

# 1 Health and illness

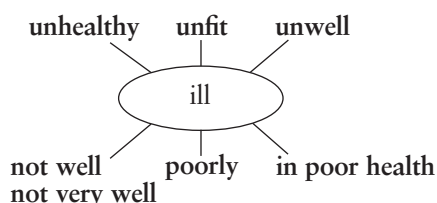
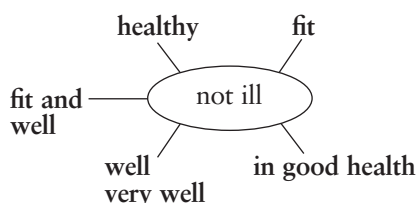
## A Asking about health

**Health** is the state of the body. When doctors want to know about a patient's usual health, they ask questions such as:

What is your **general health** like?

How's your health, generally?

If you are **in good health**, you are **well** and have no **illness** (disease). If you are **healthy** you are normally well and can resist illness. If you are **fit**, you are well and strong.



## B Sickness

**Sickness** has a similar meaning to illness. It is also used in the names of a few specific diseases, for example **sleeping sickness** and **travel sickness**. Patients also talk about sickness when they mean nausea and vomiting.

Patient says	Possible meanings
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.

The combination **sickness and diarrhoea** means vomiting and diarrhoea.

## C Recovery

When patients return to normal health after illness, they have **recovered**. We can also say:

The patient	made a	good full complete	recovery.
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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, we often use the verb **get** to talk about change:

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**.

He **got over** the illness very quickly.

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.

Noun	Adjective
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.

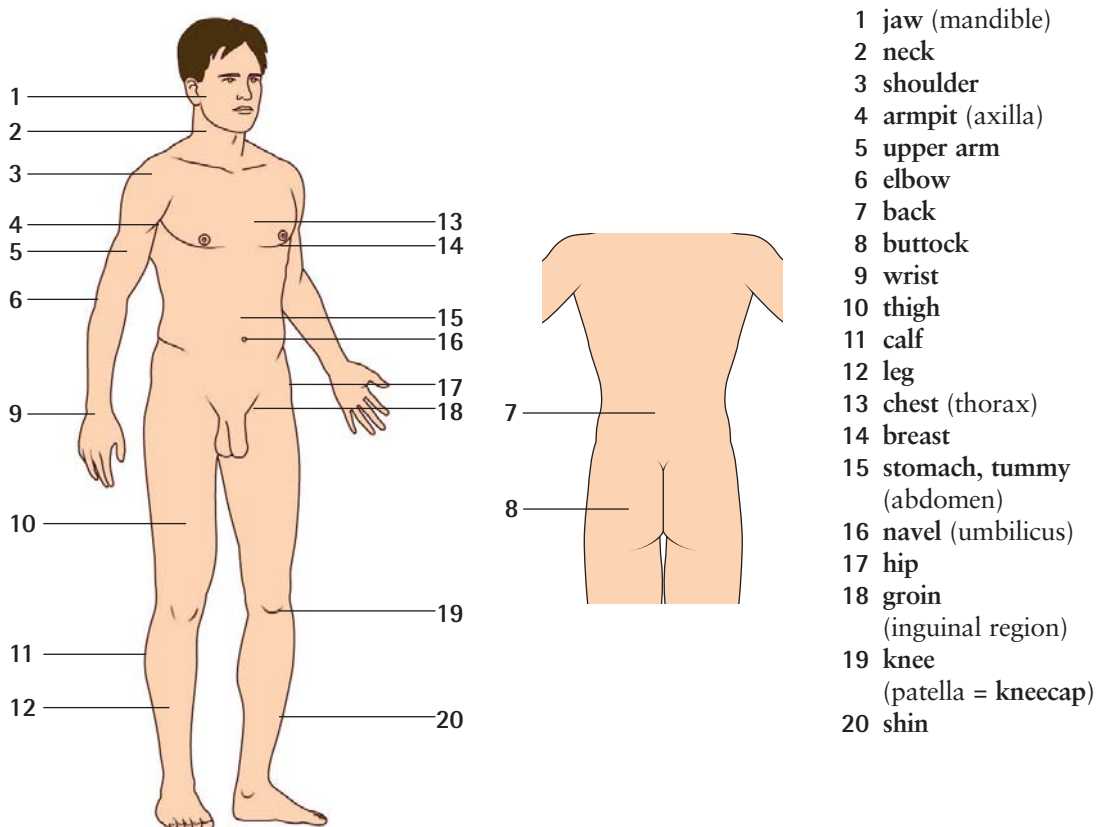
- Her condition ..... (deteriorated/improved) and she died.
- He ..... (relapsed/recovered) and was allowed to go home from hospital.
- The cause of sleeping ..... (illness/sickness) was discovered in 1901.
- The patient made a full ..... (remission/recovery).
- I have been in ..... (poor/good) health for months and feel very fit.
- It was a month before I ..... (got over / got better) the illness.
- 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?

## 2 Parts of the body 1

### A Parts of the body

Most external parts of the body have ordinary English names as well as anatomical names. Doctors normally use the English names, even when talking to each other. There are a few exceptions where doctors use the anatomical name; these are shown in brackets below.



**Limb** means arm (**upper limb**) or leg (**lower limb**). The **trunk** is the body excluding the head and limbs.

For a more detailed diagram showing parts of the body, see Appendix I on page 00.

### B Referring to parts of the body

When patients speak about their problem they often refer to a part of the body:

I'm **having trouble with my**

hip.  
shoulder.  
knee.

The doctor often needs to ask about a part of the body:

Do you get any **pain in**

**the  
your**

chest?  
stomach?  
back?

### C Describing radiation of pain

A patient is telling the doctor about his back pain and the parts of the body it radiates to.

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.

**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		

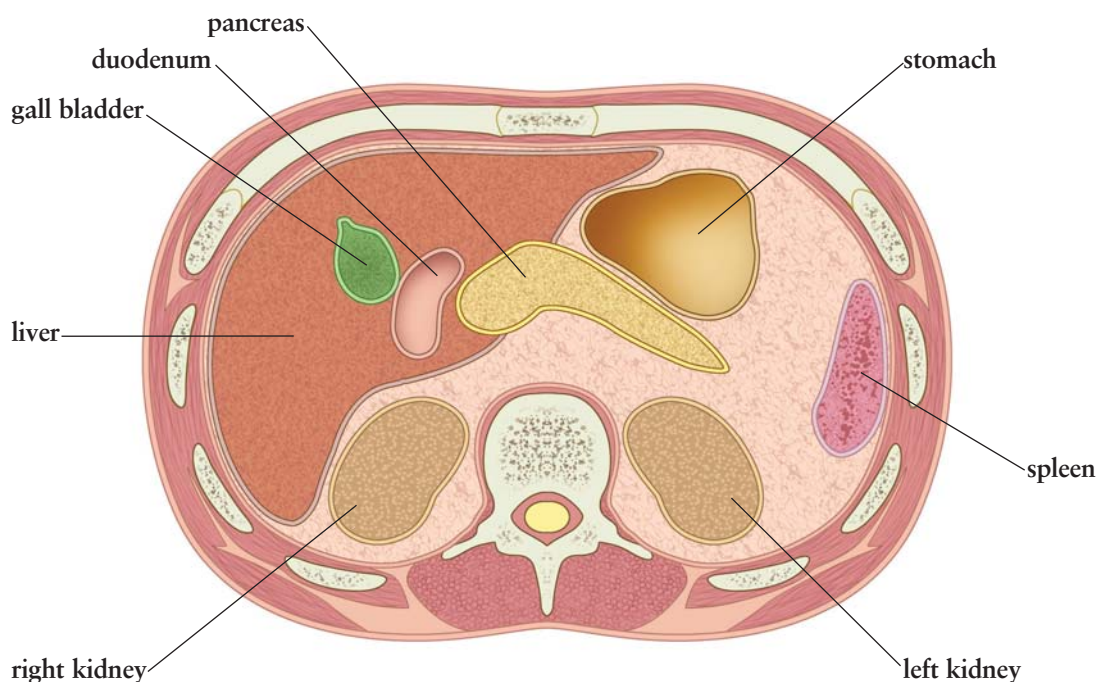
**Over to you** 

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.

## 3 Parts of the body 2

### A The abdomen

The main **organs** of the body have ordinary English names and doctors use these words. But when an adjective is needed they often use an anatomical word. For example, we can say **disease of the liver** or **hepatic disease**. Some abdominal organs, for example the pancreas, have no ordinary name.



When doctors talk about the main parts of the digestive system, they use the words **bowel** or **intestine**: the **small intestine** or the **small bowel**, the **large intestine** or the **large bowel**. When speaking to patients, doctors may refer to the anus and rectum as the **back passage**.

### B The chest

The chest (thorax) contains the organs of respiration and the **heart**. The main parts of the respiratory system are the **airways** and the **lungs**. The left lung is divided into two **lobes**, and the right into three. The airways consist of the larynx, the trachea (or **windpipe**), the right and left bronchus, and the **bronchioles**. The chest is separated from the abdomen by the **diaphragm**.

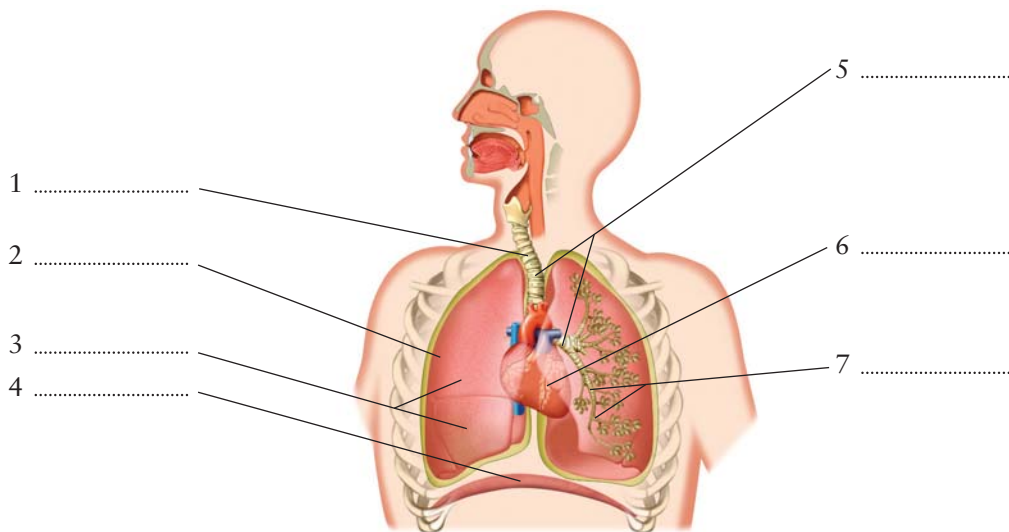
### C The pelvis

A doctor is explaining the function of the **bladder** to a patient.

The bladder is situated in the pelvis, as you know, and it is connected to each **kidney** by a long tube called the **ureter** – one on each side. The ureters carry the urine from the kidneys to the bladder, where it is stored until you decide to **empty your bladder**. When that happens, the urine passes down another tube, called the **urethra**, to the outside.

**3.1** Label the diagram using words from the box. Look at B opposite to help you.

diaphragm	lobes	windpipe	heart
lung	airways	bronchioles	




**3.2** Match the conditions (1–8) with the organs affected (a–h), using your medical knowledge.

- |                      |                |
|----------------------|----------------|
| 1 hepatitis          | a bladder      |
| 2 pneumonia          | b gall bladder |
| 3 nephritis          | c heart        |
| 4 gastric ulcer      | d kidney       |
| 5 cystitis           | e liver        |
| 6 angina pectoris    | f lung         |
| 7 cholecystitis      | g stomach      |
| 8 ulcerative colitis | h large bowel  |

**3.3** Complete the textbook extract. Look at A and C opposite to help you.

**Examination of the abdomen**

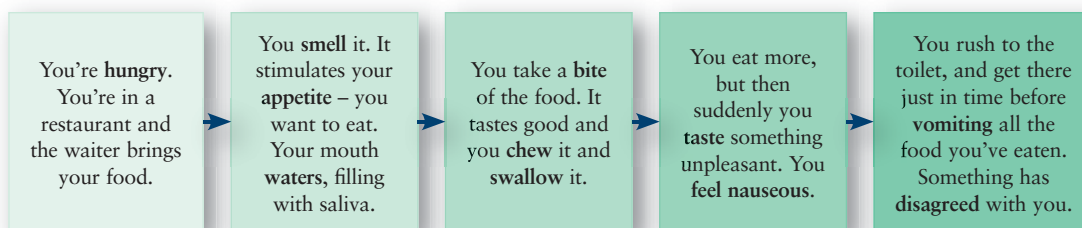
To examine the patient for enlarged abdominal (1) ....., first feel for the (2) ..... and the (3) ..... on the right side. To do this, ask the patient to take a deep breath, while pressing with the fingers upwards and inwards. Next, feel for the right (4) ..... and then cross over to the other side for the left (5) ..... . Still on the left side, palpate for an enlarged (6) ..... . Finally, moving to the lower abdomen, feel for the (8) ..... , which is only felt if it is full.

**Over to you** 

Many patients do not know the location or function of the spleen or the pancreas. How would you explain them to a patient, in English?

# 4 Functions of the body

## A Eating



## B The five senses

In addition to **smell** and **taste**, the senses include **sight** (or vision), **hearing**, and **touch** (also called **sensation** or **feeling**). To ask about the senses, doctors use the questions:

What is your	sight hearing	like?
Is your	sense of smell sense of taste	normal?

To ask about the sense of touch, doctors talk about **numbness** (loss of sensation):

Have you noticed any numbness (in your fingers or toes)?

## C Other functions

Function	Verb	Noun
speaking	speak	speech
walking	walk	gait
breathing respiration	inhale / breathe in / take a breath in exhale / breathe out	breath
urination micturition	urinate micturate pass urine / pass water	urine
defecation	defecate pass faeces / pass stools	faeces stools
menstruation	menstruate have a period	(menstrual) period (monthly) period

When taking a history, doctors can ask:

Do you have any	trouble difficulty problems	walking? breathing? passing urine? with your speech?
	pain	when you breathe in?

When auscultating a patient's lungs, the doctor tells the patient:

Take a deep breath in, hold your breath, then breathe out completely.

## D Less common functions

There are some things we do less often. When we are hot, we **sweat**. When we are nervous, we **shake**. When we are sad, we **cry**.

Doctors can ask:

Do you	sweat shake	more than usual?
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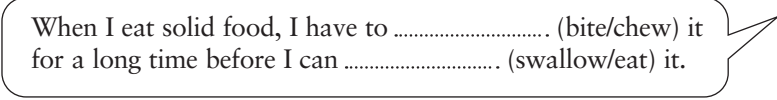

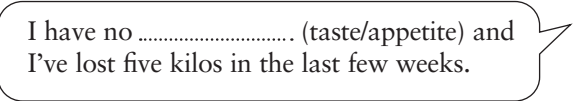
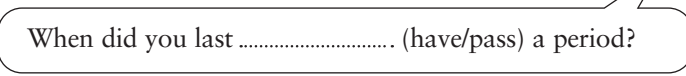
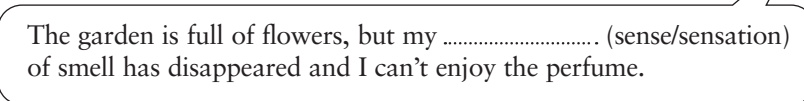
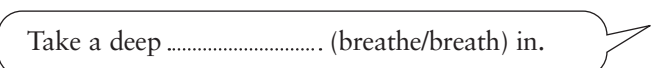
**4.1** Match the symptoms (1–5) to the questions (a–e), using your medical knowledge.

- |             |                                                |
|-------------|------------------------------------------------|
| 1 dysuria   | a What is your breathing like?                 |
| 2 dysphagia | b Do you have any pain when you pass water?    |
| 3 diplopia  | c Do you have any difficulty with your speech? |
| 4 dysphasia | d Do you have any trouble swallowing?          |
| 5 dyspnoea  | e Is your vision normal?                       |

**4.2** Patients are describing symptoms of the conditions shown in brackets. Complete the sentences. Look at C and D opposite to help you.

- 1 I've got pain and ..... in both feet. (peripheral neuropathy)
- 2 I'm having difficulty ..... solid food. (oesophageal stricture)
- 3 I have a lot of problems ..... . (prostatic hypertrophy)
- 4 I've been ..... more than usual, even when it's not hot. (hyperthyroidism)
- 5 I've noticed that my hands ..... when I'm not using them. (Parkinsonism)
- 6 I have trouble ..... when I climb the stairs. (left heart failure)

**4.3** Complete the sentences. Look at A, B, C and D opposite to help you.

- 1  When I eat solid food, I have to ..... (bite/chew) it for a long time before I can ..... (swallow/eat) it.
- 2  Do you have any pain when you ..... (pass/have) stools?
- 3  I have no ..... (taste/appetite) and I've lost five kilos in the last few weeks.
- 4  When did you last ..... (have/pass) a period?
- 5  The garden is full of flowers, but my ..... (sense/sensation) of smell has disappeared and I can't enjoy the perfume.
- 6  Take a deep ..... (breathe/breath) in.

**Over to you** 

You think a patient may have diabetes. Think of five questions you can ask the patient to investigate further. Try to use the question types presented in this unit.



# 5 Medical practitioners 1

## A Practitioners

In Britain, doctors, also known as **medical practitioners**, must be **qualified**: have a university degree in medicine. They must also be **registered** – included in the General Medical Council's list, or **register** – in order to **practise** (see Unit 13). A doctor who treats patients, as opposed to one who only does research, is called a **clinician**. A doctor who provides primary care for patients is known as a **general practitioner (GP)**, or family doctor. GPs usually work in a **group practice**. Larger group practices work in a building called a **health centre**.

**Note:** In British English, the verb is spelt **practise** and the noun is spelt **practice**.

## B Specialties

**Specialist** doctors, for example paediatricians, generally work in hospitals. However, those who work outside the NHS, providing **private health care**, may have **consulting rooms** outside a hospital – for example in the famous Harley Street in London.

The two main branches of medicine are **surgery** and **internal medicine**, and the doctors who practise these branches are called **surgeons** and **physicians**, respectively. In Britain, male surgeons are addressed as Mr and females as Ms – so Dr Smith is a physician, and Ms Smith is a surgeon.

A cardiologist	specializes in is a specialist in	diseases of the heart and circulation, or <b>cardiology</b> .
A geriatrician		diseases of elderly patients, or <b>geriatrics</b> .
An anaesthetist		<b>anaesthetics</b> .

**Note:** Names of specialties usually end in **-ology**; names of specialists usually end in **-ologist**. If the name of a specialty ends in **-ics**, the name of the specialist ends in **-ician**. There are some exceptions, e.g. **anaesthetics** and **anaesthetist**.

## C Choosing a specialty

Jill Mathews has just graduated from medical school and is talking about her future.

'I haven't decided what to **specialize in** yet. I need more experience before I decide, but I'm quite attracted to the idea of paediatrics because I like **working with** children. I'd certainly prefer to work with children than, say, elderly patients – so I don't fancy geriatrics. I was never very **interested in** detailed anatomy, so the **surgical specialties** like **neurosurgery** don't really appeal. You have to be **good with** your hands, which I don't think is a problem for me – I've **assisted at** operations several times, and I've even done some minor ops by myself – but surgeons have to be able to do the same thing again and again without getting bored, like tying off cut arteries and so on. I don't think that would be a problem for me, but they need to make decisions fast and I'm not too **good at** that. I like to have time to think, which means surgery's probably not right for me.'

**Note:** The collocation **good with** is followed by a noun – *He's good with children*. The collocation **good at** is followed by the -ing form (gerund) of a verb, or by a noun – *She's good at explaining procedures. She's good at explanations*.



**5.1** Write sentences to describe the work of the specialist in each branch of medicine. Look at B opposite to help you.

- 1 dermatology *A dermatologist specializes in diseases of the skin.*
- 2 rheumatology
- 3 traumatology
- 4 paediatrics
- 5 obstetrics

**5.2** Complete the table with words from A, B and C opposite and related forms. Put a stress mark in front of the stressed syllable in each word. The first one has been done for you.

Verb	Noun (person)	Noun (activity or thing)
'specialize		
practise		
consult		
assist		
graduate		
qualify		

**5.3** Find prepositions in C opposite that can be used to make word combinations with the words in the box. Then use the correct forms of the words to complete the sentences.

good      interested      specialize      work

- 1 A pathologist ..... diagnosing disease through examining cells and tissue.
- 2 A paediatrician must enjoy ..... children.
- 3 An oncologist is ..... the diagnosis and treatment of cancer.
- 4 A psychiatrist must be ..... counselling.
- 5 A neurosurgeon must be ..... her hands.

**5.4** Make word combinations using a word from each box. Two words can be used twice. Look at A, B and C opposite to help you.

consulting  
 general  
 group  
 health  
 internal  
 surgical

centre  
 practice  
 specialties  
 medicine  
 practitioner  
 rooms

**Over to you**

Re-read what Dr Jill Mathews says about surgeons in Section C. Make a list of the qualities she thinks are needed to be a good surgeon. Then make a similar list of qualities for another specialty.

If you are a student, which branch of medicine do you think you have the qualities for? If you have already completed your training, why did you choose your particular branch of medicine?