

1 Health and illness

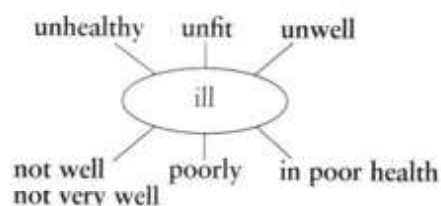
A Asking about health

Health is the state of the body. When doctors want to know about a patient's usual health, they ask questions such as:

What is your **general health** like?

How's your health, generally?

If you are **in good health**, you are **well** and have no **illness** (disease). If you are **healthy** you are normally well and can resist illness. If you are **fit**, you are well and strong.



B Sickness

Sickness has a similar meaning to illness. It is also used in the names of a few specific diseases, for example **sleeping sickness** and **travel sickness**. Patients also talk about sickness when they mean nausea and vomiting.

Patient says	Possible meanings
I was sick this morning.	I was ill this morning. I felt unwell this morning. I vomited this morning.
I feel sick.	I feel ill. I feel unwell. I am nauseous. I feel the need to vomit.

The combination **sickness and diarrhoea** means vomiting and diarrhoea.

C Recovery

When patients return to normal health after illness, they have **recovered**. We can also say:

The patient	made a	good full complete	recovery.
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If a patient's health is in the process of returning to normal, the patient is **improving**. The opposite is **deteriorating**. We can also say that the patient's condition **improved** or **deteriorated**.

In speech, we often use the verb **get** to talk about change:

get	over (an illness)	= to recover
	better	= to improve
	worse	= to deteriorate

If a patient is better, but then gets worse again, the patient has **relapsed**. Another word for **improvement**, especially in recurring conditions such as cancer, is **remission**.

He **got over** the illness very quickly.

Two years later she remains **in complete remission**.

1.1 Complete the table with words from A and B opposite. The first one has been done for you.

Noun	Adjective
fitness	fit
health	
illness	
sickness	

1.2 Make word combinations using a word from each box. Look at B and C opposite to help you.

complete
feel
get
poor
travel

sickness
health
remission
sick
over

1.3 Complete the conversation. Look at B opposite to help you.

Doctor: How are you feeling today?

Patient: Not very (1)

Doctor: How long have you been feeling (2) ?

Patient: About a week.

Doctor: What is your (3) like normally?

Patient: Very good. I'm usually quite (4) and (5)

Doctor: What is the problem now?

Patient: It's my stomach.

Doctor: Do you feel (6) ?

Patient: Yes.

Doctor: Have you actually been (7) ?

Patient: No.

Doctor: Have you had any serious (8) in the past?

Patient: No, none at all.

1.4 Choose the correct word to complete each sentence. Look at B and C opposite to help you.

1 Her condition (deteriorated/improved) and she died.

2 He (relapsed/recovered) and was allowed to go home from hospital.

3 The cause of sleeping (illness/sickness) was discovered in 1901.

4 The patient made a full (remission/recovery).

5 I have been in (poor/good) health for months and feel very fit.

6 It was a month before I (got over / got better) the illness.

7 He seems to be rather (unhealthy/unwell) – his diet is bad and he never exercises.

Over to you 

What advice do you give people for keeping fit and well?