



Write On! Going to the Doctor

### Notes About Your Visit

Have you ever left a doctor's office feeling **confused**? When you go to see a doctor you do not feel good, or maybe you are worried. Because of that, it is sometimes hard to remember what the doctor said.

Sometimes doctors use words we don't understand. You might be embarrassed to admit you don't understand the words. Or you might think you know what the doctor is saying, but you misunderstand. This adds to the stress of visiting a doctor. It is important to ask the doctor questions before you leave the office. It is important to know what is wrong with you and what you have to do to get better. In this lesson, you will learn to develop a list of **symptoms** and to write a list of questions to ask the doctor. You will also want to make notes on what you are told to do, so you remember the instructions.



### Words to Know

**confused:** unclear in your mind

**symptom:** a sign or indication of disease or illness

**dehydrated:** to be lacking water

**prescription:** an order for medicine written by a doctor

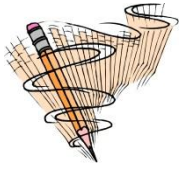
**pharmacist:** a person trained and licensed to work with drugs

### Calling the Doctor

Before you call to make a doctor's appointment, the first thing you should do is make a list of your symptoms. How do you know you are sick? You should put the most severe sign of sickness on the top of your list. When you call the doctor's office, the nurse may ask you what the problem is. If she does, you will have a list that you can tell her. You should do the same thing if you are calling for someone else. What are the person's symptoms? How soon do they need to see the doctor?



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### Your Turn

Read the following passage. After reading it, create a list of symptoms for the doctor.

You have been sick for two days. Your body aches and you want to sleep all the time. Your throat is sore and your head is pounding. You can't keep any food in your stomach. You keep throwing up. Your temperature has been 103°F for two days. You need to call and make an appointment to see the doctor. Make a list of your symptoms. Put the most serious ones at the top of your list.

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

What did you think was the most serious symptom? Did you list your fever first? A temperature that high can be dangerous. That is important information. The vomiting would come next. If you are vomiting too much, you will become **dehydrated**. It doesn't matter what comes after that—the sore throat or the headache. Those are not as important as the temperature and vomiting.



**Check it Out!**

*Painting a Picture with Words*, in the **Reading on the Move** lesson series can help you create a list of symptoms that explain exactly how you are feeling.

Find it on the Internet at

**[www.migrant.net/migrant/publications/index.htm](http://www.migrant.net/migrant/publications/index.htm)**

## The Doctor's Visit

Okay, so the doctor wants to see you today. You feel horrible, but you get dressed and go to your doctor's office. As you are sitting in the waiting room, you get sick

**Remember:**

**Take the list of your symptoms with you to the doctor.**

again and rush to the bathroom. When you come out the nurse shows you to the exam room. All you want to do is lie down on the table and sleep, but you have to wait for the doctor a little longer.

The doctor comes in and asks you a bunch of questions and then examines you. He asks you some more questions and then says he is going to write you a **prescription**. He tells you how to take it, hands you a paper, and turns to leave. Quick—what three questions are you going to ask him before he leaves?

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

There are many questions you could ask, but there are three that are very important. Maybe you have already written them down.

1. What is wrong with me (my main problem)?
2. What do I need to do to feel better?
3. Why is it important for me to do this?

It is important to know the answers to those questions. By understanding that information, you will know how to make yourself better. If the doctor gives you a prescription, it is also important to know how to take it. You will want to write down the answers so you can remember them. That will help you to not be confused later.



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## Prescriptions

If the doctor has given you a prescription, it is important to understand how to take it. The directions on the bottle can be confusing. You should ask your doctor how to take the medicine. If you forget to ask your doctor, you can ask the **pharmacist**.

Let's look at some labels that can be confusing.

Take one tablet by mouth twice a day.

Take one tablet every 12 hours.

Take 2 tablets in the morning and at night.



What questions do you have about these labels? List them.

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

Did your questions include any of these?

- What time of the day do I take these?
- Can I eat food and take these?
- Should I take them with food?
- Do I take them until they are gone?

**Remember:**  
**Ask questions.**  
**Be sure that you**  
**understand the**  
**answers.**

These are important questions to have answered. If you don't know the answers, then you must ask the doctor or pharmacist.

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### Another Example

A doctor wrote a prescription for a patient. When the patient picked up the prescription there were many labels on the bottle.

Take one tablet by mouth every day before breakfast.

Take this medicine with a full glass of water.


Do not skip doses or discontinue unless directed by your doctor.

Take this medicine at least 4 hours before taking antacids or vitamin supplements.

After reading all of these labels, the patient had a lot of questions. Make a list of questions you think the patient had to ask the doctor about taking the medication.

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

It is important to understand what the doctor tells you during a visit. You should not be afraid to ask questions, have information repeated, and take notes. This is the only way you can make sure you will get better.



**Check it Out!**

*What's the Meaning of This*, in the **Reading on the Move** lesson series can help you explore the word definitions.

Find it on the Internet at

**[www.migrant.net/migrant/publications/index.htm](http://www.migrant.net/migrant/publications/index.htm)**



### Going to the Doctor Checklist

- I can make a list of symptoms to give to my doctor.
- I have at least three important questions to ask the doctor during a visit.
- I can ask my doctor or pharmacist about my medicines and how to take them.

### Writing Traits Scored in this Lesson

|                     | <b>Great Job</b><br>5 points   | <b>Almost There</b><br>3 points  | <b>Keep Working</b><br>1 point  |
|---------------------|--|--|---|
| <b>Ideas</b>        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The message is clear.</li> <li>• It is interesting to read.</li> <li>• There is enough information.</li> </ul>                                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The message is clear.</li> <li>• Some parts are interesting to read.</li> <li>• More information is needed.</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The message is not clear.</li> <li>• There is no solid information.</li> </ul>         |
| <b>Organization</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a strong beginning.</li> <li>• Points are in order.</li> <li>• The message is clear.</li> <li>• There is a strong conclusion.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a beginning.</li> <li>• There is a middle, but it runs together.</li> <li>• There is no conclusion.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is no beginning, middle, or end.</li> <li>• The message is not clear.</li> </ul> |

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