

VOCABULARY · EPISODE 76

5 Min Survival Kit The Doctor

Key words & expressions · English + Español

10 words

Your English Toolbox

1

to describe your symptoms**describir tus síntomas · explicar lo que sientes al médico**

DEF

to explain the signs of illness or discomfort you are experiencing to a medical professional — using specific, clear language to help them understand what is wrong

Describing symptoms in a second language is one of the most practically important skills a language learner can have. Knowing words like 'dull ache', 'sharp pain', 'throbbing', 'tender', and 'swollen' can genuinely affect the quality of care you receive.

ES

Explicar los signos de enfermedad o malestar que estás experimentando a un profesional médico usando lenguaje específico y claro.

Describir síntomas en un segundo idioma es una de las habilidades más prácticamente importantes que un estudiante de idiomas puede tener.

Can you describe your symptoms? — Tell me: where does it hurt, how does it feel, how long has it been going on?

Can you describe your symptoms? -> ¿Puedes describir tus síntomas?

She described her symptoms in clear English and the doctor understood her immediately — preparation made the difference.

She described her symptoms in clear English and the doctor understood her immediately. -> Describió lo que sentía al médico en inglés claro y el médico la entendió de inmediato.

2

to be referred to a specialist**que te deriven a un especialista · ser enviado a un médico especializado**

DEF

to be sent by your general doctor to see a doctor who has specific expertise in a particular area of medicine

Referred to a specialist is essential medical English — it describes the pathway through healthcare systems. Understanding this process and knowing how to ask for it are key practical skills for living in an English-speaking country.

ES

Ser enviado por tu médico general a ver a un médico que tiene experiencia específica en un área particular de la medicina.

Es inglés médico esencial — describe la vía a través de los sistemas de salud.

She was referred to a specialist after the GP couldn't identify the cause of her recurring headaches.

She was referred to a specialist after the GP couldn't identify the cause. -> La derivaron a un especialista después de que el médico de cabecera no pudo identificar la causa.

Can you refer me to a specialist? — One of the most important questions you can ask at a doctor's appointment.

Can you refer me to a specialist? -> ¿Puede enviarme a un médico especializado?

3

to make an appointment

pedir cita · concertar una hora programada para ver a un médico o profesional

DEF

to arrange a scheduled time to see a doctor, dentist, or other professional

Make an appointment is the standard phrase for booking medical (and other professional) visits in English. In NHS or private healthcare contexts, you 'make' or 'book' an appointment, not 'take' one. The language around appointments also includes: 'cancel', 'reschedule', 'miss', 'attend'. Knowing this phrase and its surrounding vocabulary is essential for navigating healthcare in an English-speaking country.

ES

Concertar una hora programada para ver a un médico, dentista u otro profesional.

La frase estándar para reservar visitas médicas en inglés. Se 'hace' o 'reserva' una cita, no se 'toma'.

Make your appointment as early as possible — waiting lists can be long.

Make your appointment as early as possible — waiting lists can be long. -> Pide cita lo antes posible — las listas de espera pueden ser largas.

She called the surgery first thing in the morning to make an appointment with her GP.

She called the surgery first thing in the morning to make an appointment with her GP. -> Llamó a la consulta a primera hora de la mañana para pedir cita con su médico de cabecera.

4

to be in good health

estar sano · estar físicamente y mentalmente bien — sin enfermedad ni problemas médicos significativos

DEF

to be physically and mentally well — without illness, chronic conditions, or significant medical concerns

In good health is the wellness descriptor. In medical English, it is used on forms, in consultations, and in general conversation. Being able to describe your health status accurately is a fundamental medical communication skill. Related phrases include: 'I'm generally healthy', 'I have no pre-existing conditions', 'I'm fit and well'. The opposite is 'in poor health' or 'in ill health'.

ES

Estar físicamente y mentalmente bien — sin enfermedad, condiciones crónicas ni problemas médicos significativos.

El descriptor de bienestar. En inglés médico se usa en formularios, consultas y conversación general.

Being in good health makes all other life goals more achievable — it is a foundation, not a bonus.

Being in good health makes all other life goals more achievable — it is a foundation, not a bonus. -> Estar sano hace que todos los demás objetivos de vida sean más alcanzables — es una base, no un beneficio.

She confirmed she was in good health when filling out the insurance form and had nothing significant to declare.

She confirmed she was in good health when filling out the insurance form and had nothing significant to declare. -> Confirmó que estaba sana al rellenar el formulario del seguro y no tenía nada significativo que declarar.

to take medication

5 tomar medicación · consumir regularmente un medicamento recetado según lo indicado por un médico

DEF

to regularly consume a prescribed or over-the-counter drug as directed by a doctor or the instructions on the packaging

Take medication is the standard clinical phrase. In medical contexts, you 'take' medicine — not 'eat' or 'drink' it. The phrase 'I take medication for...' is how patients describe their medical history. Related: 'I'm on medication', 'I've been prescribed...', 'I take it twice a day'. Saying 'I eat pills' is grammatically understandable but not natural medical English.

ES

Consumir regularmente un medicamento recetado o de venta libre según lo indicado por un médico o las instrucciones del envase.

La frase clínica estándar. En contextos médicos se 'toma' la medicina — no se 'come' ni se 'bebe'.

Tell your doctor about all medication you take — including over-the-counter and herbal remedies.

Tell your doctor about all medication you take — including over-the-counter and herbal remedies. -> Dile a tu médico toda la medicación que tomas — incluyendo los medicamentos sin receta y los remedios herbales.

She took medication for high blood pressure and made sure to carry it whenever she travelled.

She took medication for high blood pressure and made sure to carry it whenever she travelled. -> Tomaba medicación para la hipertensión y se aseguró de llevarla consigo siempre que viajaba.

a side effect

6 un efecto secundario · una consecuencia no intencionada de tomar una medicación

DEF

an unintended consequence of taking a medication — typically a negative physical reaction that occurs alongside the intended therapeutic effect

Side effect is the pharmacology phrase. Every medication comes with a list of possible side effects — from mild (headache, nausea) to serious (heart rhythm problems). In medical consultations, patients are expected to report side effects. Phrases include: 'I've been experiencing a side effect', 'I think this medication is causing...', 'Is this a known side effect of...?'

ES

Una consecuencia no intencionada de tomar un medicamento — típicamente una reacción física negativa que ocurre junto con el efecto terapéutico previsto.

La frase farmacológica. Cada medicamento viene con una lista de posibles efectos secundarios.

Report any side effects to your doctor promptly — some require a dose adjustment or medication change.

Report any side effects to your doctor promptly — some require a dose adjustment or medication change. -> Informa a tu médico de cualquier efecto secundario con prontitud — algunos requieren un ajuste de dosis o cambio de medicación.

She stopped the medication after experiencing a side effect that affected her concentration and focus.

She stopped the medication after experiencing a side effect that affected her concentration and focus. -> Dejó la medicación después de experimentar un efecto secundario que afectaba a su concentración y atención.

to feel under the weather

7

no encontrarse bien · sentirse ligeramente indispuerto — no gravemente enfermo pero tampoco en plena forma

DEF

to feel slightly unwell — not seriously ill but not at your best either

Feel under the weather is the mild illness idiom. It is used when you are not sick enough to dramatically describe symptoms but you are clearly not well — perhaps a slight headache, tiredness, or a general sense of malaise. 'I'm feeling a bit under the weather today' is a common, natural English way to explain why you might leave early, skip an event, or be less productive.

ES

Sentirse ligeramente indispuerto — no gravemente enfermo pero tampoco en plena forma.

El modismo de la enfermedad leve. Se usa cuando no estás lo suficientemente enfermo como para describir síntomas dramáticamente pero claramente no te encuentras bien.

Say 'I'm feeling a bit under the weather' when you want to explain being unwell without being dramatic.

Say 'I'm feeling a bit under the weather' when you want to explain being unwell without being dramatic. -> Di 'me siento un poco indispuerto' cuando quieras explicar estar mal sin ser dramático.

She told her manager she was feeling a bit under the weather and asked if she could work from home that day.

She told her manager she was feeling a bit under the weather and asked if she could work from home that day. -> Le dijo a su jefe que no se encontraba muy bien y le preguntó si podía trabajar desde casa ese día.

to run tests

8

hacer análisis · llevar a cabo exámenes o investigaciones médicas como análisis de sangre o escáneres

DEF

to carry out medical examinations or investigations — such as blood tests, scans, or other diagnostic procedures

Run tests is the medical investigation phrase. When a doctor cannot diagnose from the consultation alone, they order tests. Phrases include: 'I'm going to run a few tests', 'We'll need to run some blood tests', 'The tests came back clear'. For patients, understanding these phrases is essential for following medical conversations and knowing what will happen next in their treatment.

ES

Llevar a cabo exámenes o investigaciones médicas — como análisis de sangre, escáneres u otros procedimientos diagnósticos.

La frase de investigación médica. Cuando un médico no puede diagnosticar desde la consulta sola pide pruebas.

Ask your doctor what any tests are for and when to expect results — it is your right to know.

Ask your doctor what any tests are for and when to expect results — it is your right to know. -> Pregunta a tu médico para qué son las pruebas y cuándo esperar los resultados — es tu derecho saber.

She was told the doctor wanted to run a few tests before making any diagnosis.

She was told the doctor wanted to run a few tests before making any diagnosis. -> Le dijeron que el médico quería hacer algunas pruebas antes de hacer ningún diagnóstico.

9

to be allergic to

ser alérgico a · tener una respuesta inmune anormal a una sustancia específica

DEF

to have an abnormal immune response to a specific substance — causing symptoms such as rash, swelling, or difficulty breathing when exposed to it

Allergic to is the medical sensitivity phrase. Every medical form asks about allergies. The phrase 'I'm allergic to...' covers everything from mild intolerances to life-threatening reactions. Knowing how to say this clearly — and how to distinguish between 'I'm allergic to X' (immune response) and 'I can't eat X' (intolerance or preference) — is important medical communication.

ES

Tener una respuesta inmune anormal a una sustancia específica — causando síntomas como erupción, hinchazón o dificultad para respirar.

La frase de sensibilidad médica. Cada formulario médico pregunta sobre alergias.

State your allergies clearly at every medical appointment — especially before any procedure or prescription.

State your allergies clearly at every medical appointment — especially before any procedure or prescription. -> Indica tus alergias claramente en cada cita médica — especialmente antes de cualquier procedimiento o prescripción.

She was allergic to penicillin and had a medical alert bracelet to ensure emergency staff always knew.

She was allergic to penicillin and had a medical alert bracelet to ensure emergency staff always knew. -> Era alérgica a la penicilina y llevaba una pulsera de alerta médica para asegurarse de que el personal de emergencias siempre lo supiera.

10

a diagnosis

un diagnóstico · la identificación de una condición médica o enfermedad basada en síntomas y pruebas

DEF

the identification of a medical condition or disease based on symptoms, tests, and clinical judgment

Diagnosis is the medical conclusion noun. When a doctor says 'I think we are looking at...' or 'Based on what I can see, this is...' they are arriving at a diagnosis. Patients have the right to ask about the diagnosis clearly: 'What exactly do you think is wrong?', 'Are there other possibilities?', 'How confident are you?'. Understanding the diagnosis is the first step to understanding treatment.

ES

La identificación de una condición médica o enfermedad basada en síntomas, pruebas y juicio clínico.

El sustantivo de conclusión médica. Los pacientes tienen derecho a preguntar sobre el diagnóstico con claridad.

Ask your doctor to explain the diagnosis clearly — do not leave the appointment unclear about what you have been told.

Ask your doctor to explain the diagnosis clearly — do not leave the appointment unclear about what you have been told. -> Pide a tu médico que explique el diagnóstico claramente — no salgas de la cita sin saber claramente lo que te han dicho.

She was relieved to finally receive a diagnosis after months of tests and uncertainty.

She was relieved to finally receive a diagnosis after months of tests and uncertainty. -> Sintió un alivio al recibir finalmente un diagnóstico después de meses de pruebas e incertidumbre.