

MEDICAL ENGLISH FOR HEALTH PROFESSIONALS – INTERMEDIATE LANGUAGE REVIEW

VOCABULARY

People at a hospital

(Stressed syllable in bold)

ana**est**hetist
auxiliary nurse
dietician
doctor
gynaeco**log**ist
inpatient
nurse
nurse pract**iti**tioner
ophthal**m**ologist
outpatient
paediatrician
patient
psy**chi**atrist
re**cep**tionist
specialist
surgeon

General terms

an appointment
a disease
a prescription
treatment
a hospital ward

Parts of the body

The head

chin
ear
eye
head
mouth
neck
nose
sinus
teeth
throat
thyroid
tongue

The body

ankle
arm
back
breast
chest
elbow
finger
foot
hand
hip
joint
knee
leg
nail
rib
shoulder
skin
toe
wrist
abdomen

Internal parts

artery
blood
bone
bowel
heart
liver
lung
lymph nodes
muscle
nerve
pulse
spine

Common symptoms

a bruise
a cough
a cramp
a headache
a lump
a pain
a rash
a stomach ache
a temperature
bleeding
chest pain
constipation
diarrhoea
discharge
dryness
fatigue
fever
nausea
nosebleed
painful swallowing
seizures
shortness of breath
sore throat
soreness
stiffness
swelling
to faint
to vomit
weakness
weight gain
weight loss

Examination equipment

a hospital robe or gown
gloves
a blanket
a sphygmomanometer
an ophthalmoscope
an otoscope
a flashlight
a stethoscope
a thermometer
a tongue depressor (US)
or spatula (UK)
a reflex hammer
scales

Diagnostic tests

biopsy
blood analysis
CAT or CT scan
MRI scan
Pap smear or cervical
smear
stool test
ultrasound
vital signs
X-ray

Common abbreviations

A&E - accident and
emergency
ADL - activities of daily
living
BMI - body mass index
BP - blood pressure
NKA - no known allergies
SOB - short of breath
Sx - symptoms
Tx - treatment
CC -chief complaint
ENT - ear, nose and throat
FH -family history
Fx - fracture
LN - lymph node
NKFA - no known food
allergies
P - pulse
PMH - past medical
history
HPI – history of present
illness

Word building

verb

feel
bruise
bleed
breathe
weigh
swell
ache
move

noun

feeling
bruise
blood
breath
weight
swelling
ache
movement
wellness
weakness
soreness / a sore
stiffness
shortness
dryness
strength
pain

adjective

well
weak
sore
stiff
short
dry
strong
painful

GRAMMAR

Describing frequency

We can describe frequency in different ways:

first thing in the morning = early, as soon as I am awake

once

once a day, **once** every two days, **once** a week, ...

once a day, **twice** a day, **three times** a day, ...

every

every hour, **every** day, **every** month, ...

Adverbs of frequency

How often do you have a check-up?

Do you have check-ups **regularly**?

I **never/hardly ever/sometimes/often/always** have headaches.

Verb forms

The infant **was taken** to a local clinic.

Past passive (*be* + past participle): Used when the agent (who did the action) is not important in the sentence.

She normally **wakes** up at night.

Present simple: Used to describe routines and facts.

She **has taken** three feedings in the last 24 hours.

Present perfect (*have* + past participle): used to describe actions in an unfinished period of time, from then until now.

The patient **was** restless during the day.

Past simple: used to describe a completed action in the past.

Different functions**Describing an intention**

I'm **going to** give you a prescription for some syrup.

I'm **going to** clean the wound.

I'll **just** take your blood pressure.

Giving an instruction

Just eat boiled rice for a couple of days and drink plenty of water.

Take 10 ml of the medicine before meals.

Describing a necessity

I **need to** give you a tetanus inoculation, to prevent infection.

You **need to** have some tests.

Giving information

It **should** clear up in two or three days.

This **is** a bacterial infection.

You **have** a fractured rib.

Possibility vs. generally true

You **may/might** experience constipation. (This is possible.)

They **can** make you feel sleepy. (This happens. This is generally true.)

So that, in case and if

Put some antiseptic on the stitches, **so that** they don't get infected.

(**so that** + something you want or don't want to happen)

I'll also give you a tetanus injection, **in case** you were exposed to the bacteria.

(**in case** + something that could happen, or could have happened)

Come back immediately **if** you see that it is red and sore.
(**if** + a condition or situation)

Linking information and ideas

She cries when she is left alone. **However**, she stops when she is held.
We can use *however* to link two ideas. It means the same as *but*.

This drug is effective **but** it has some side effects.
We can use *but* to add information that usually contrasts with what is said before.

I prescribed this treatment **because** the patient has a heart condition.
We can use *because* to explain a reason.

His fever was high, **so** his mother decided to take him to the hospital.
We can use *so* to explain the result or reason for doing of something.

He has been eating well **and** has had three feeds today.
We can use *and* to add extra information.

She cried, **which** was a change from her normal behaviour.
We can use *which* to add more information, referring back to something you just said.

She is restless. She **also** wakes up at night.
We can use *also* to add extra information.

She has a heart condition **as well as** a history of UTI.
She has a heart condition **as well as** having a history of UTI.
We can use *as well as* to add extra information. It means the same as *and also*. *As well as* is followed by a noun or the *-ing* form of a verb.

USEFUL EXPRESSIONS

Introducing yourself

My name's I'm looking after you today.
Good morning, I'm Doctor I'm going to give you a physical examination.

Asking about a patient's health

How can I help you?
So, what seems to be the problem?
How are you feeling, today?

Checking information

Hello. It's Mr ..., isn't it?
Your surname is ..., is that right?
You work in ..., don't you?
You're an office worker, aren't you?

Asking for information

OK, so, first I need some details for your medical record.
Are you allergic to anything?
What other symptoms do you have?
How long have you had the cough?

Have you had it for the same amount of time?
Is it worse at any particular time of the day or night?
Is it difficult to swallow with your sore throat?
Can you describe it for me?
What colour is the phlegm that you're coughing up?
How bad, on a scale of one to ten?

Offering help

Just let me know if you need anything else.
I'll help you to the bathroom.
I'll give you a prescription for your headaches.

Explaining to a patient

First, we'll do some tests and then make another appointment for you next week.
Now, I'm just going to take your temperature and blood pressure.

A physical examination

Take the patient's blood pressure.
Do an abdominal examination.
Check the neck.
Do a lung examination.
Look at the patient's spine.
Check the patient's ears, nose and throat.
Take the patient's pulse.

Giving instructions

Lie face up
Lift up your arm.
Turn over.
Sit down.
Lie on the couch.
Lie face down.
I will press your stomach.
Bend your arm.
Take off your jacket. Roll up your sleeve, please.
Open your mouth, please. Put out your tongue.
Turn your head to the right and to the left. Now, touch your shoulder with your chin.
Can you sit on the couch, please?
Lift up your shirt. Breathe in. Breathe out.
Bend forward and touch your toes.

Asking about time and frequency

Is the cough worse first thing in the morning?
Do you check your blood pressure regularly?
How many cigarettes do you smoke a day?
Do you often have headaches?

Saying something is important

It's important to change the dressing each day.
You need to make sure that the wound stays dry.
It's better not to shower.
Don't forget about not drinking alcohol while taking the medication.
Don't forget to take the medication.

Glossary:

amount (n):	quantity
annoying (adj):	makes you feel angry or annoyed
balance (n):	ability to maintain the body vertical and not fall
behaviour (n):	a way of acting or being
clue (n):	a sign or indication
cough (v):	to pass air from your lungs through your throat, making a sound
discharge (n):	liquid that comes from part of the body and is sometimes infected
dress (v):	to cover, to put a bandage or dressing on a wound
dressing (n):	a bandage or covering put on a wound to protect it
feeding (n):	when a baby drinks or eats
feverish (adj):	with a fever, with a high temperature
formula (n):	prepared milk given to babies instead of their mother's milk
gather (v):	to collect
gum (n):	the areas of pink flesh inside the mouth where the teeth are fixed
infant (n):	a very young child
irritability (n):	state of being easy to annoy
itchiness (n):	feeling that you want or need to scratch, when something is itchy
lethargic (adj):	inactive, with little energy
mouth ulcer (n):	painful round or oval sore inside the mouth that is slow to heal
nappy (n):	soft cloth or pants to absorb a baby's urine and solid waste
overall (adj):	general
over-the-counter (adj):	something you can buy from a chemist's without a prescription
overweight (adj):	being heavy, having more than a healthy weight
painful (adj):	causing pain or soreness
painkillers (n):	drugs used to reduce pain
phlegm (n):	a thick substance in your nose and throat when you have a cold
restless (adj):	not calm or quiet, nervous and agitated
restlessness (n):	state of being restless, not calm or quiet, nervous and agitated
scale (n):	a set of numbers to measure something
somewhere else (phrase):	in a different part or place
soreness (n):	to be sore or painful, to hurt
sponge (n):	a soft, absorbent material used for washing things with soap
stool (n):	a piece of solid waste expelled from the body
strength (n):	the state of being strong
swallow (v):	to pass food or liquid down your throat into your stomach
take out (phrasal verb):	to remove or extract
tap (v):	to hit something gently and repeatedly with your finger
thoroughly (adv):	completely
UTI (abbreviation):	urinary tract infection
wheeze (n):	a sound that indicates difficult breathing