fever
- 5 swelling
- 6 nausea
- 7 dizziness

- a Can you feel this? 3
- b Do you have them on your back too? \_\_\_\_\_
- c How high is it? \_\_\_\_\_
- d When you have an attack, do you fall over? \_\_\_\_\_
- e Was there any blood in it? \_\_\_\_\_
- f Do you still feel sick? \_\_\_\_\_
- g How long has it been this big? \_\_\_\_\_

### 5 Further vocabulary practice

Underline the correct words in italics to complete the sentences.

The first one is done for you.

- 1 I have aches and pains / in pain / painful all over my body.
- 2 My pulse is up to 150 per minute and I feel dizzy / dizziness / to be dizzy.
- 3 I've got an itchy / itchiness / itch rash on the back of my hand.
- 4 My leg is cut and bruising / bruised / bruise from the accident.
- 5 He feels nauseous / nausea / nauseating and needs to sit down.
- 6 She has a small lump / lumpy / lumps on her breast.
- 7 Her spine is deform / deformed / deformity.



## WRITING

## 6 Writing a symptom report

Read the example report about the fatal symptoms of one patient.  
Use the notes in the box to write a similar report about a patient with symptoms of an angina attack.

## Example Report

The victim was a 60-year-old man. Two days ago he complained of a bad cough and said he felt nauseous. Yesterday his ankles and feet were swollen and he told his wife that his fingers were numb. At two o'clock in the afternoon he felt dizzy, fell over and lost consciousness. He died of heart failure in the ambulance.

## NOTES

Patient: 55-year-old woman

Admitted to hospital: Monday 13<sup>th</sup> June 18.35

Presenting symptoms: burning pain in the centre of chest, nausea, numbness in fingers

**Diagnosis:** angina attack

**Treatment:** rest & glyceryl trinitrate

**Follow-up:** Tuesday 11:00 : No symptoms, vital signs normal

14.00: Discharged