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A

Allergies

People with **allergies** have a strong reaction when they eat, touch, or even breathe in certain things. They may get this reaction by eating a food like peanuts, by petting a cat or dog, or from inhaling something in the air, like the pollen from ragweed. When people have an allergic reaction, they may start sneezing suddenly, get very watery and itchy eyes, or get itchy skin. If they have a very serious allergy, they may have trouble breathing. The most common things to be allergic to are grasses and the seeds of plants and trees that bloom in the spring and the fall. This is called hay fever. There are many different medicines for treating allergies that can be suggested or prescribed by your doctor. They come in a spray, pump or pill.

Anesthesia

Anesthesia is medicine that helps you stay asleep during an operation. It also makes sure that you won't feel any pain while the operation is happening. Anesthesia is either a kind of gas (or air) you breathe through a mask, or it's a liquid that is injected into your veins.

Asthma

A person who has a condition called **asthma** will sometimes have trouble breathing. Usually a person with asthma feels fine and breathes normally, but occasionally he may experience what's called an asthma attack. This occurs when a person's breathing tube (which brings air into your body) becomes narrower than normal. When a person is having an asthma attack, he can't get enough air easily into his body. There are excellent medicines to help people with asthma feel better quickly and start breathing normally again. Usually, the medicine is in the form of a spray (or inhaler), but it might also be given as a pill.

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Blood

Blood is a special kind of liquid that travels through your veins and arteries, which are little tubes that run everywhere inside your body. Your heart pumps red blood through the tubes called arteries, carrying tiny particles of air (oxygen) and fuel to your body's cells. The oxygen in your blood comes from the air you breathe. The cells use this oxygen and food to help you move and grow. The blood then travels back to your heart through veins. The blood in your veins is blue, because it is no longer carrying the oxygen.

Blood Pressure Cuff

A **blood pressure cuff** is a piece of cloth a doctor or nurse will wrap around your arm to make sure that your heart is doing a good job pumping blood through your body. The blood pressure cuff will blow up like a balloon and get a little bit tight around your arm. This feels funny, but it does not hurt at all.

Blood Test

A **blood test** is when a nurse or doctor pricks your arm with a tiny needle and takes out a little bit of blood. This might feel like a little pinch. The blood is sent to a laboratory, where it is examined, or tested. The results of this test tell the doctor what is inside your blood, to find what could be making you sick. This information may help him help you get well. A doctor may also take a blood test just to check that you are growing normally.

Brain

The **brain**, which is inside your head, is one of the most important organs in your body. It's your body's main "computer" that controls your speech, movements and all the parts of your body. Your brain is where you do your thinking and learning, and it's divided into many different parts.

Broken Bone

It is possible to **break one of the bones** in your body. This can happen when you fall down or bang into something with a lot of force. You will need to get an X-ray to find out if you have a broken bone, and if you do, you may need a cast on the area. A cast is a special kind of wrapping, placed around the injured bone, to protect it while it heals. The cast usually stays on for four to six weeks.

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Chicken Pox

Chicken pox are little bumps that pop out on your skin. These bumps can be very itchy, but try not to scratch them. When you are sick with the chicken pox, you may also have a fever, headache and runny nose. It's very easy to catch chicken pox from a friend who already has the disease. You can ease the itching by taking baths with oatmeal. After a few days, the bumps turn into tiny sores with scabs. Don't scratch those either, or you might get a scar. It usually takes five to seven days to get better.

Cold

A **cold** is a common type of infection that will usually cause a person to have a runny or stuffy nose, coughing, sneezing or watery eyes. Colds are caused by a virus. The average cold lasts from three to seven days. When you have a cold, it's important to cover your mouth when coughing or sneezing to make sure you don't pass your illness to anyone else. It's also useful to wash your hands to get rid of the germs that cause colds and other illnesses to spread.

Constipation

Constipation is when your bowel movements (or poop) feel harder than usual. Sometimes this makes it difficult or uncomfortable to go to the bathroom. Constipation can sometimes be caused by the food you eat, or by not drinking enough water. Taking some medicines can also make you constipated — and sometimes constipation just happens by itself. Certain medicines or remedies can help you go to the bathroom more easily to relieve the constipation, if it bothers you.

Cough

A **cough** begins with a tickle in your throat. The muscles in your throat tighten to get rid of the tickle, or "cough" it out. Sometimes you get a cough when you are sick with a cold. A

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cough can also be caused by breathing in smoke or something else in the air that irritates you. Some people think a cough is your body trying to "push" or cough the sickness out of your body.

Cuts

You get a **cut** when something sharp tears your skin. Most cuts get better quickly, because your body knows how to make them heal. The first thing your body does is stop the bleeding. This process is called clotting. After the bleeding stops, the dried blood turns into a scab, which protects the new skin cells growing underneath. When the cut is healed, the scab falls off, so don't pick at it.