

IELTS Health Vocabulary

Topic Vocabulary >> Lesson 8: Health

During the IELTS Speaking exam you may be asked questions to do with health and fitness. Read the following IELTS-style questions and answers below and pay attention to the phrases in **bold**. Use the ‘Definitions’ section at the bottom of the page to check the meaning of any phrases you don’t understand.



Part 1-style questions

Examiner: Have you got a relation you’re particularly fond of?

Sinita: Yes ... my granddad ... he’s 94 years old but generally he’s **as fit as a fiddle** ... we’re very close and see each other a lot ... whenever he **goes down with a cold** or **is under the weather** I make a point of visiting him ...

Examiner: Do you do any sport?

Jon: Yes ... I’m keen on skateboarding ... but I haven’t done it for a while ... I had a bad fall recently and **pulled a muscle** and had a few **cuts and bruises** ... but I’m **on the mend** and hope to be doing it again soon ...

Examiner: Is there anything you’re particularly afraid of?

Davide: The dentist ... I hate going to the dentist ... I only ever go if I **have a toothache** so it usually means I have to **have a filling** or even **have a tooth out** ... I really don’t like it ...

Part 2-style task

Describe a time when you were ill. You should say:

- when this was
- what your symptoms were
- how long the illness lasted

and say how it affected your life at the time.

Pierre: This is a tricky one really as I'm usually quite healthy ... I've never been seriously ill ... like everyone else I sometimes get a few **aches and pains** or **catch a cold** ... I can remember a few months ago I had to have time off work with a **heavy cold** ... I had the usual symptoms ... a **blocked nose** ... **sore throat** ... it lasted quite a while ... about 2 weeks I think though I didn't have that much time off work ... for a few days I remember **feeling poorly** but I was **over the worst of it** after a few days and went back to work ... I always find it's better to be active when you feel ill as it keeps your mind off your symptoms ... I think my family get a little fed up with me when I'm ill though ... I tend to feel sorry for myself and lie on the sofa all day as if I'm **at death's door** ... but as I said earlier ... on this occasion it was nothing serious and didn't really cause me any problems ...

Part 3-style questions

Examiner: What costs are involved when you are ill in your country?

Anya: Well ... people have to pay **prescription charges** which can be quite expensive ... but fortunately general healthcare is free ... unless you want to **go private** of course and then you can pay a fortune for your treatment ...

Examiner: In your experience are people too quick to take time off work when they're ill?

Alicia: Yes .. I've got friends who have a day off work if they wake up with a **runny nose** ... and in most cases they seem **to make a speedy recovery** after they've **phoned in sick** ...

Examiner: Do women pay more attention to their health than men?

Julie: I think so yes ... women are more likely to see their **GP** for a **check-up** if they're concerned about something ... men tend to avoid facing up to any health problems they have ...

my dad always seems to have a very **chesty cough** but refuses to go to **make an appointment** to see the doctor ...

Definitions

- **aches and pains**: minor pains that continue over a period of time
- **to be a bit off colour**: to feel a little ill
- **to be at death's door**: (informal) to be very ill indeed
- **to be on the mend**: to be recovering after an illness
- **to be over the worst**: to have got through the most serious or uncomfortable stage of an illness
- **to be under the weather**: (informal) to not feel well
- **a blocked nose**: when the nose has excess fluid due to a cold
- **to catch a cold**: to get a cold
- **a check-up**: a physical examination by a doctor
- **a chesty cough**: a cough caused by congestion around the lungs
- **cuts and bruises**: minor injuries
- **to feel poorly**: to feel ill
- **as fit as a fiddle**: to be very healthy
- **to go down with a cold**: to become ill
- **to go private**: to choose to be treated by commercial healthcare rather than by services offered by the state
- **GP**: General Practitioner (family doctor)
- **to have a filling**: to have a tooth repaired
- **to have a tooth out**: to have a tooth removed
- **a heavy cold**: a bad cold
- **to make an appointment**: to arrange a time to see the doctor
- **to make a speedy recovery**: to recover quickly from an illness
- **to phone in sick**: to call work to explain you won't be attending work due to illness
- **prescription charges**: money the patient pays for medicine authorised by a doctor
- **to pull a muscle**: to strain a muscle
- **a runny nose**: a nose that has liquid coming out of it

- ***a sore throat***: inflammation that causes pain when swallowing