

**UNIVERSITY OF BASRAH  
AL-ZAHRA COLLEGE OF MEDICINE  
FIRST STAGE**

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# Unit One: Health and Illness

- ❖ **Health** is the state of the body.
- ❖ **Good health** means you are well and have no illness (disease)
- ❖ If you are **Healthy** means you are well and can resist illness
- ❖ If you are **fit**, you are well and strong

# Asking about health


When doctors want to know about a patient's usual health, they ask questions such as:

- **What is your general health like?**
- **How is your health, generally?**

# Sickness

- **Sickness** has a similar meaning to illness.
- It is used in the names of specific diseases, e.g. **sleeping sickness** and **travel sickness**.
- Patients also talk about sickness when they mean nausea and vomiting.
- The combinations of sickness and diarrhoea means vomiting and diarrhoea.

<b>Patient says</b>	<b>Possible meanings</b>
I was sick this morning.	I was ill this morning.
	I felt unwell this morning.
	I vomited this morning.
I feel sick.	I feel ill.
	I feel unwell.
	I am nauseous.
	I feel the need to vomit.

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- **Ill** means (unhealthy, unfit, unwell, not well, poorly, in poor health)
  - **Not ill** means ( healthy, fit, well, very well, in good health)

# Recovery

- When patients return to normal health after illness, they have **recovered**.

We can say:

The patient made a	good	Recovery.
	full	
	complete	

If a patient's health is in the process of returning to normal, the patient is improving. The opposite is deteriorating. We can also say that the patient's condition improved or deteriorated.

In speech, the verb **get** is often used to talk about change, e.g. **He got over the illness very quickly.**

get	Over (an illness)	= to recover
	Better	=to improve
	worse	= to deteriorate



- If a patient is better, but then gets worse again, the patient has **relapsed**.
- Another word for improvement, especially in recurring conditions such as cancer, is **remission**, e.g.
  - Two years later, she remains in complete remission.

1.1 Complete the table with words from A and B opposite. The first one has been done for you.

<b>Noun</b>	<b>Adjective</b>
fitness	fit
health	
illness	
sickness	

1.2 Make word combinations using a word from each box. Look at B and C opposite to help you.

complete  
feel  
get  
poor  
travel

sickness  
health  
remission  
sick  
over

1.3 Complete the conversation. Look at B opposite to help you.

Doctor: How are you feeling today?

Patient: Not very (1) .....

Doctor: How long have you been feeling (2) .....

Patient: About a week.

Doctor: What is your (3) ..... like normally?

Patient: Very good. I'm usually quite (4) ..... and (5) .....

Doctor: What is the problem now?

Patient: It's my stomach.

Doctor: Do you feel (6) .....

Patient: Yes.

Doctor: Have you actually been (7) .....

Patient: No.

Doctor: Have you had any serious (8) ..... in the past?

Patient: No, none at all.

1.4 Choose the correct word to complete each sentence. Look at B and C opposite to help you.

- 1 Her condition ..... (deteriorated/improved) and she died.
- 2 He ..... (relapsed/recovered) and was allowed to go home from hospital.
- 3 The cause of sleeping ..... (illness/sickness) was discovered in 1901.
- 4 The patient made a full ..... (remission/recovery).
- 5 I have been in ..... (poor/good) health for months and feel very fit.
- 6 It was a month before I ..... (got over / got better) the illness.
- 7 He seems to be rather ..... (unhealthy/unwell) – his diet is bad and he never exercises.

*Over to you*



What advice do you give people for keeping fit and well?

# Parts of the Body

- Most external parts of the body have ordinary English names as well as anatomical names. Ordinary names are often used even by doctors when they talk to each other. There are certain exceptions used between brackets on page 12.

- **Limb** means arm (upper limb) or leg (lower limb). The trunk is the body excluding the head and the limbs.
- When patients speak about their problem they often refer to a part of the body, e.g.
  - I am having trouble with my hip/ shoulder/ knee.
- The doctor often needs to ask about a part of the body, e.g.
  - Do you get any pain in the/ your chest/ stomach/ back.

# Describing Radiation of Pain

- Pain may radiates from a part of the body to other parts, e.g.
- It starts in the back. Then it seems to go into the right buttock and down the back of the right thigh to the knee. (a patient telling the doctor about his back pain and the parts of the body it radiates to)

- 2.1 Write the ordinary English words for the corresponding anatomical terms in the table using your medical knowledge. Look at A opposite to help you.

Anatomical term	Common word
abdomen	
axilla	
carpus	
coxa	
cubitus	
mamma	
nates	
patella	

- 2.2 Complete the sentences using ordinary English words. Look at A and C opposite to help you.

a A male patient describing angina pectoris:

It's like a tightness across my (1)....., and it goes up  
(2)..... my (3)..... and into my left  
(4)..... and (5)..... the left (6).....



b A male patient describing renal colic:

It starts (1) ..... the loin and goes into the  
(2) ..... and (3) ..... into the testicle.

2.3 Complete the sentences. Look at A opposite to help you.

Anatomical term

Patient's statement

1 inguinal swelling

I've got a lump in the .....

2 abdominal pain

My little boy's got a ..... ache.

3 periumbilical rash

I've got some spots around my .....

4 thoracic pain

I've got a pain in the middle of the .....

5 enlarged axillary node

There's a painful swelling in my .....

6 mandibular pain

I've got a pain in my .....

2.4 Complete the table with words from the box. The first one has been done for you.

abdomen	elbow	loin	wrist	thigh
knee	chest	arm	leg	finger

Trunk	Upper limb	Lower limb
abdomen		

*Over to you*



Make a list of the words from A opposite that you find it hard to remember or that you need most often. Try to learn at least one of them every day.

