

Health and illness I

A Phrasal verbs and verb-preposition collocations for health and illness

I'm **fighting off** a cold at the moment. [trying to get rid of]

Marge isn't in today; she's **gone down with** flu. [has caught, usually a non-serious illness]

I won't be going today. I've **come down with** a dreadful cold. [with I we say *come down* not *go down*]

I had a virus last week, but I **got over** it quite quickly. [got better/recovered]

My sister's **recovering from** a major operation. [getting better: used for more serious illnesses]

Harry **suffers from** hay fever and sneezes a lot if he is near grass or flowers. [used for more long-term problems]

He **died of/from** lung cancer. [Not: He ~~died with~~ lung cancer.]

B Health systems

In Britain, **healthcare**¹ is paid for through taxes and **national insurance**² payments taken directly from wages and salaries. The government decides how much will be spent on the **National Health Service**³, but a lot of people feel they do not spend

enough. Hospital treatment and visits to a **family doctor** (or **GP**)⁴ at a **surgery**⁵ or **clinic**⁶ are free, but there is a **prescription charge**⁷. Dentists and opticians charge fees. Private healthcare is available and a large number of insurance schemes exist to enable people to 'go private'⁸.

¹ general expression for all of the services offered by hospitals, clinics, dentists, opticians, etc.

² tax paid by most adults which covers the costs of healthcare for everyone

³ British name for the service that covers hospitals, clinics, dentists, etc.

⁴ doctor who looks after people's general health: GP means *general practitioner*

⁵ small centre with just two or three doctors

⁶ large centre with several doctors and kinds of services

⁷ charge for the medication the doctor prescribes, which you pay at a pharmacy

⁸ choose private healthcare

C Serious illnesses and health problems

Here are some serious illnesses, with the word-stress underlined. Make sure you know the stress-pattern when learning longer words or phrases. It is a good idea to make a note of it.

diabetes: disease where the body does not properly absorb sugar and starch

bronchitis: inflammation in the breathing system, causing you to cough

heart disease: serious illness connected with the heart which can lead to a heart attack

skin cancer / lung cancer / breast cancer: harmful tumours in those areas

TB (or **tuberculosis**): infectious disease in the lungs

cholera: an intestinal disease that can be caused by bad drinking water

hepatitis: inflammation of the liver

typhoid: fever, with red spots on the chest and abdomen

heart attack/failure: when the heart fails