



Focus: Describing symptoms, giving instructions, using clear and calm language with patients and colleagues

Medical & Healthcare Communication



The English Hub

Welcome & Objectives

Today, you will:

- Learn vocabulary for symptoms and medical instructions
- Use grammar to express advice and warnings
- Practise clear, calm language in roleplay scenarios
- Gain confidence using English in patient or colleague interactions

Warm-up discussion:

- Have you ever needed to describe a health issue in English?
- What part of your role requires clarity and calm communication?

Key Vocabulary: Symptoms & Medical Terms

Review the vocabulary with your tutor:

Term	Definition	Example
fever	high body temperature	"The patient has a mild fever."
nausea	feeling sick	"He reported nausea after lunch."
prescription	written medication instruction	"I gave her a new prescription."
dosage	correct amount of medicine	"Double-check the dosage, please."
allergic reaction	harmful response to substance	"He had an allergic reaction to penicillin."

Task: Use two terms and create your own example sentences.

Speaking Practice: Describe a Symptom

Scenario:

Pretend a colleague asks you about a patient. How would you describe these symptoms in simple English?

Your tutor will give you one word (e.g. 'vomiting', 'rash', 'dizziness'), and student forms a full sentence.

Focus: Calm tone + structure

Example: "She has a mild rash on her arm."

Grammar: Modal Verbs for Advice

Explanation:

Modal verbs like **should**, **must**, **have to**, **could** help express advice, instructions, or obligation.

Modal	Use	Example
should	recommendation	"You should drink more water."
must	strong necessity	"You must take your medication."
could	suggestion	"You could try resting more."
have to	requirement	"You have to fast before surgery."

Rule:

Subject + modal verb + base verb

"He should rest." / "They must wear gloves."



Activity: Advice for Patients

Scenario:

- The patient has a sore throat
- They missed their medication
- They have trouble sleeping

Task: Give advice to a patient in these scenarios

Encourage variety: use different modal verbs for each

Example: “You could drink warm tea.”

Listening: Common Instructions

Your tutor will read out the following instructions:

- “Please remove your shoes before entering.”
- “You must take this tablet after food.”
- “You should rest for the next two days.”

Discuss:

- Which are strong obligations?
- Which are polite recommendations?

Explain how you defined this.



Grammar: First Conditional for Medical Outcomes

Explanation:

The **first conditional** is used for real, possible outcomes.

Structure:

- If + present simple, will + verb

Examples:

- “If you take this medicine, you’ll feel better.”
“If she skips her antibiotics, she won’t recover fully.”

Task: Practise building 2 conditional sentences aloud using the following scenario:

1. A patient drinks enough water during the day.
2. A patient ignores the physiotherapist’s exercises.



Grammar Practice: Complete the Sentence

Your tutor will say half of a conditional sentence:

- “If he doesn’t rest...”
- “If she eats peanuts again...”
- “If he doesn’t take his medication...”

Task: Complete the sentence after your tutor reads the first half.



Polite Imperatives: Giving Clear Instructions

Explanation:

In healthcare, we give instructions politely and clearly using imperatives + softeners.

Examples:

- “Please lie down.”
“Take a deep breath, please.”
“Don’t move your arm.”

Task: Rephrase the following sentences into a polite imperative:

1. Wash your hands.
2. Don’t eat anything for 8 hours before the test.
3. Take this pill with water.

Tip: Practise clear delivery + tone



Listening: Instruction Scenarios

Your tutor will read the following instruction sentences:

“Put this under your tongue and wait 30 seconds.”

“Please let me know if you feel dizzy.”

“Keep your leg raised.”

Task: Identify the action verb + tone (polite or neutral).

Roleplay: Nurse to Patient

Scenario:

You're a nurse explaining *post-operation care* to a patient who has just returned home from minor knee surgery. The patient is still a little tired from the procedure and may not remember everything from the hospital briefing, so you need to speak slowly, clearly, and politely.

Your goal is to:

- **Start with reassurance:** make the patient feel comfortable.
- **Give clear, polite instructions:** using imperatives with softeners (*please, make sure, remember to*).
- **Sequence the advice:** using words like *first, then, after that, and finally*.
- **End by checking understanding:** and offering to answer questions.



Present Perfect for Patient History

Explanation:

We use present perfect to talk about a patient's experience until now.

Structure:

- Subject + have/has + past participle

Examples:

- “He has taken the medication for two weeks.”
“She hasn't had any pain today.”

Task: Your tutor will read out the following actions, form positive/negative sentences for them:

- Feel pain
- Miss a dose
- Recovered fully



Speaking: Giving a Quick Medical Update

Scenario:

You're a nurse in a busy hospital ward. A doctor has just arrived to check on a patient who had surgery two days ago. The doctor needs a quick verbal update before doing the rounds. You need to summarise the patient's recent status using **present perfect** and the **passive voice**.

Task: Give a **two-sentence** spoken update, include the following:

- Make sure one sentence describes something that has happened to the patient.
- The other sentence should describe an ongoing or repeated situation.



Common Questions from Patients

Your tutor will pretend to be a patient and ask you the following questions:

1. “How long do I need to take this?”
2. “Is it safe to go home?”
3. “Can I eat before the scan?”

Task: Answer each scenario using soft modal phrases.
Example: “You’ll need to take it for 5 days.”

Error Correction

Correct the following sentences:

- “She take the tablet already.”
- “If he not stop smoking, he will get worse.”
- “She need take medication morning”

