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Episode #032

How to say you're sick in English

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Hi! I am very happy today because I have a huge announcement! A **new course** is now available to help you with your pronunciation. And **it's for all levels!**

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In today's episode:

- I'll talk about the most common symptoms that we experience when we're sick or ill.
- Later, you'll practice grammar with a point of view story.

Awesome! Let's get started!

As you've probably noticed, **I've been sick** for the last two weeks. It started with a **sore throat, fever, cough**, feeling weak ... it wasn't the **flu** but **pharyngitis** or **bronchitis**. I know what you're thinking: it sounds even worse than it actually feels, right?

When we are ill, we don't rest well, and we start remembering how well we feel when we're healthy:)

I'm better now, even though I still **have a cough**. I wanted to thank you for all the messages of support. I've also been recommended to try out some **home remedies** to help improve my health:)

Apart from the **syrup** and **pills** that my doctor has prescribed me, I've tried out ginger tea with lemon and honey, cinnamon with honey, and I've been eating foods that contained plenty of garlic and onion.

All these days, I've been eating veggie soup. I just wasn't in the mood to eat solid meals.

Over the last two weeks, I've been focusing on the health topic, and I've decided to share with you some basic **symptoms**.

What do you think? It's always useful to know some expressions related to this topic.

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Like this, if you find yourself in a country where they speak English, and something happens to you, you'll be able to communicate much better with the doctors there.

In this lesson, I'll help you to **describe** some of the most common **symptoms** that we experience when we are **ill** or **sick**.

When you want to **ask someone about their health**, it's very common to use the word "**feel**."

Here are some examples:

"You don't look too well. Are you feeling ill?"
"Yeah, I don't feel well. I'd better go home."

If someone says, "**I don't feel well**," you could ask him or her:

"What's the matter with you?"
"Are you well?"

Let's see some of the **most common symptoms**:

A **symptom** is a manifestation of what's happening to you.

Let's have a look at this conversation:

"I don't **feel** well."
"Oh, **what's the matter** with you?"
" Well... I have a **headache**."

You see? The word "**headache**" is a symptom.

By the way, there are different ways to specify that your head hurts:

"My head **hurts**." or "I have a **headache**."

But I could also say that "I feel a lot of **pain** in my head."

In that case, you should probably go to the hospital because then it means that you're experiencing **severe discomfort, which can't just be ignored**.

For example:

"Yesterday, I suddenly felt a lot of **stomach pain**. They took me to the hospital where they found out I had **appendicitis**."

The word **ache** is similar to **pain**, but it's usually used to refer to a **less severe type of discomfort** that **can continue longer** than pain. It's less urgent.

We could say that we have a **headache**, a **stomach ache**, a **backache**, or a **heartache**; these are very common examples.

Be careful when you're using the word heartache. Bear in mind that **heartache** is used to refer to a type of **emotional pain**. For example, if you're in love with someone and this person breaks your heart, or he simply doesn't care about you;

You could say:

"He's causing me a lot of **heartaches**."

When something is bothering you, your doctor prescribes **medicine** or **drugs**. Then you take medicine (drugs).

For example:

"Yesterday, the doctor prescribed these **pills**. I have to take three **pills** a day."

Okay, let's take a closer look at the most **common symptoms** you may have. I don't want any of them!

- Let's see an example of "**having a cough**" or "**coughing**":

"I don't feel very well."

"What's wrong with you?"

"I have **a lot of coughs**, especially at night."

"Ah, sorry. Are you taking any syrup?"

Syrup, by the way, is one of the **medicines** that can help you avoid **coughing**.

- **Inflammation:**

Almost any part of your body can become **swollen**. There are many reasons for this. For example, in my case, in the last two weeks, my throat was **swollen**, and it hurt. You can also get inflammation from a blow.

For example:

"My foot became very **swollen** after a blow."

● **Fever**

Fever is an increase in body temperature.

Having a **fever** is very normal if you have **the flu**.

For example:

"I have a **fever**, and my throat is **swollen**. I think I have **the flu**."

● **Fatigue**

Fatigue is the same as tiredness. When you are **fatigued**, it means that you are tired, that you have no energy. Sometimes a **disease** causes **fatigue**. We have no energy, and we don't know why.

Example:

"Jim suffered from **fatigue** after not getting any good sleep for a whole week."

Let's look at a couple of examples:

"My stomach hurts. I think I have **indigestion**. I feel very sick."

"If you eat that mayonnaise, it'll **make you sick**."

● **Nausea/vomiting**

After enjoying a delicious meal, the last thing you want is to feel **nauseous**. **Nausea** is the **desire to vomit**. You can also have **nausea** without vomiting, though.

For example:

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"I **don't feel very well** after eating the chocolate cake I kept from last year. I feel **nauseous**, and I think I'm gonna **throw up** = vomit."

● Dizziness

If you **feel dizzy** for a long time, it's best to see a doctor.

Dizziness is a word that is often used to describe two different feelings: **lightheadedness or vertigo**.

Lightheadedness is a feeling that you're about **to faint or "pass out"**. This feeling often goes away or improves when you **lie down**. If **lightheadedness** gets worse, it can lead to a feeling of **fainting**.

Vertigo, however, is a feeling that **you or your surroundings are moving** when **there's no actual movement**. You may have trouble walking or standing, and you may **lose your balance** and fall.

● Low or high blood pressure

And what can cause **dizziness**? Well, one of the reasons is **high blood pressure**.

An example:

"I was sitting, I got up, and now I'm **dizzy**.
"Ah... Do you have **high blood pressure**?"

● Difficulty breathing

It's very important to **see a doctor** if you notice this difficulty. If you can't breathe, I don't think you're gonna be alive for long!

Sometimes this **breathing difficulty** is caused by **anxiety**. It's what doctors call a **psychosomatic effect**, but we're not going to

get into that specific vocabulary. This isn't a podcast focused on English medicine.

Awesome! So far, we've seen vocabulary and expressions related to **health**.

Point of View Story

(Practice your Grammar)

Now you'll practice with the **point of view story**. This kind of story will help you to improve your English **grammar**.

It's very simple. I tell you the same story more than once. Every time I **change a grammatical aspect**. So, you can see how **grammar changes**, and you can **compare**. You just have to **listen**.

Let's start with the story told in the **third person**, in the **past**:

Mr. Pete was a man who always experienced health problems. As he was very organized, he planned the week as follows:

On Mondays, he got up **coughing** a lot. He was **coughing** so much that the police and firemen came to see what was going on.

On Tuesdays, he felt **fatigued**. He was tired all day. Even when he blinked, he felt tired. He also had difficulty **breathing**. He tried not to blink too much and breathe as little as possible, just in case.

He didn't eat anything on Wednesdays; he would always get a **stomach ache** that day of the week. And even if he didn't eat anything at all, he still had the same symptoms. In 90% of cases, he was also **nauseous**.

Thursday wasn't a bad day for him. He only had a high **fever** and **chills** during the day.

On Fridays, he suffered from **low blood pressure** on even hours and **high blood pressure** on odd hours. He also experienced constant **dizziness**.

One day he decided to visit the doctor, and the doctor said: "Mr. Pete, you're in perfect health, but I have to say I've never seen such a **hypochondriac**. I'll **prescribe a drug** with fantastic **placebo** effects."
And from that day on, Mr. Pete has never been sick again.

Awesome! I've told you the story in the third person in the past. Now, I'll explain it to you in the **first person in the past**, from Mr. Pete's point of view:

I was a man who always experienced health problems. As I was very organized, I planned the week as follows:

On Mondays, I got up **coughing** a lot. I was **coughing** so much that the police and firemen came to see what was going on.

On Tuesdays, I felt **fatigued**. I was tired all day. I felt tired, even when I blinked. I also had **difficulty breathing**. I tried not to blink too much and breathe as little as possible, just in case.

I didn't eat anything on Wednesdays because I would always get a **stomach ache**. Even if I didn't eat anything at all, I still had the same symptoms. In 90% of cases, I was also **nauseous**.

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Poor Mr. Pete. He was a **hypochondriac**, but he got cured with **placebo medicine**.

Great! I like these kinds of stories because they're easy to remember and help a lot with learning English. Humor also makes learning more enjoyable.

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Georgiana

founder of SpeakEnglishPodcast.com