



## Understanding Symptoms

### Expressions that may be used by patients:

- Head:** I've got a (splitting/dreadful/awful/terrible/bad) headache.  
My head aches/throbs / I've got a migraine.  
I feel woozy (funny/queer/light-headed/dizzy/faint) when I get up suddenly.  
I feel drowsy / I feel giddy / I feel the room spinning /The room's spinning / I blacked out (fainted).
- Throat:** I've got a sore throat / My throat's sore / My throat aches.  
I'm hoarse (croaky) / I've got a frog in my throat / I've lost my voice.  
I feel tightness in my throat / I can't breathe.  
I can't swallow / Food seems to stick in my throat.
- Neck:** I've got a stiff neck / I have a crick in my neck / My glands are swollen.
- Back:** I have a backache / My back aches / I've pulled a muscle in my back.  
I think I have a slipped disc / I have sciatica (rheumatism/fibrosis/lumbago).
- Chest:** I feel tightness in my chest / I've got a pain under my ribs.  
I get out of breath easily / I find it difficult to breathe.  
I am fighting (gasping) for breath / My lungs are clogged up.  
I am bringing up (coughing up) phlegm (blood/ mucus).  
I've got a bad (terrible/hacking/racking) cough.  
My heart keeps missing (skipping/jumping) a beat.  
I've got a wheezy chest.  
My breasts hurt (ache/are tender/are swollen).
- Stomach:** I've got a stomach ache (tummy-ache/stomach upset/cramps in my stomach).  
I have an upset tummy / I can't keep anything down / I have a stomach cramp.  
I've got indigestion (heartburn/wind) / I get nauseated (I feel sick).  
I feel like I am going to vomit (puke/throw up/ be sick/barf).  
I've got a gassy stomach / I've got a poor appetite / I've gone off my food.
- Mental State:** I'm (I feel) depressed (tired/exhausted/bored/moody/miserable/weepy/ fed up/listless/ down in the dumps/bad-tempered/edgy/upset/afraid/ frightened/terrified/unhappy/confused/nervy/irritable/under the weather/ aggravated/pissed off/like I'm knocking my head on a brick wall/bogged down/ at the end of my rope/out of sorts).

