

University of Basrah
Al-Zahra College of Medicine
First Class

Assist. Prof. Dr. Alaa Abdul-Imam Al-Riyahi
Subject: English
The Fifth Lecture

Presenting Complaints

- What are the personal details of a patient?
- How can you ask polite and gentle questions?
- How do you take the history of the presenting complaint?
- Tenses used in Presenting Complaints

The Personal details of a patient

Surname: Karlson

First name: Dave Ian **Sex:** M

Address: 3 Park View Mansions,
Castlefield Manchester M6 7 DE

Admission details: Duncan Ward at 2 p.m.
on 9 November 2008

Hospital No: 19733045

DOB: 7 9 53 **Telephone number:** 01664057001

Marital Status: Single **Occupation:** Postman

GP: Dr Jones

C/o: Pain in right arm

Now listen to the recording and check the information



Asking Short and Gentle Questions

- **Ask gentle questions to put the patient at ease. Use**

Can you tell me what + noun + verb?

Can you tell me what your surname/ family name is?

What's your surname/ family name?

- **Remove words to make questions shorter**

What's your first name? (Your first name?)

Have you any other names? ('And' Any other names?)

What do you do for a living? (Your job?)

Taking the History of the presenting complaint

When taking the history of the presenting complaint (HPC), you often ask about pain:

1. Where do you get the pain? (site)
2. Does the pain spread any where else? (radiation)
3. Does it wake you up at night? (severity)
4. Can you tell me what the pain is like? (character)
5. Can you describe the pain for me? (character)
6. How long have you had the pain? (duration)
7. Is there anything which makes it worse/ better? (exacerbation/ alleviation)
8. When did it start? (onset)
9. Is there anything which brings it on? (trigger)
10. Is the pain constant? (constancy)
11. Have you had the pain before? (previous episode)

Tenses in the Presenting Complaints

- Understanding the times patients are referring to when they speak is crucial to making a correct diagnosis.

The Present Simple

- **This tense is used to talk about:**

1. Something that is true at the moment of speaking:

I've got chest pain.

I feel better.

2. Something that happens on a regular basis around now:

I get these headaches in the morning.

2. A process

When I lean forward, the pain goes away.

The pain starts in my chest and moves up to my shoulder

The Present Continuous

- The tense is used to talk about:

1. Something that is happening at the moment of speaking:

His blood pressure is rising.

2. Something that is happening around now:

I am having chest pains.

3. Something that has been arranged for:

I am seeing a physiotherapist next Wednesday.

Present Perfect

- It is used to talk about something that begins in the past, and which either continues up to the present or is related to the present in some way:

My headaches have decreased.

Present Perfect Continuous

- This tense describes a progressive change in a situation up to now:

My headaches have been decreasing.

Past Simple

- It is used to talk about something that happens at a specific point in the past.
- It is very common to use the time expressions:

At 10.00, in the morning, yesterday, last week and ago, e.g.

Yesterday, the coughing became worse.



Wishing you
Good Luck!

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