

MEDICINE¹

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Technical English

Lecturer:

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Medicine 1: Unit 1

Presenting complaint



1 I just need to find Mr Jensen's notes.

2 My hospital number? It's 3438235 and my GP's name is Dr Lane.

3 Good morning, Mrs Dean. My name's Dr Bray.

4 Sorry, I don't know my GP's phone number. Can I leave that blank?



Match each photo with what the person is saying?

Vocabulary

People

doctor / Dr: a medical doctor

patient: a person receiving medical care

GP: General Practitioner, the family doctor

receptionist: the person working at the front desk

Hospital / office words

notes: medical records or written information about a patient

hospital number: the patient's identification number in the hospital

form: a paper to fill in with information

Pediatrician:

a doctor who studies and treats the diseases of children.

Dermatologist:

a doctor who studies and treats skin diseases.

Ophthalmologist:

a doctor who studies and treats the diseases of the eye.

Obstetrician:

a doctor who is trained in obstetrics (the birth of children).

Cardiologist:

a doctor who studies and treats heart diseases.

Nephrologist:

a nephrologist focuses on kidney care and conditions that affect the kidneys.

Otolaryngologist (ENT):

a doctor who treats ear, nose and throat.

Neurologist:

a doctor who studies and treats diseases of the nerves and brain.

Psychiatrist:

a doctor who studies and treats mental illnesses.

Oncologist:

a doctor who studies and treats cancer in the body.

Radiologist:

a doctor who is trained in radiology.

Rheumatologist:

a doctor who diagnoses and treats rheumatic diseases.

Surgeon:


a doctor who is trained to perform surgery.

Anesthesiologist:

a doctor who studies the use of anesthetics.

Listening 1

Personal details

- 1  Look at the chart containing personal details of Mr Karlson. Then listen and correct any details 1–8 that may be wrong. Tick (✓) items that are correct.

Surname: <i>Johnson</i>	<u>Karlson</u>	1
First name(s) <i>Dave Ian</i>	Sex <i>M</i>	
Address <i>3 Park View Mansions,</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	2
<i>Castlefield Manchester M6 7DE</i>		
Admission details <i>Duncan Ward at 4 p.m.</i>		
<i>on 9 November 2008</i>	<u>2 p.m.</u>	3
Hospital No <i>19736045</i>	<u>19733045</u>	4
DOB <i>27 10 53</i>	<u>7-9-53</u>	5
Telephone number <i>0166 405 7001</i>		
Marital Status <i>Single</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	6
Occupation <i>Postman</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	7
GP <i>Dr Khan</i>	<u>Dr. Jones</u>	8
C/o <i>pain in right arm</i>		



3. Work in pairs. Decide what questions the doctor asks for each piece of information on the form.

- Can you tell me what your family name is?
- And your first name?
- Any other names?
- And can you tell me what your address is?
- When were you admitted?
- And do you know your hospital number?
- And what's your date of birth?
- Your telephone number?
- Are you married or single?
- What do you do for a living?
- And lastly, who's your GP?



Language Spot

Asking short and gentle questions

- **Ask gentle questions to put the patient at ease.**

Can you tell me what/who + subject + verb?

What's your family name?

Can you tell me what your family name is?

- **Remove words to make questions shorter.**

What's your first name? Your first name?

Do you have any other names? (And) Any other names?

Direct Questions

Where is Dr Ahmed?

Is it your first time?

What did you eat last night?

Some other phrases used in indirect Questions

Can I ask ... ?

I'd like to know ...

Indirect Questions

Can you tell me where Dr Ahmed is?

Can you tell me if it is your first time?

Can you tell me what you ate last
night?

I'd like to know ...

I was wondering ...

Could you let me know ... ?

Do you happen to know ... ?

- dull
- burning
- stabbing

When taking the history of the presenting complaint (HPC), You often ask about pain. Use these words to complete the questions.

- a Where do you get the pain? _____
- b Does the pain spread anywhere else? _____
- c Does it wake you up at night? _____
- d Can you tell me what the pain is like? _____
- e Can you describe the pain for me? _____
- f How long have you had the pain? _____
- g Is there anything which makes it worse or better? _____
- h When did it start? _____
- i Is there anything which brings it on? _____
- j Is the pain constant? _____
- k Have you had the pain before? _____

- a. Where is the pain? Where does it hurt?
- b. Radiate, move to another part of the body
- c. Severity, seriousness
- d. E.g. sharp, dull, burning, stabbing
- e. E.g. It's a sharp pain. It feels like pressure. It comes and goes.
- G. E.g. movement makes it worse
- j. constant, intermittent pain = comes and goes

Match these words to questions in exercise 2.

3

- 1 f duration
- 2 h onset
- 3 c severity
- 4 i trigger
- 5 b radiation
- 6 d and e character
- 7 g exacerbation / alleviation
- 8 a site
- 9 k previous episode
- 10 j constancy

2

- a Where do you get the pain? _____
- b Does the pain spread anywhere else? _____
- c Does it wake you up at night? _____
- d Can you tell me what the pain is like? _____
- e Can you describe the pain for me? _____
- f How long have you had the pain? _____
- g Is there anything which makes it worse or better? _____
- h When did it start? _____
- i Is there anything which brings it on? _____
- j Is the pain constant? _____
- k Have you had the pain before? _____

Adjectives describing pain

throbbing (adj): a pain that feels like regular beating or pulsing

boring (adj): (of a pain) passing through one part of the body to another.


Tender (adj) :(of a part of the body) painful when you touch it.

gnawing (adj) :a dull, continuous pain that does not go away

sharp (adj) : (of a pain) sudden and severe pain that feels like a knife or a sting


Crushing: a very heavy, strong pain or pressure, as if something is pressing hard on the body

Presenting complaints

 Listen. Match each picture in 1 with a conversation.





3  Listen again. What three questions are used by the doctor to ask about the presenting complaint (PC)?

- 1 What's brought you here _____?
- 2 Can you tell me what seems to be bothering you _____?
- 3 What can we do for you _____?

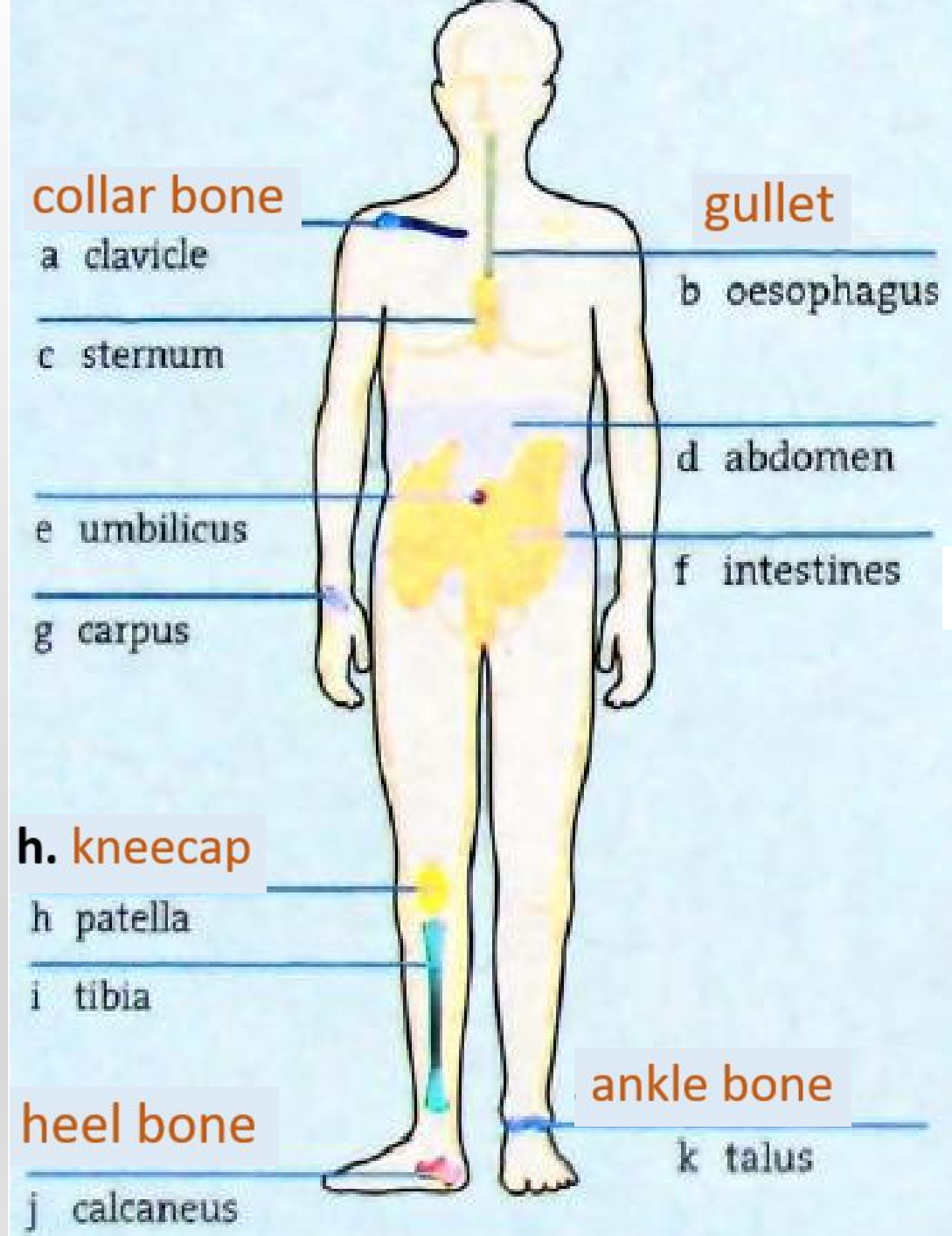
6. Think about non-technical terms for body parts a-k

c. breastbone

e. navel, belly button

g. wrist (bone)

i. shin bone



collar bone

gullet

a clavicle

b oesophagus

c sternum

d abdomen

e umbilicus

f intestines

g carpus

f. gut, bowel

h. kneecap

h patella

i tibia

heel bone

ankle bone





j calcaneus

k talus

d. tummy, belly

Pronunciation

Medical terms: word stress

1		<u>sternum</u>	,	<u>talus</u>	,	<u>carpus</u>
2		<u>clavicle</u>	,	<u>abdomen</u>	,	<u>tibia</u>
3		<u>patella</u>	,	<u>intestines</u>		
4		<u>umbilicus</u>	,	<u>calcaneus</u>	,	<u>oesophagus</u>

umbilicus

clavicle

abdomen

patella

sternum

talus

tibia

intestines

calcaneus

oesophagus

carpus

4 Try not to look at 1 and 2. Work in pairs. Take turns reading the sentences below by adding the correct words that match the stress pattern.

a Mrs Evans can't walk properly.

She's got a pain in her calcaneus

b He's very tender here on the right side of the abdomen near his kidneys.

c Ahmed's oesophagus feels as if it's on fire when he swallows.

d He damaged his patella when he fell on the pavement.

e James has got a crushing pain around the sternum but nothing in his arms or legs.

f I think there is a fracture in the carpus in the right hand.

g The pain radiates from around the umbilicus to the back.

SOCRATES

Use **SOCRATES** in the history of presenting complaint to help you remember the main questions you need to ask about pain.

Site

Onset

Character

Radiation

Association

Timing

Exacerbating and alleviating factors

Severity

SOCRATES: Site, onset , character, radiation, association, timing, exacerbating and alleviating factors, severity

- | | |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| 1. Where do you get the pain? | site |
| 2. Does the pain spread anywhere else? | radiation |
| 3. Does it wake you up at night? | severity |
| 4. When did it start? | onset |
| 5. Can you describe the pain for me? | character |
| 6. Is there anything which brings it on? | Association |
| 7. How long have you had the pain? | timing |
| 8. Is there anything which makes it worse/better? | exacerbating and alleviating factors |

Vocabulary

Describing pain

1. piercing / boring
2. extremely severe / intense
3. aching
4. scalding / burning
5. like a tight band around my head
6. dull / persistent / vague
7. excruciating / thunderclap
8. shooting
9. spasmodic
10. crushing / gripping

- A. sciatica
- B. ureteric colic
- C. acute pancreatitis
- D. appendicitis
- E. degenerative arthritis
- F. cluster headache
- G. cystitis
- H. tension headache
- I. sub-arachnoid haemorrhage
- J. angina pectoris

Words to describe pain

piercing: feeling as a sharp object is pushing in your body.

scalding: very strong and giving a feeling of burning.

persistent: continuing for a long period of time without interruption.

Vague: mild, not very severe

excruciating: extremely severe.

thunderclap: sudden and very tense.

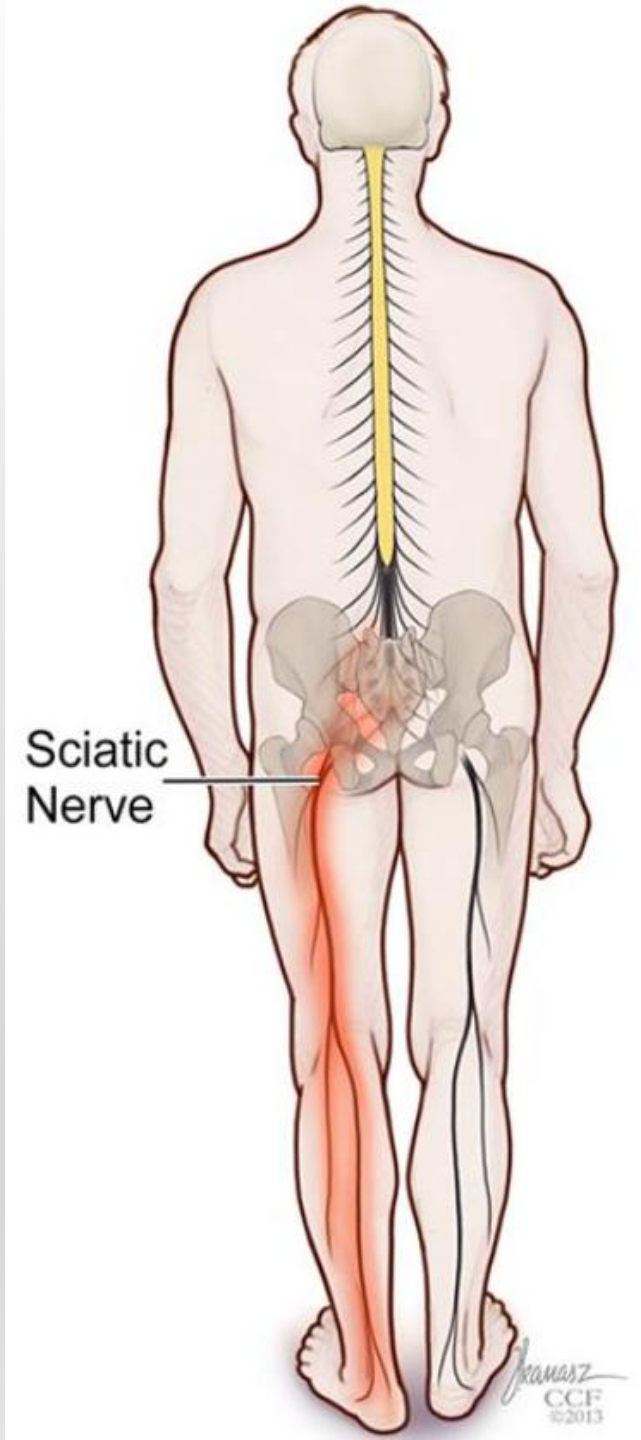
Shooting: a sudden sharp pain that moves quickly across an area of the body.

Spasmodic: (of a pain) caused by your muscles becoming tight in a way that you cannot control.

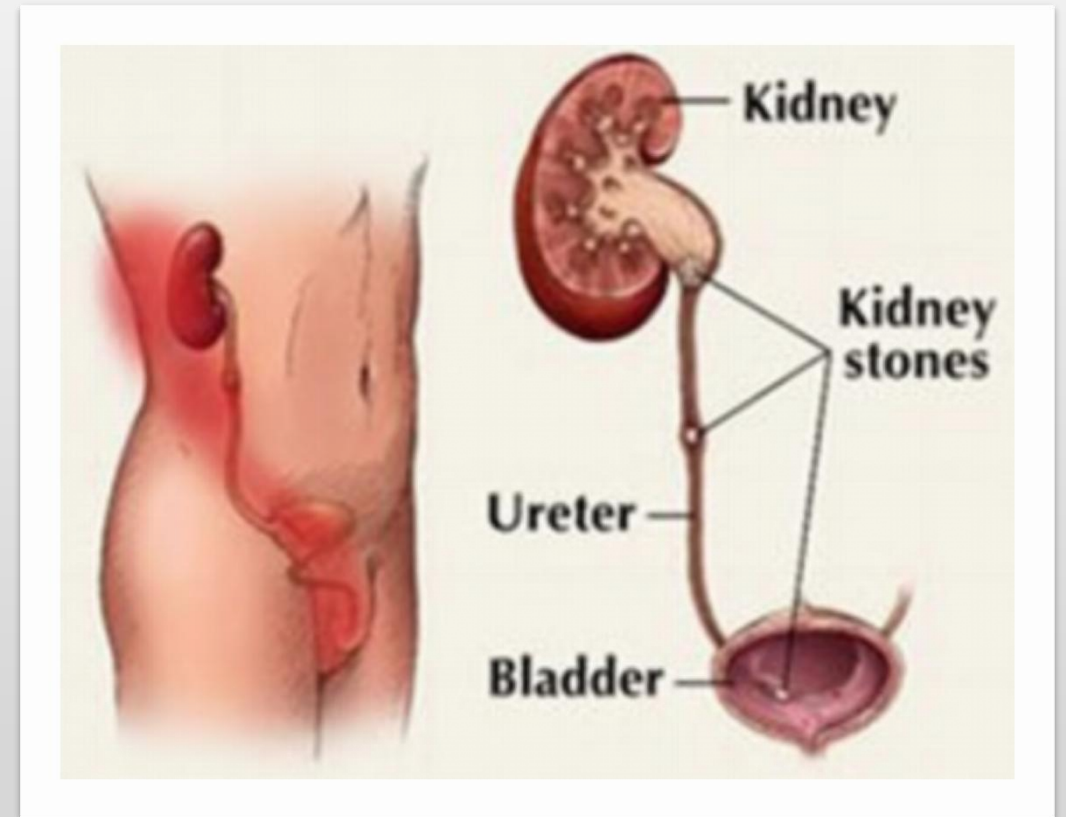
Gripping: feeling as if something is squeezing or holding a part of your body very hard.

Bac
k

Sciatica refers to back pain caused by a problem with the **sciatic** nerve. This is a large nerve that runs from the lower back down the back of each leg.



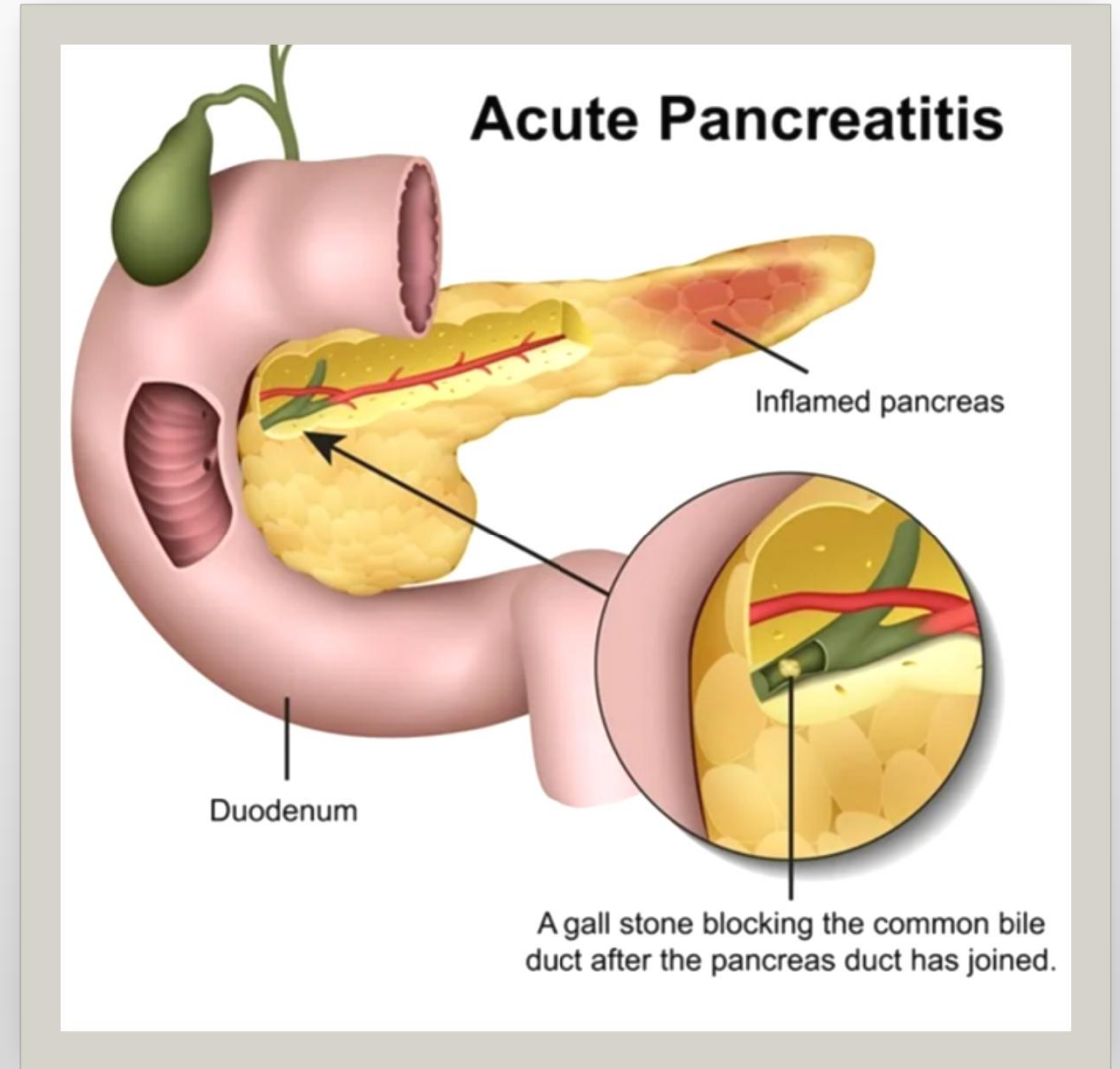
Ureteric colic (renal colic) is defined as a medical condition characterized by the presence of a urinary stone, leading to a severe urinary system pain.



(Han)

Bac
k

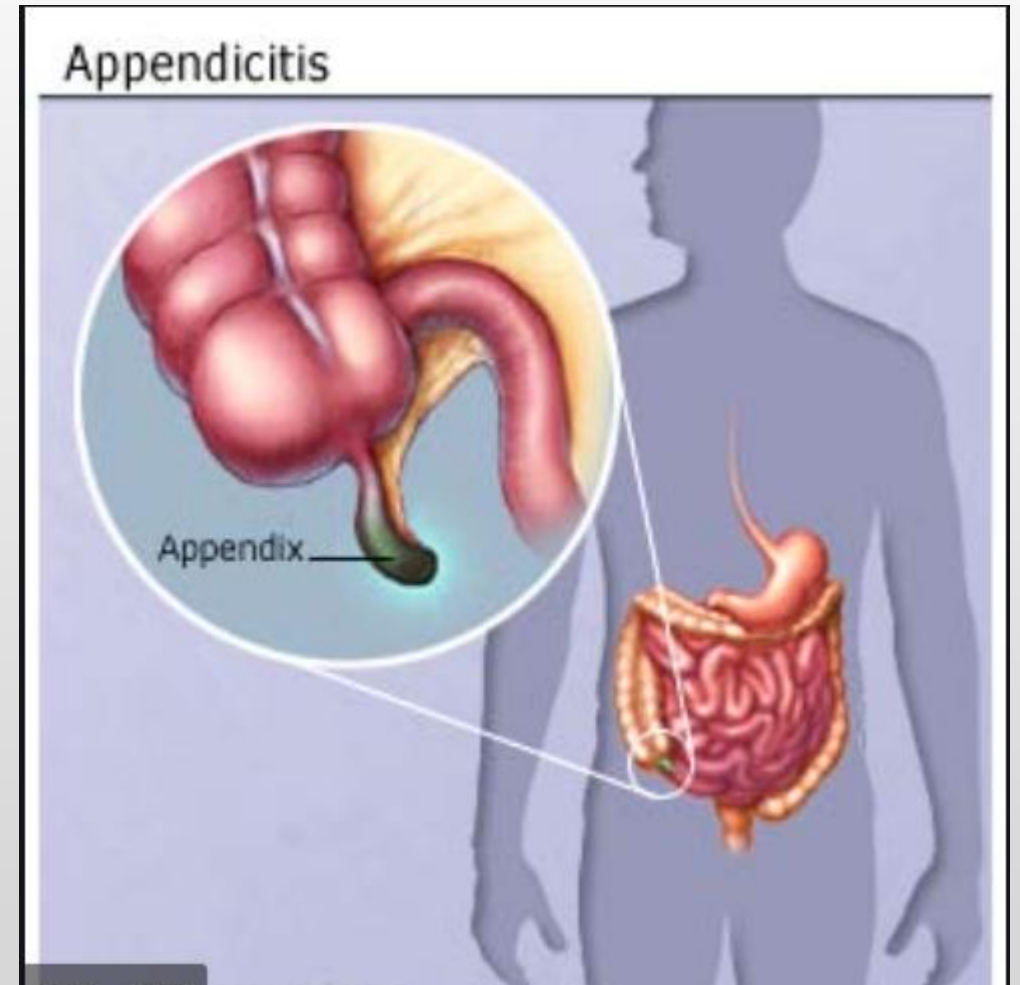
Acute pancreatitis is sudden inflammation of the **pancreas**.



(Dreams time)

Bac
k

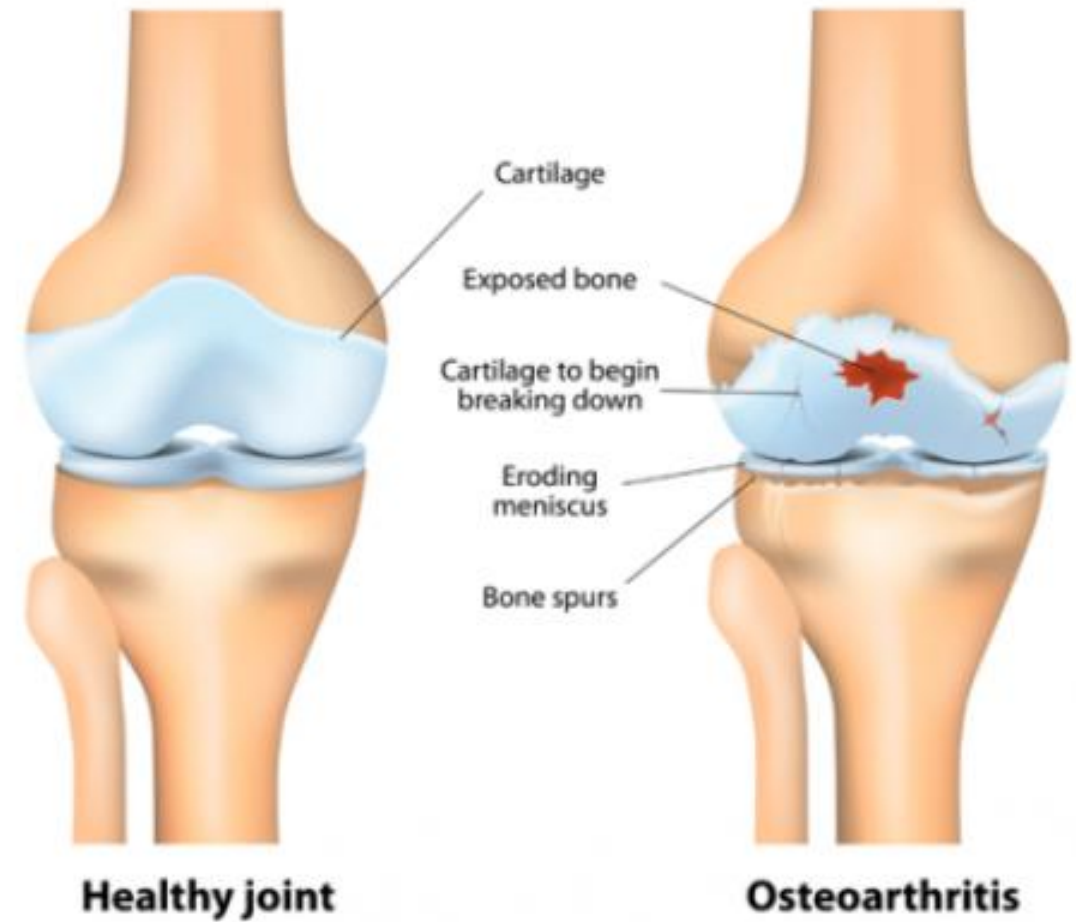
Appendicitis occurs when the appendix becomes inflamed and filled with pus. It requires surgery.



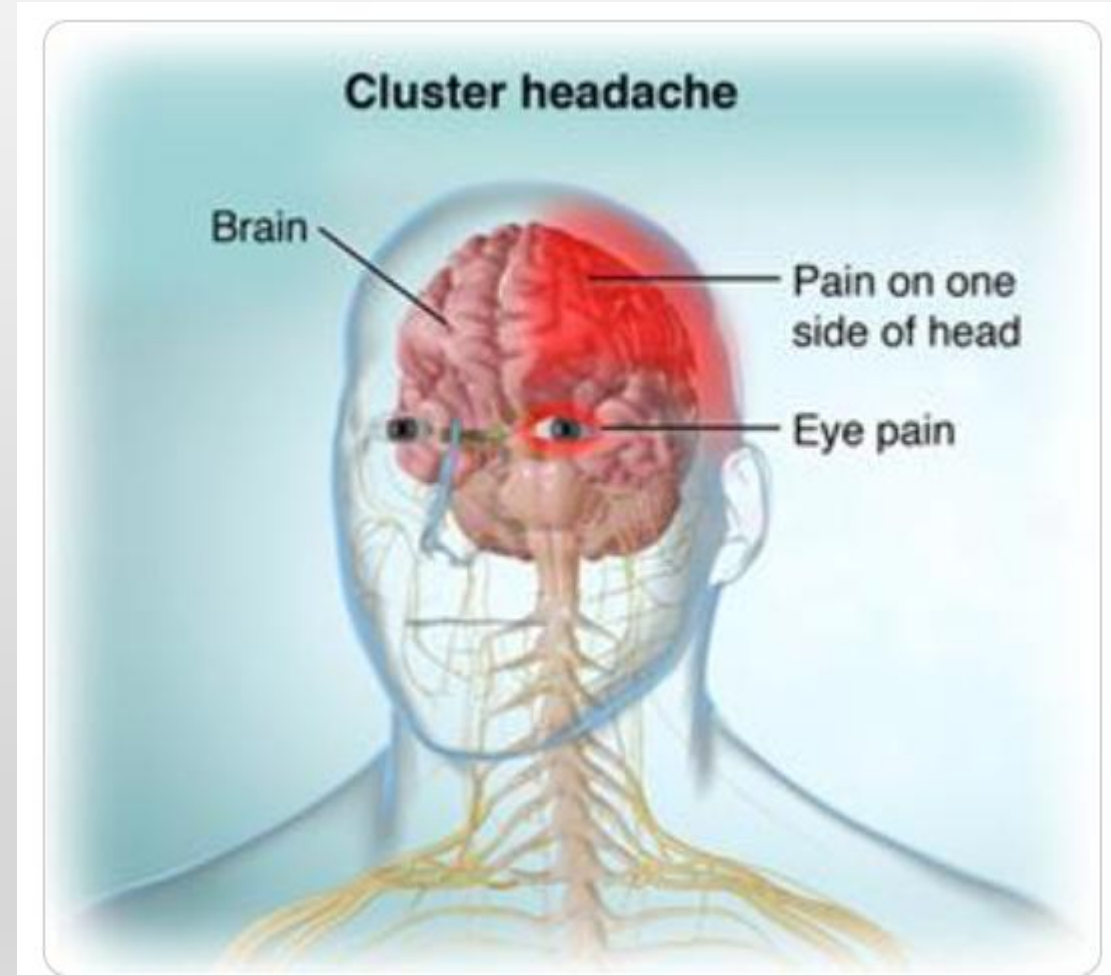
(Khatri, 2019)

Bac
k

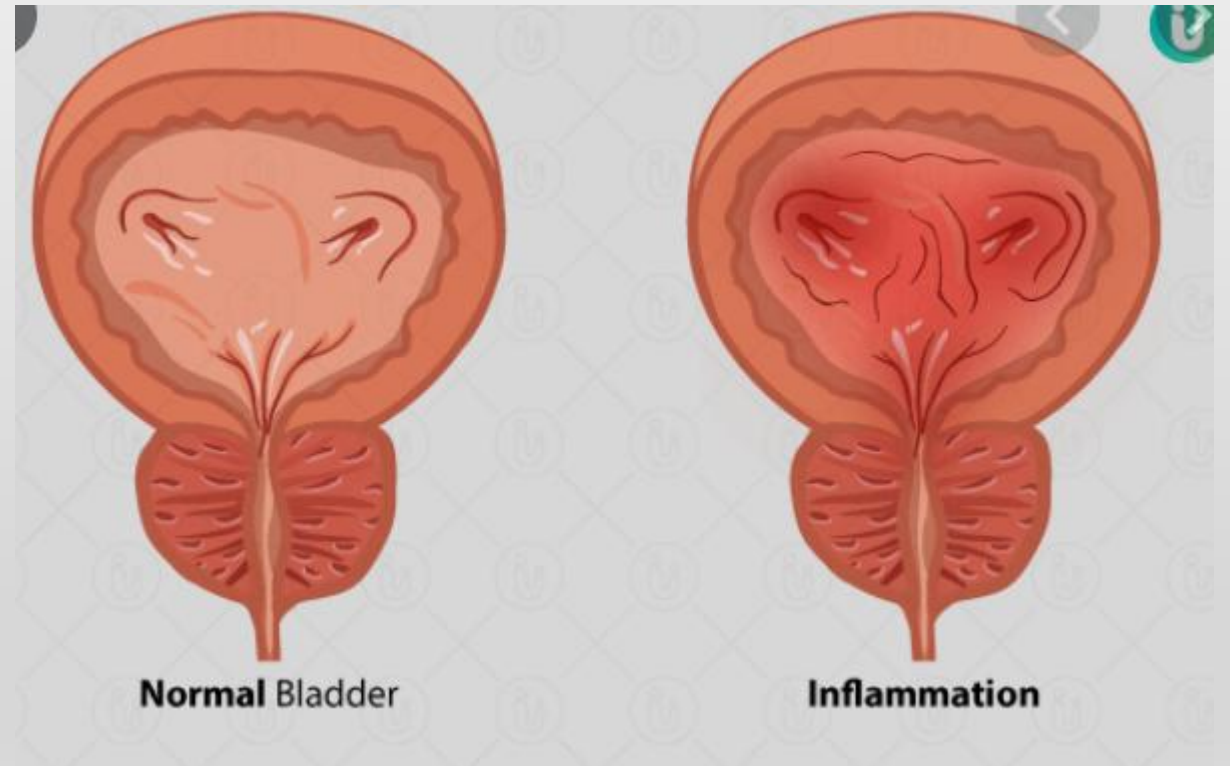
Degenerative arthritis (Osteoarthritis) is a condition that involves the chronic breakdown of cartilage in the **joints** leading to painful joint inflammation. (Mayo Clinic)



Cluster headache (CH) is on one side of the head, typically around the eye. There is often accompanying eye watering, nasal congestion, or swelling around the eye on the affected side. (Orchard Health)

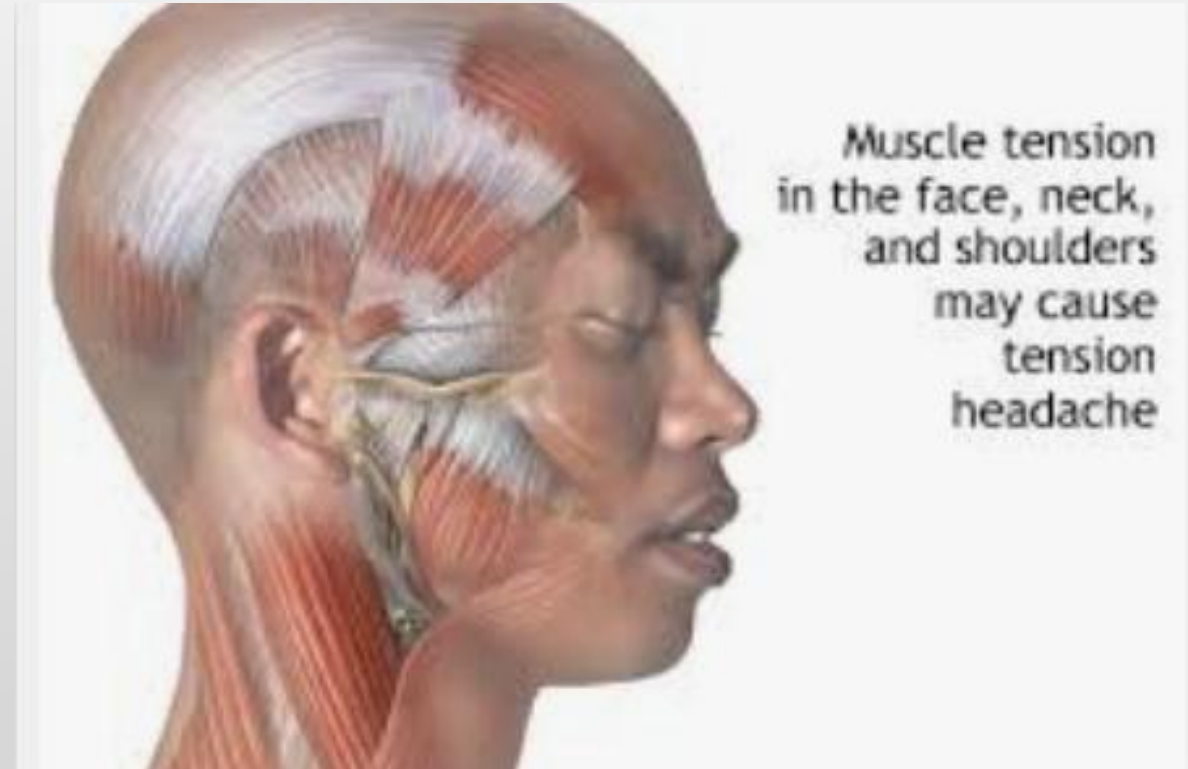


- **Cystitis** is an inflammation of the bladder.



(Rajalakshmi)

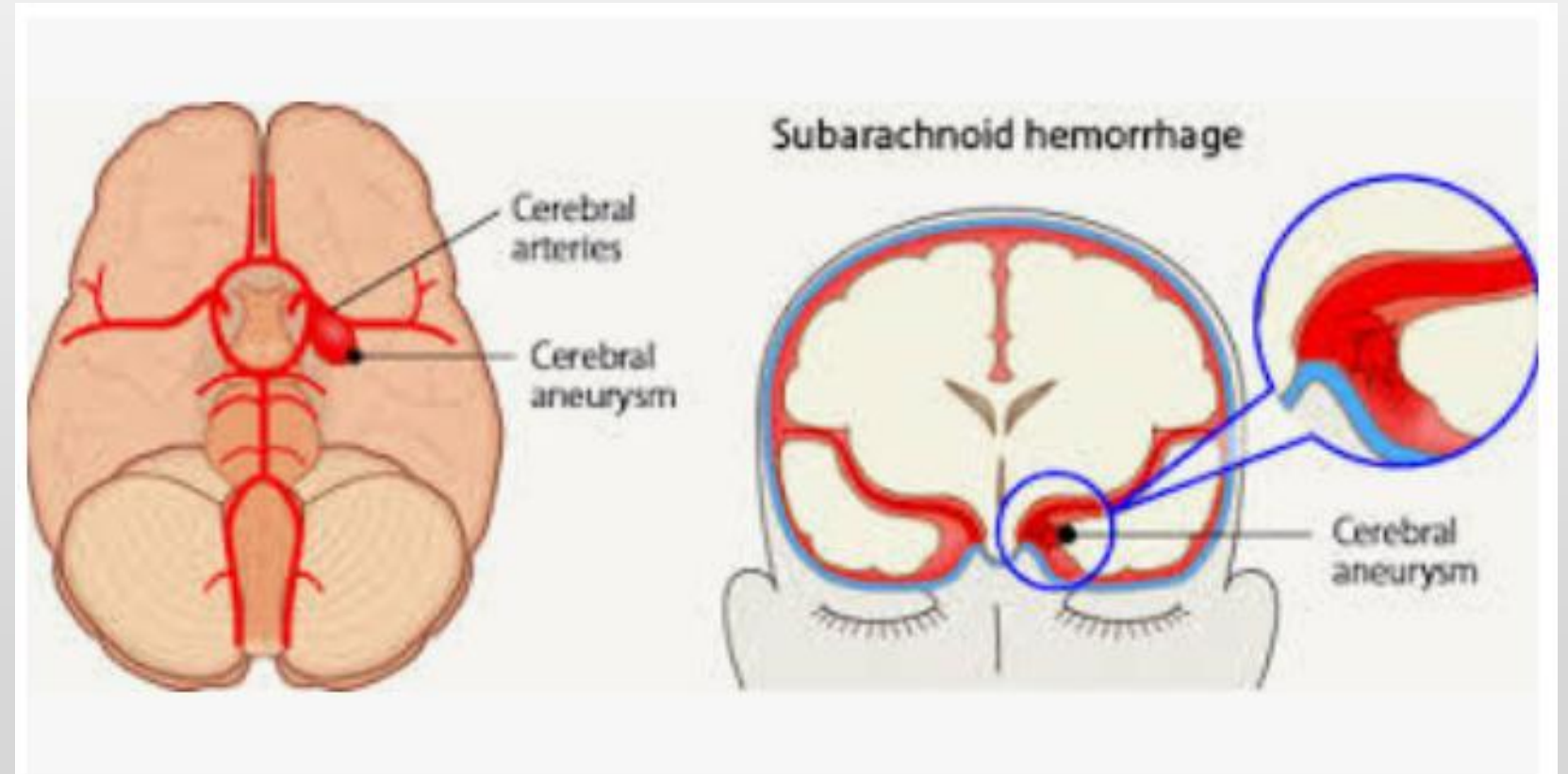
A **tension headache** is the most common type of **headache**. It can cause mild, moderate, or intense pain behind your eyes and in your head and neck. Some people say that a **tension headache** feels like a tight band around their forehead.



(Medlineplus)

Bac
k

- **Subarachnoid hemorrhage (SAH)** is a life-threatening type of stroke caused by bleeding into the space surrounding the brain.



(Furst, 2020)

Bac
k

Angina pectoris is the medical term for **chest pain** or discomfort due to coronary heart disease. It occurs when the heart muscle doesn't get as much blood as it needs.



(American Heart Association, 2015)

Bac
k

Vocabulary

Describing pain

Which descriptions 1-10 do you associate with the conditions a–j? In some cases, there may be more than one answer.

1. piercing / boring
2. extremely severe / intense
3. aching
4. scalding / burning
5. like a tight band around your head
6. dull / persistent / vague
7. excruciating / thunderclap
8. shooting
9. spasmodic
10. crushing / gripping

- | | |
|------------------------------|----|
| A. sciatica | 8 |
| B. ureteric colic | 9 |
| C. acute pancreatitis | 1 |
| D. appendicitis | 6 |
| E. degenerative arthritis | 3 |
| F. cluster headache | 2 |
| G. cystitis | 4 |
| H. tension headache | 5 |
| I. sub-arachnoid haemorrhage | 7 |
| J. angina pectoris | 10 |

3. For each description, write **M** (mild), **S** (severe), or **V** (very severe). Then say which condition **a–j** in **1** each patient below is possibly describing.

1. **M** I get this vague headache sometimes during the week.

2. **V** The headache is excruciating. I can't bear to look at the light.

3. **V** The pain in my stomach is so bad it makes me double up.

4. **S** I get this sharp pain when you press my side here on the right and then let go.

5. **V** All my joints hurt. I am wracked with pain.

Possible conditions: 1. Tension headache 2. Cluster headache 3. Acute pancreatitis 4. Appendicitis 5. Degenerative arthritis.

differentiate (v) distinguish; tell the difference between

4. You can ask a patient to describe pain on a scale of 1 to 10. What other ways can you ask a patient to assess the severity of pain?

- 1. Visual Analog Scale (VAS):** Ask the patient to mark their pain level on a straight line from 'no pain' to 'worst pain imaginable'.
- 2. Verbal Rating Scale (VRS):** Use words to describe pain, such as mild, moderate, severe, or unbearable.
- 3. Faces Pain Scale (FPS-R):** Show a series of facial expressions ranging from a smiling face (no pain) to a crying face (worst pain) and ask the patient to choose one.
- 4. Descriptive Pain Scale:** Ask the patient to describe their pain using terms like throbbing, stabbing, burning, or crushing.

It's my job

- 1 Before you read the text about Dr Henderson, a cardiologist, discuss with a partner what you think being a cardiologist involves.

Dr Gillian Henderson

My name is Dr Henderson. I'm a cardiologist at a London hospital. The highly trained team of which I am part deals with the diagnosis, investigation, and treatment of patients with all forms of heart disease, including cardiac transplantation and some sorts of vascular disease.

None of our work would be possible without the support of other people in the hospital team – the triage nurses, the receptionists, and so on. Their work is vital to the smooth running of the department. When patients arrive for the first time, personal information is taken: name, address, telephone numbers, next of kin for contact in case of emergency, and other information such as their GP's name and address, their NHS number, and their unique hospital number.

We deal with a large catchment area and also deal with referrals from outside the area, tourists, visitors to A&E, private patients, and so on, so the potential for confusion is great unless the data that are taken are accurate and the systems secure.

At various stages of patients' contact with the hospital, information is checked to make sure it is correct and that the patients can confirm their identity. For example, on arrival at a clinic patients might be asked their GP's name or part of their telephone number, for example the last three numbers.

Then during the consultation a nurse or a doctor might also ask their date of birth. All this is for the benefit of the patient to ensure the hospital team does not make mistakes and people do not use patients' details fraudulently.

We can then turn to dealing with the patients' treatment in safety.



2 All of the statements below are true. Find information in the text to support each statement.

- 1 Dr Henderson's team is very skilled.
- 2 The work of her team depends on the support of other people.
- 3 Details about the closest relative are taken from patients.
- 4 Patients have two numbers (other than their phone number) on their hospital records.
- 5 The data collected need to be accurate.
- 6 Checks are carried out to make sure patients are who they say they are.

Listening 3

A presenting complaint



Pulse 100/min 100 beats per minute
Hydrargentum/ Hydrargyrion blood pressure
BP: 100/70 mm/Hg millimetres of mercury
JVP Not elevated jugular venous pressure
CVS NAD cardiovascular system
no abnormality detected
O/E on examination
Widespread early inspiratory fine crepitations
audible
abdomen - normal
CNS - NAD central nervous system

Listen and make notes about Mr. Wood's presenting complaint.

Speaking

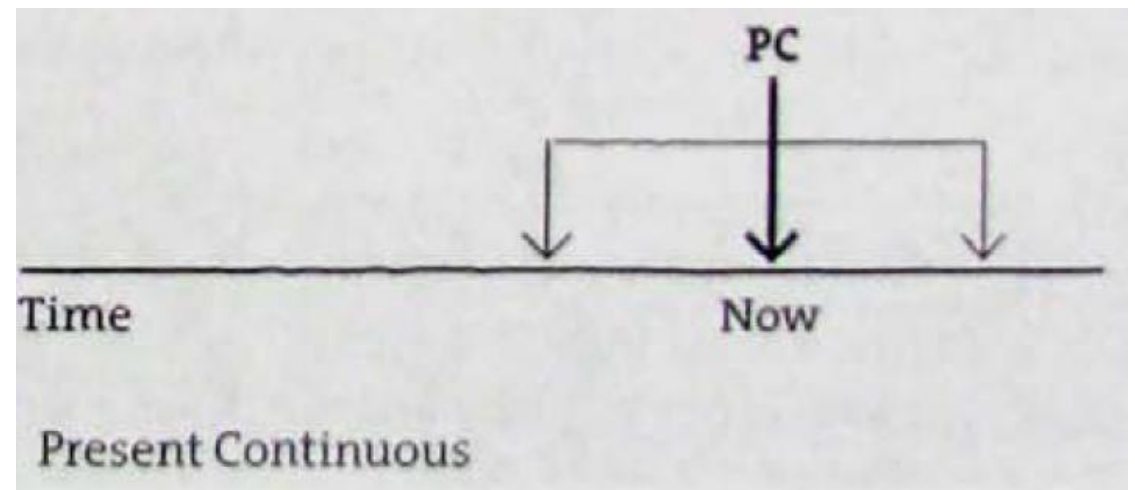
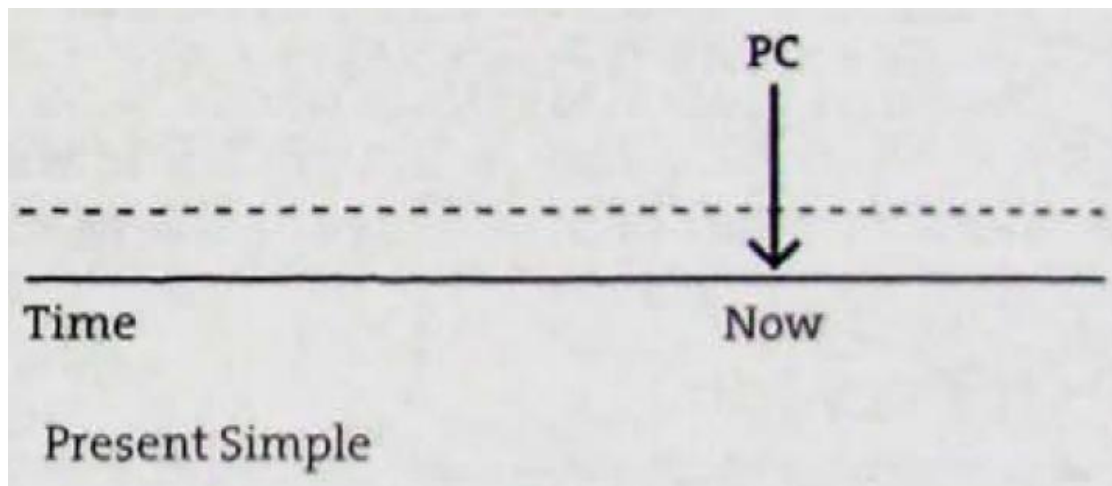
- 1 Discuss the signs above.
- 2 Discuss the correct diagnosis for the shoulder pain. angina
- 3 Decide what the diagnosis was on arrival at the hospital.
Angina or myocardial infarction
- 4 Outline your immediate treatment.
administration of aspirin and oxygen; pain relief

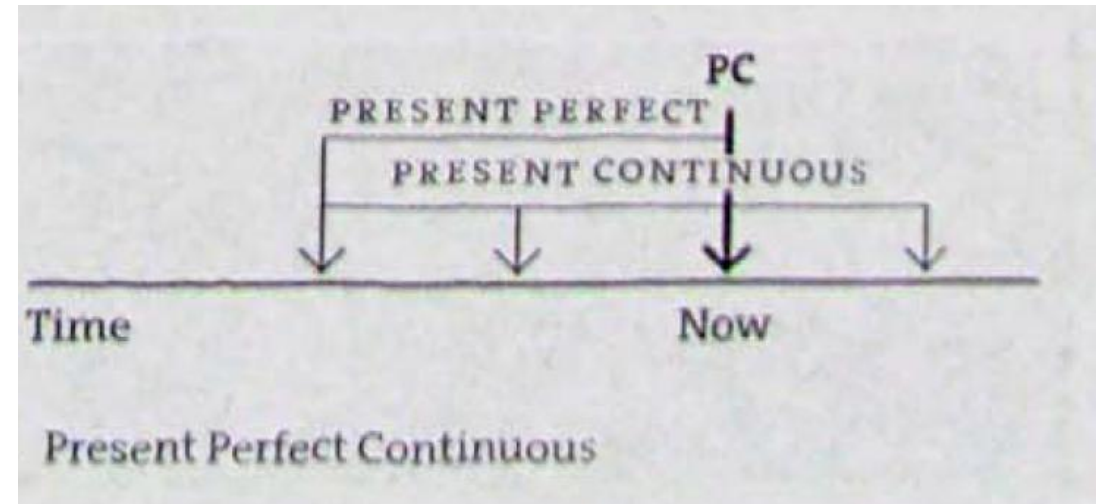
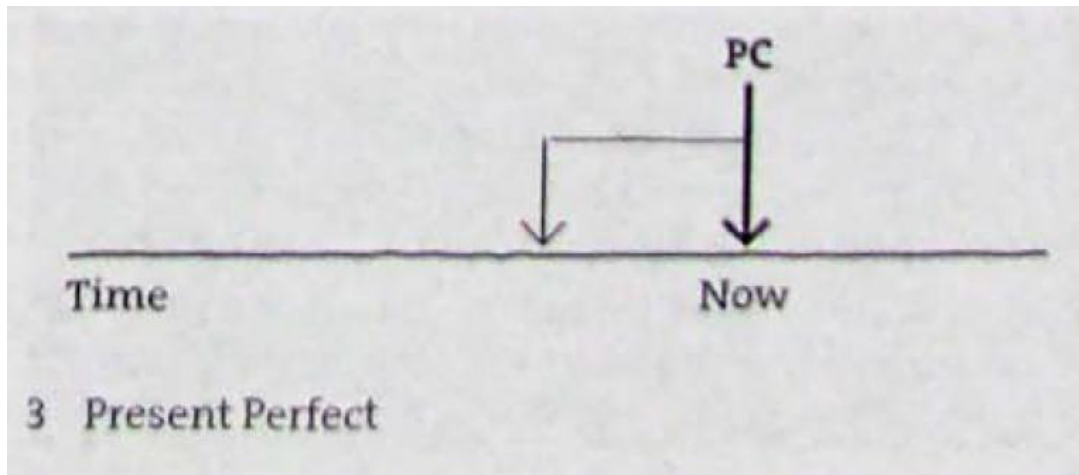
Grammar

🌟 **Language spot**

Tenses in the presenting complaint

- Understanding the time patients are referring to when they speak is crucial to making a correct diagnosis. You should be very comfortable understanding the difference between the Present Simple, Present Continuous, Present Perfect, and Present Perfect Continuous.





- 1** Decide whether each sentence a–i relates to the time shown in diagrams 1, 2, 3, or 4 below.

PC = Presenting complaint

- a 1 I've got a headache.
- b 4 I've been having this shooting pain in my leg.
- c 1 I keep getting these flashing lights around my eyes and a sharp pain.
- d 4 I have been having these terrible backaches.
- e 1 The pain goes right through you.
- f 4 Have you been having any pain?
- g 2 I'm getting these headaches off and on now.
- h 2 I'm not taking anything for them.
- i 3 The attacks have increased.

2 Work in pairs. Complete the sentences below with the correct form of the verb. If more than one tense is possible, explain the difference.

1 My mother _____ (have) these pains since last Tuesday. She still has them.

has been having

2 _____ (you normally go) for a run at the same time every day?

Do you normally go

3 The pain _____ (ease) a little since yesterday. It's better now.

has eased

4 I _____ (lie) in bed for four weeks now. I haven't been out of it once, doctor.

have been lying

5 I can see the rash _____ (get worse). It's much redder.

is getting/ has been getting worse

6 I _____ (not take) any medication at the moment.

am not taking

7 _____ (pain spread) to your shoulder or is it just here?

Has/Does the pain spread

Speaking

A

acute pancreatitis

gastritis:
(Inflammation of the lining of the stomach)

Duodenitis
(inflammation in your duodenum lining)

B

appendicitis

cholecystitis (gallbladder inflammation)

gallstone

ureteric colic

a

pain just above belly button; goes through to back; makes me double up; worse after a fatty meal; drink a lot (alcohol); sharp pain; had it several times before; pain there all the time; came on after dinner last night



b

sharp pain in the right side; makes me double up; never had it before; feeling sick; side very tender to touch; only thing relieves it is bending knees to chest





Culture project

Being aware of your own body language and the body language of your patients will help you in taking a history.



1 Find a picture a–c to match each description of body language 1–7.

- 1 a The doctor is not sure about what he is saying.
- 2 a, b, c The patient is not comfortable or at ease.
- 3 The patient is angry.
- 4 The doctor is bored and unsympathetic.
- 5 The doctor is showing interest and inviting the patient to continue speaking.
- 6 The patient doesn't understand what the doctor is saying.
- 7 The doctor and patient aren't communicating.

Writing

A case report

- 1 Complete the extract from the case report written by Dr Martin after the consultation with Mr Wood on page 8. Insert the verbs in the correct form into the appropriate blank space.

present have be smoke
be work radiate

A 49-year-old man presented¹ in A & E with chest pain. He had had the pain for 3 hours prior to arrival. The pain was² in the centre of his chest and radiated³ to his left shoulder.

He had⁴ a history of chest pain on exercise, which has been present for the previous six months.

He smoked⁵ approximately 20 cigarettes a day and was⁶ teetotal. He has been prescribed aspirin, B-blockers for the previous two years, and a GTN spray to use as required, which is two to three times per week. His father died of a myocardial infarction aged 65. He worked⁷ as a gallery attendant.

Glyceryl trinitrate (GTN) is a **spray** used to relieve angina (chest pain).