

1

Health and illness

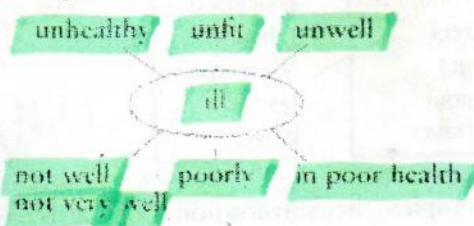
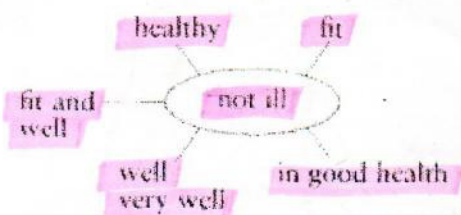
A Asking about health

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 or 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.

insomnia
stressed sleeping

Patient says

nausea = غثبات

Possible meanings

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.

vomiting

disease = الداء

The combination sickness and diarrhoea means vomiting and diarrhoea.

C Recovery

شفا

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 in remission.

He got over the illness very quickly.

Two years later she remains in complete remission.

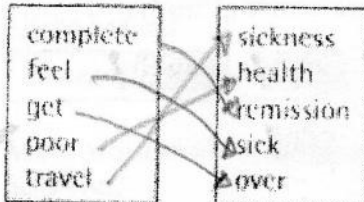
remission

improving ≠ deteriorating

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	healthy
illness	ill
sickness	sick

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



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

Doctor: How are you feeling today?
 Patient: Not very well
 Doctor: How long have you been feeling (2) unhealthy?
 Patient: About a week.
 Doctor: What is your (3) health like normally?
 Patient: Very good. I'm usually quite (4) well and (5) fit.
 Doctor: What is the problem now?
 Patient: It's my stomach.
 Doctor: Do you feel (6) sick?
 Patient: Yes.
 Doctor: Have you actually been (7) sick?
 Patient: No.
 Doctor: Have you had any serious (8) illness 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.

- Her condition (deteriorated/improved) and she died.
- He (relapsed/recovered) and was allowed to go home from hospital.
- The cause of sleeping (illness/sickness) was discovered in 1931.
- The patient made a full (remission/recovery).
- I have been in (poor/good) health for months and feel very fit.
- It was a month before I (got over / got better) the illness.
- 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?

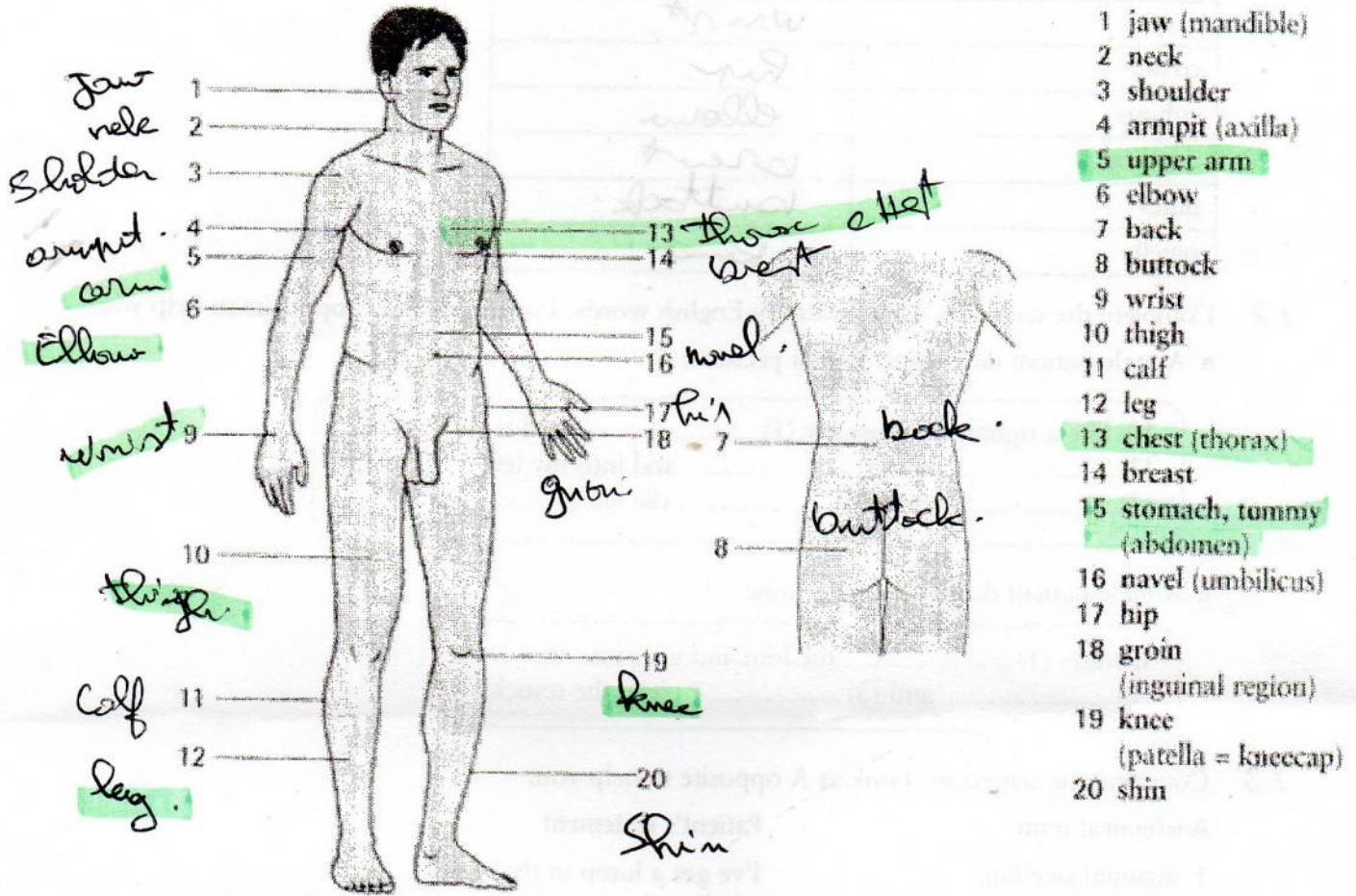
- avoiding unhealthy food
- practice sport

2

Parts of the body 1

A Parts of the body

Most external parts of the body have ordinary English names as well as anatomical names. Doctors normally use the English names, even when talking to each other. There are a few exceptions where doctors use the anatomical name; these are shown in brackets below.



Limb means arm (upper limb) or leg (lower limb). The trunk is the body excluding the head and limbs.

For a more detailed diagram showing parts of the body, see Appendix I on page 00.

B Referring to parts of the body

When patients speak about their problem they often refer to a part of the body:

I'm having trouble with my

hip,
shoulder,
knee.

The doctor often needs to ask about a part of the body:

Do you get any pain in

the
your

chest?
stomach?
back?

C Describing radiation of pain

A patient is telling the doctor about his back pain and the parts of the body it radiates to.

It starts in the back. Then it seems to go into the right buttock and down the back of the right thigh to the knee.

2.1 Write the ordinary English words for the corresponding anatomical terms in the table using your medical knowledge. Look at A opposite to help you.

Anatomical term	Common word
abdomen	Stomach
axilla	armpit
carpus	Wrist
Coxa COXA	hip
elbow	elbow
mammaries	breast
ischiorectal	buttock
patella	Knee

2.2 Complete the sentences using ordinary English words. Look at A and C opposite to help you.

a A male patient describing angina pectoris:

It's like a tightness across my (1) chest, and it goes up (2) in to my (3) jaw and into my left (4) shoulder and (5) down to the left (6) arm.

b A male patient describing renal colic:

It starts (1) in the loin and goes into the (2) groin and (3) down into the testicle.

2.3 Complete the sentences. Look at A opposite to help you.

Anatomical term

Patient's statement

- inguinal swelling
- abdominal pain
- periumbilical rash
- thoracic pain
- enlarged axillary node
- mandibular pain

- I've got a lump in the groin.
- My little boy's got a stomach ache.
- I've got some spots around my navel.
- I've got a pain in the middle of the chest.
- There's a painful swelling in my armpit.
- I've got a pain in my jaw.

2.4 Complete the table with words from the box. The first one has been done for you.

abdomen	elbow	loin	wrist	thigh
knee	chest	arm	leg	finger

Trunk	Upper limb	Lower limb
abdomen loin - chest	elbow wrist arm finger	thigh knee leg

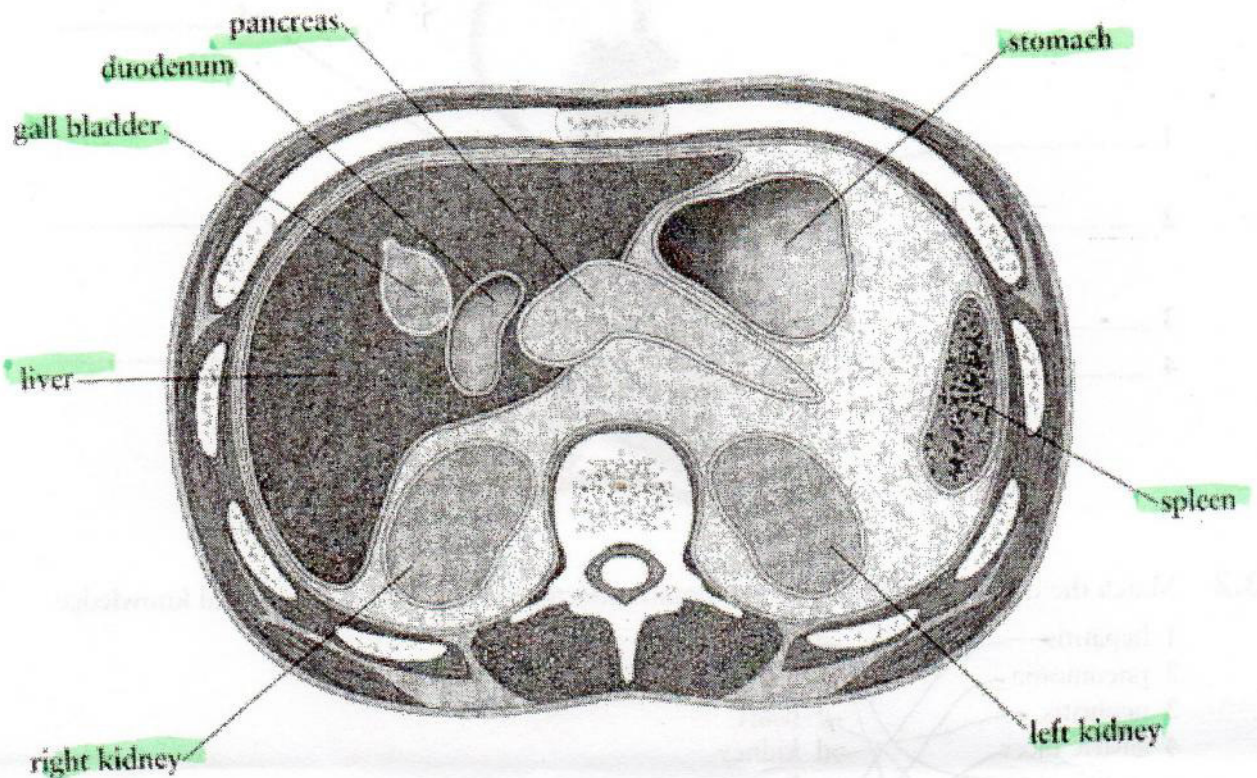
Over to you

Make a list of the words from A opposite that you find it hard to remember or that you need most often. Try to learn at least one of them every day.

A

The abdomen

The main organs of the body have ordinary English names and doctors use these words. But when an adjective is needed they often use an anatomical word. For example, we can say disease of **the liver** or **hepatic disease**. Some abdominal organs, for example the pancreas, have no ordinary name.



When doctors talk about the main parts of the digestive system, they use the words **bowel** or **intestine**: the **small intestine** or the **small bowel**, the **large intestine** or the **large bowel**. When speaking to patients, doctors may refer to the anus and rectum as the **back passage**.

B

The chest

The chest (thorax) contains the **organs of respiration** and the **heart**. The main parts of the respiratory system are the **airways** and the **lungs**. The left lung is divided into two **lobes**, and the right into three. The airways consist of the **larynx**, the trachea (or **windpipe**), the right and left bronchus, and the **bronchioles**. The chest is separated from the abdomen by the **diaphragm**.

C

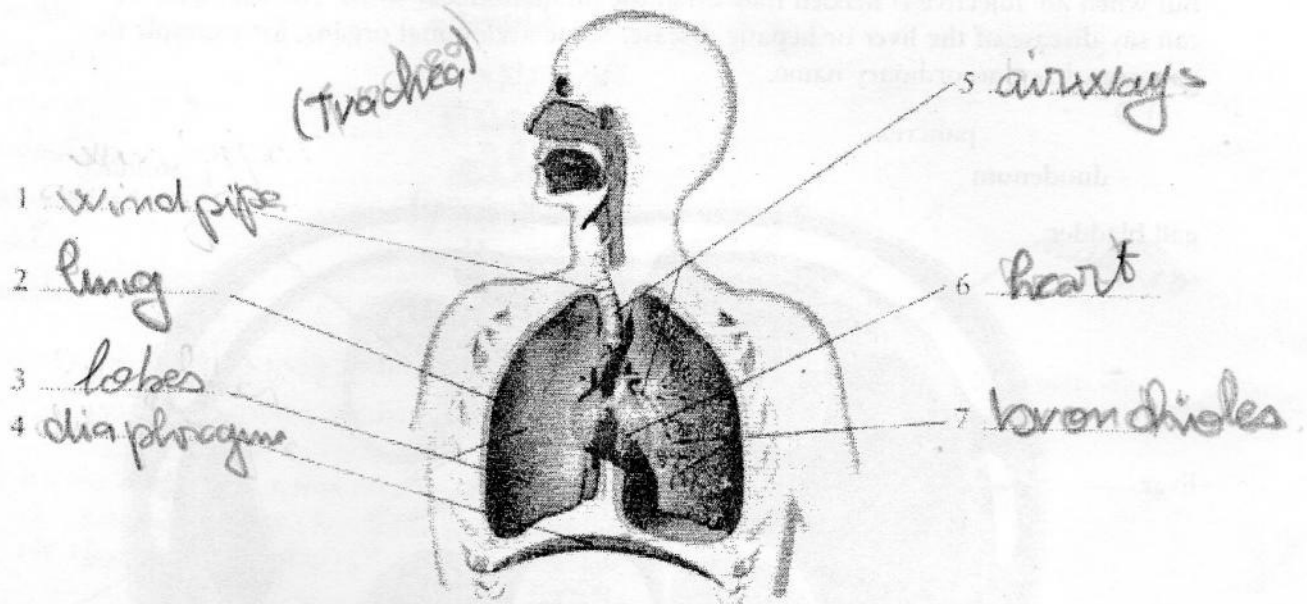
The pelvis

A doctor is explaining the function of the **bladder** to a patient.

The bladder is situated in the pelvis, as you know, and it is connected to each **kidney** by a long tube called the **ureter** – one on each side. The ureters carry the urine from the kidneys to the bladder, where it is stored until you decide to **empty your bladder**. When that happens, the urine passes down another tube, called the **urethra**, to the outside.

3.1 Label the diagram using words from the box. Look at B opposite to help you.

diaphragm	lobes	windpipe	heart
lung	airways	bronchioles	



3.2 Match the conditions (1-8) with the organs affected (a-h), using your medical knowledge.

1 hepatitis	→	a bladder
2 pneumonia	→	b gall bladder
3 nephritis	→	c heart
4 gastric ulcer	→	d kidney
5 cystitis	→	e liver
6 angina pectoris	→	f lung
7 cholecystitis	→	g stomach
8 ulcerative colitis	→	h large bowel

Handwritten notes in Arabic: التهاب الكبد (hepatitis), التهاب الرئة (pneumonia), التهاب الكلى (nephritis), التهاب المرارة (cholecystitis), التهاب القولون (ulcerative colitis), التهاب المثانة (cystitis).

3.3 Complete the textbook extract. Look at A and C opposite to help you.

Examination of the abdomen

To examine the patient for enlarged abdominal (1) organs, first feel for the (2) liver and the (3) gall bladder on the right side. To do this, ask the patient to take a deep breath, while pressing with the fingers upwards and inwards. Next, feel for the right (4) Kidney and then cross over to the other side for the left (5) Kidney. Still on the left side, palpate for an enlarged (6) spleen. Finally, moving to the lower abdomen, feel for the (8) bladder which is only felt if it is full.

Over to you

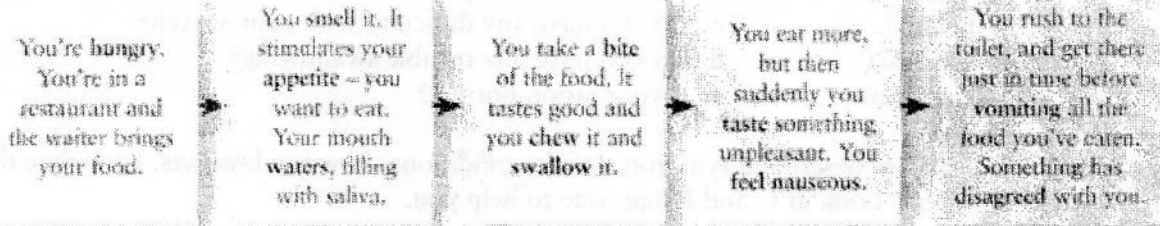
Many patients do not know the location or function of the spleen or the pancreas. How would you explain them to a patient, in English?

4

Functions of the body

4

A Eating



B The five senses

In addition to **smell** and **taste**, the senses include **sight** (or vision), **hearing**, and **touch** (also called **sensation** or **feeling**). To ask about the senses, doctors use the questions:

What is your	sight hearing	like?
Is your	sense of smell sense of taste	normal?

To ask about the sense of touch, doctors talk about **numbness** (loss of sensation):

Have you noticed any numbness (in your fingers or toes)?

C Other functions

Function	Verb	Noun
speaking	speak	speech
walking	walk	gait
breathing respiration	inhale / breathe in / take a breath in exhale / breathe out	breath
urination micturition	urinate micturate pass urine / pass water	urine
defecation	defecate pass faeces / pass stools	faeces stools
menstruation	menstruate have a period	(menstrual) period (monthly) period

When taking a history, doctors can ask:

Do you have any	trouble difficulty problems	walking? breathing? passing urine? with your speech?
	pain	when you breathe in?

When auscultating a patient's lungs, the doctor tells the patient:

Take a deep breath in, hold your breath, then breathe out completely.

D Less common functions

There are some things we do less often. When we are hot, we **sweat**. When we are nervous, we **shake**. When we are sad, we **cry**.

Doctors can ask:

Do you	sweat shake	more than usual?
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4.1 Match the symptoms (1-5) to the questions (a-e), using your medical knowledge.

- 1 dysuria
2 dysphagia
3 diplopia
4 dysphasia
5 dyspnoea
- a What is your breathing like?
b Do you have any pain when you pass water?
c Do you have any difficulty with your speech?
d Do you have any trouble swallowing?
e Is your vision normal?

4.2 Patients are describing symptoms of the conditions shown in brackets. Complete the sentences. Look at C and D opposite to help you.

- 1 I've got pain and numbness in both feet. (peripheral neuropathy)
2 I'm having difficulty swallowing solid food. (oesophageal stricture)
3 I have a lot of problems to pass water. (prostatic hypertrophy)
4 I've been sweating more than usual, even when it's not hot. (hyperthyroidism)
5 I've noticed that my hands shake when I'm not using them. (Parkinsonism)
6 I have trouble breathing when I climb the stairs. (left heart failure)

4.3 Complete the sentences. Look at A, B, C and D opposite to help you.

- 1 When I eat solid food, I have to chew ^{chew} (bite/chew) it for a long time before I can swallow (swallow/eat) it.
- 2 Do you have any pain when you pass (pass/have) stools?
- 3 I have no appetite (taste/appetite) and I've lost five kilos in the last few weeks.
- 4 When did you last have (have/pass) a period?
- 5 The garden is full of flowers, but my sense (sense/sensation) of smell has disappeared and I can't enjoy the perfume.
- 6 Take a deep breath (breathe/breath) in.

Over to you

You think a patient may have diabetes. Think of five questions you can ask the patient to investigate further. Try to use the question types presented in this unit.

A Sensory loss

The central nervous system controls the sensory and motor functions of the body. Diseases of this system therefore lead to loss of some of these functions.

Function	Loss	Other symptoms
hearing	deafness	buzzing or ringing in the ear (tinnitus)
sight	blindness	double vision (diplopia) blurring (loss of visual acuity – clarity of vision)
sensation (feeling)	numbness (anaesthesia)	tingling or pins and needles (paraesthesiae)
balance	unsteadiness (ataxia)	dizziness (vertigo)

Note: There are no common words for loss of, or conditions relating to, taste and smell.

B Motor loss

Motor loss symptoms and signs include:

- weakness – loss of power
- paralysis – complete loss of power
- tremor – involuntary rhythmic movement, especially of the hands
- abnormal gait – unusual manner of walking.

Speech may also be affected, for example with hoarseness – a rough, deep voice as in vocal cord paralysis. Slurred speech means poor articulation, as in cerebellar disease.

C Loss of consciousness

Patients may describe sudden loss of consciousness in a number of ways:

I	passed out, had a blackout, fainted.	I had a	fit, seizure, convulsion.
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Fit, seizure and convulsion are all used to refer to violent involuntary movements, as in epilepsy.

Doctors may say:

When did you lose consciousness?

Here is a passage from a textbook on the causes of loss of consciousness.

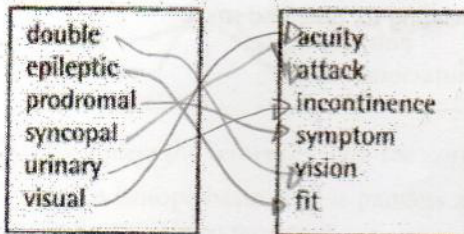
The principal differential diagnosis is between an epileptic fit and a syncopal attack, or fainting. Syncope is a sudden loss of consciousness due to temporary failure of the cerebral circulation. Syncope is distinguished from a seizure principally by the circumstances in which the event occurs. For example, syncope usually occurs whilst standing, under situations of severe stress, or in association with an arrhythmia. Sometimes a convulsion and urinary incontinence – loss of control of the bladder – occur even in a syncopal attack. Thus, neither of these is specific for an epileptic attack. The key is to establish the presence or absence of prodromal symptoms, or symptoms that occur immediately before the attack. Syncopal episodes are usually preceded by symptoms of dizziness and light-headedness. In epilepsy, people may get a warning, known as an aura, that an attack is going to happen.

Note: The noun convulsion is often used in plural form – *He had convulsions as a child.*

26.1 Complete the table with words from A, B and C opposite.

Adjective	Noun
blind	blindness
conscious	consciousness
deaf	deafness
dizzy	dizziness
numb	numbness
lightheaded	lightheadedness
unsteady	unsteadiness

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



26.3 A doctor is trying to determine the cause of loss of consciousness in a 52-year-old man. Complete the doctor's questions. Look at C opposite and at the table in 26.1 above to help you.

Did you lose (1) your consciousness suddenly or gradually?

Did you get a (2) warning of the attack?

What were you doing before you (3) passed out?

Were you worried or under any (4) strain at the time? severe stress

Did you feel (5) dizzy or (6) lightheaded before the attack?

Did you lose (7) control of your bladder?

Did your wife notice any (8) involuntary movements while you were unconscious?

Over to you

Smells can diagnose Alzheimer's

The Times, 14 December 2004

According to a newspaper article, research has shown that inability to identify ten particular smells is an early sign of Alzheimer's disease. What do you think the ten smells are?

problem of his memory