**Health Problems**

**English Vocabulary**

The most common ways to ask about someone's health are:

* How do you feel (today)?
* How are you feeling?
* Is everything okay?

They will most likely respond:

* I'm fine.
* I feel sick.
* Not so good.
* Not very well.
* I don't feel well.
* I'm sick.

When you see (or hear) that they are not well, then you can ask:

* What's the matter?
* What's wrong?

If the person wants to say what is wrong, they may give the reason they feel that way:

* I have ... (+ health condition)
* I've got ... (+ health condition)
* **I have** a headache
* **I've got** a sore throat.
* The following is a list of common health problems (ailments and illnesses) with the definition of each word or expression:
* **asthma:** a respiratory condition where spasms in the lungs cause difficult in breathing. An asthmatic uses an inhaler to calm the spasms.
* **a backache:** a prolonged pain in the back.
* **a broken leg:** when a bone in the leg is broken. A broken leg is put in a cast to help immobilize the leg so that it heals quicker. Other parts of the body with bones can also be broken, for example a broken arm, a broken wrist etc.
* **a cold:** a common viral infection which causes mucous to run from the nose, gives a sore throat and often includes sneezing.
* **a cough:** the act of expelling air from the lungs with a sudden sharp sound.
* **an earache:** pain inside the ear.
* **a fever:** an abnormally high body temperature, usually accompanied by shivering and a headache.
* **the flu:** flu is the common name given for influenza. It is a contagious viral infection of the respiratory passages that causes fever and sever aching.
* **a headache:** a continuous pain in the head.
* **heartburn:** a form of indigestion felt as a burning sensation in the chest. It is caused by acid regurgitation into the esophagus.
* **(the) measles:** an infectious viral disease causing fever and a red rash on the skin. It typically occurs in childhood.
* **a rash:** a lot of small red spots on the skin that are usually itchy.
* **a sore throat:** a condition of pain in the throat, typically caused by inflammation of it.
* **a stomachache (US) - stomach ache (Brit):** The pain in a person's belly. Notice how the word can be spelled together or as two words, depending on the country.
* **sunburn:** when the skin becomes red with inflammation as a result of overexposure to the ultraviolet rays of the sun.
* **a toothache:** the pain in a tooth or teeth.

### The difference between sick and ill

To most people, both sick and ill more or less mean the same thing, that you are not in a healthy condition.

Sick is less formal than ill and usually describes short-term ailments or diseases (like a cold or cough). Sick can also refer to feeling nauseous. In British English, to be sick can mean to vomit.

Ill is often for more serious health problems (like cancer or pneumonia) but can also be used for short-term ones.

Illness (noun) refers to a medical condition. Sickness (noun) refers to how you feel.

### The difference between ache and pain

**ACHE** is a continuous or **prolonged** dull pain in a part of the body. It can often be a throbbing sensation that covers more than one point. You can sometimes try and ignore an ache.

**PAIN** is physical suffering or discomfort caused by illness or injury. It is usually a sharp sensation in a specific part of the body and hurts more than an ache.