

ESL Lesson Idea: Describing Symptoms

Description

Your students need to be able to talk about symptoms when they are occurring so that they can describe them to a health worker.

Materials

- Student Handout: **Describing Symptoms**

Suggestions

- Using the **Describing Symptoms** handout, ask students the following questions:
"What's the matter?"
"Has this ever happened to you?"
"What did you do?"
"What other words do you know when you are not feeling well?"
- Write the sample conversation below on the board. Students will practice the conversation in pairs. Use the pictures of symptoms to practice each one.
A: "What's the matter?"
B: "I have a headache."
A: "I'm sorry to hear that. I hope you feel better soon."
B: "Thanks."
- For more practice, have students practice dialogues that might occur in the doctor's office or emergency room, asking and answering questions such as:
"Where does it hurt?"
"How long have you felt like this?"
"Are you taking any medication?"
"What kind of medical insurance do you have?"
- With more advanced students, have students practice writing down the symptoms and/or questions in a letter to take to the doctors' office. Explain that this will help them to remember everything important and to be better understood.
- Related lessons: **Calling in Sick, Late, or Absent** and **Reporting Emergencies**