



MEDICINE

“Medical science is making such remarkable progress that soon none of us will be well.”

Aldous Huxley (1894 – 1963), English writer and philosopher

1. Medicine Discussion

1. What is medicine? What are the different things it involves?
2. What are some of the most important medical breakthroughs in history?
3. What are some of the main medical problems the world is facing? What are the causes of these?
4. What medicines have you used in your life?
5. How many different medical professions can you think of? Would you like to work in medicine? Why or why not? How do you think it would be to work in this field?
6. Why do medical professionals have to spend more time studying at university than other professions?
7. Are medical workers the most important professionals in society? Are they paid enough?
8. Which diseases or conditions do we still need to develop a cure for? Do you think we are close to curing any of these?

2. Medicine Vocabulary

- **antibiotic** (noun) – *medication to fight bacterial infection.*
- **superbug** (noun) – *a bacteria or virus that has developed resistance to antibiotics or vaccines.*
- **antidepressant** (noun) – *medication to combat the effects of depression or other psychological disorders.*
- **painkiller** (noun) – *medication to relieve pain.*
- **clinical negligence vs (medical) malpractice** (nouns) – *a mistake that causes harm to patients (clinical negligence); deliberately not following standards causing harm to patients (malpractice).*
- **Hippocratic oath** (noun) – *a promise made by a healthcare practitioner to behave in an ethical way.*

Using the vocabulary words above, complete the following sentences (remember to use the correct form of the word, e.g. verb conjugation or plural noun):

1. A patient sued St Thomas Hospital for **clinical negligence** after doctors failed to diagnose a problem with her liver.
2. **Antibiotics** are no longer used to treat chest infections, ear infections or sore throats.
3. If you suffer from headaches, back pain or muscle aches, **painkillers** might help.
4. Many women are prescribed **antidepressants** to help with postnatal depression.
5. One reason **superbugs** emerged is due to the widespread use of antibiotics in the agricultural sector to pre-emptively protect animals from disease.
6. The core principle of the **Hippocratic oath** is 'do no harm'.

Medicine vocabulary comprehension questions

1. Why has the pharmaceutical industry not developed any new antibiotics since the 1980s? How could they be persuaded to develop new antibiotics?
2. What superbugs have you heard of? How concerned are you about these? How did they evolve?
3. Why might someone be prescribed antidepressants? Do you think these help?
4. What painkillers do you know about? Why might someone take these?
5. Have you heard about any cases of malpractice or clinical negligence? What happened?
6. Why do doctors have to take the Hippocratic oath? What are some ethical issues in medicine?

3. Video: The Antibiotic Apocalypse

You are going to watch a video by TED Ed called "How can we solve the antibiotic resistance crisis?"

Watch the video here: <https://yourenglishpal.com/blog/esl-conversation-lesson-plan-medicine/>

While you watch the video, answer the following questions:

Multiple choice

1. Without antibiotics, what might simple medical procedures result in?
a) *misdiagnoses* b) *clinical negligence* c) **death**
2. What have we stopped discovering?
a) *new superbugs* b) *new viruses* c) **new antibiotics**
3. What was Alexander Fleming awarded in 1945?
a) **a Nobel Prize** b) *a doctorate in medicine* c) *a government position*
4. Medication for which of the following medical issues would be most profitable to the pharmaceutical industry?
a) **depression** b) *bacterial infections* c) *viral infections*

Sentence completion

5. No new antibiotics have been developed despite bacteria continuing to develop **resistance**.
6. There are some strains of bacteria that are resistant to all the **drugs** we currently have available.
7. The agricultural industry uses antibiotics to make **(food) animals** bigger.
8. Antibiotic-resistant bacteria can be passed from animals to **humans**.

Short answer

9. What might provide the compounds necessary to develop new antibiotics? **Nature**
10. Who are not affected by phage viruses? **Humans**
11. What is the biggest challenge to developing new antibacterial treatments? **Funding**
12. To make antibiotics more profitable, what are healthcare providers in the UK buying? **Antibiotic subscriptions**

4. Medicine Conversation Questions

1. What is the difference between a doctor and a medical scientist? Who would you trust more to inform you about your health? Who would you trust more to inform you about a new medical issue?
2. Do you trust medical professionals, researchers and scientists to always tell you the truth? Why or why not? Why might someone not trust them?
3. What kind of medical misinformation have you heard about? Who is responsible for spreading this misinformation and why? Why are some medical professionals involved in this?
4. Should a parent have the right to refuse medical treatment for their children? If so, under what circumstances?
5. Does everyone have equal access to medicines and medical treatments? If not, why is this and what is the solution?
6. Should all medicines be free for everyone who needs them (i.e., paid for through taxes)? Why or why not?
7. What kind of technology do medical professionals rely on? What kind of medical technology do you expect to see in the future that does not exist today?
8. Will there be a point in the future when we no longer need medical attention? Why or why not?

5. Medicine Writing Task

Write about your opinion of medicine. Try to use some of the vocabulary you learned earlier in this lesson. In your answer, you could include some of the following topics:

- The most important medical breakthroughs in history.
- Why some people have stopped trusting medical science.
- Predictions for the future of medicine.

Alternative exam practice question:

There are certain bacteria that exist in the world that are resistant to all known antibiotics. What caused this situation? What solutions can you think of for this problem?