



Council for  
Intellectual Disability



# Signs of sickness

## Easy Read Guide



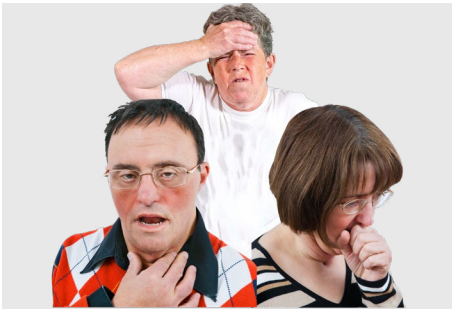
**Easy Read**

[www.cid.org.au](http://www.cid.org.au)

# Contents

Signs and symptoms of being sick	<b>1</b>
<hr/>	
Skin problems	<b>3</b>
<hr/>	
Bones	<b>4</b>
<hr/>	
Epilepsy	<b>5</b>
<hr/>	
Mental health	<b>6</b>
<hr/>	
Reaction to medicines	<b>7</b>
<hr/>	
Swallowing	<b>8</b>
<hr/>	
Stomach pain	<b>9</b>
<hr/>	
Diabetes and heart problems	<b>10</b>
<hr/>	
Hearing	<b>11</b>
<hr/>	
Eyes	<b>12</b>
<hr/>	
Teeth	<b>13</b>
<hr/>	
Additional resources	<b>14</b>

# Some signs of sickness

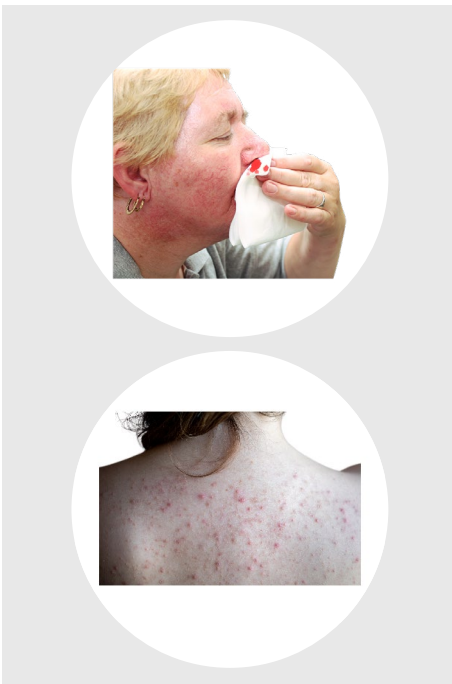


This guide is about signs and **symptoms** of being sick.

**Symptoms** is another word for signs of sickness.

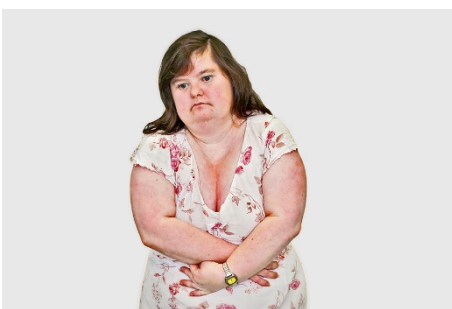


Your body shows signs when you are sick.



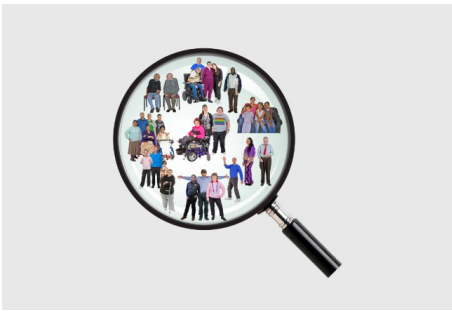
Some are easy to see like when you

- Bleed
- Have red spots on your skin.

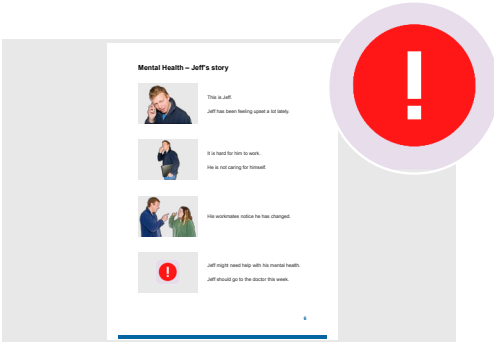


Some signs are harder to see like

- Stomach pains
- Feeling sad or confused.



This guide shares many stories about people who have signs of sickness.

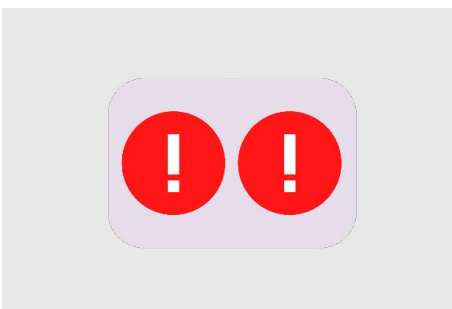


You will see a red sign at the end of each story.

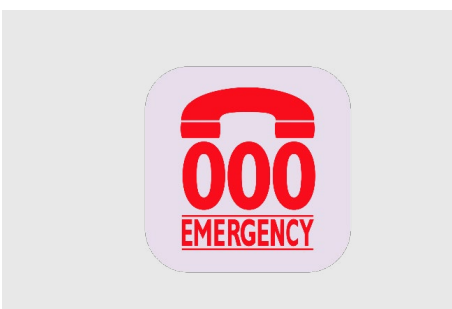
The sign tells you what the person should do.



This sign means the person should see a doctor this week.



This sign means the person should see a doctor today.



This sign means the person needs an ambulance now.

Call **000**.

## Skin – Asha’s story



This is Asha.



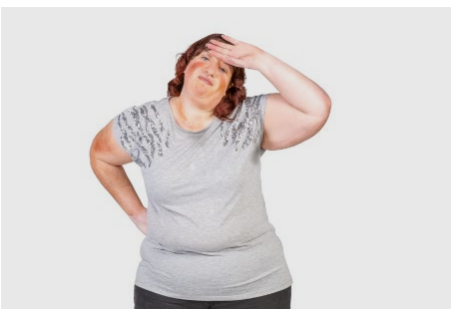
Asha’s skin is very itchy.

She cannot stop scratching it.

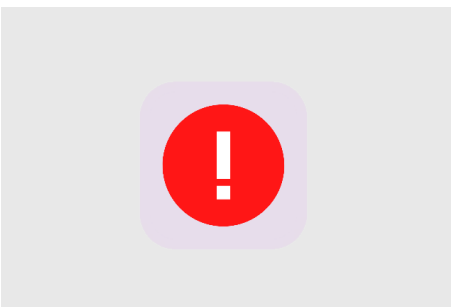


She might scratch while she sleeps.

Her skin is red and sometimes bleeds.



Asha has a skin problem.



Asha should go to the doctor this week.

# Bones – Rosa's story



This is Rosa.

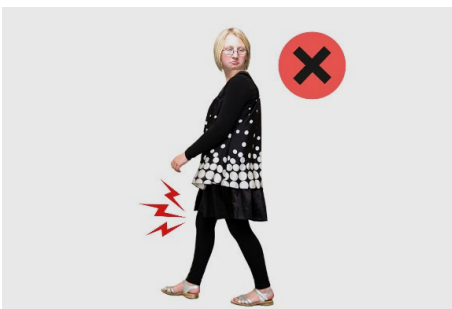


Rosa had a fall this morning.



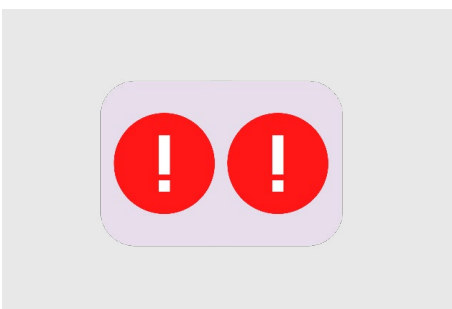
She cannot move her arm.

Rosa is unsure if she has broken a bone in her arm.



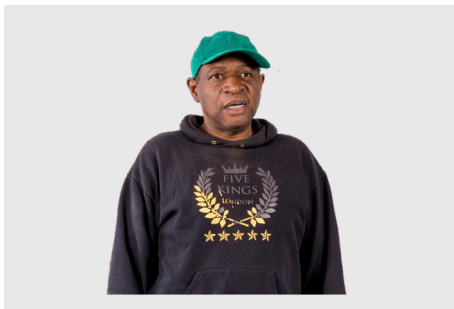
Sometimes it is hard for her to walk too.

She might have arthritis in her knee.

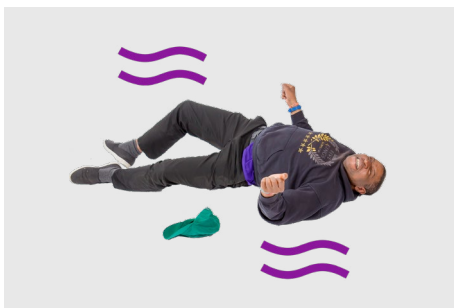


Rosa should go to the doctor today.

# Epilepsy – Nick’s story



This is Nick.



Nick has fallen down.

His whole body is shaking.

He cannot stop it.



He might be having a **seizure**.

Another word for **seizure** is a fit.



He stops shaking.

He feels sleepy.

He is confused.

Nick does not remember what happened.



Nick might have epilepsy.

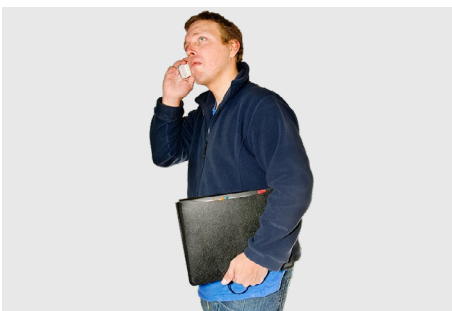
Nick or someone around Nick should call an ambulance on **000**.

## Mental Health – Jeff’s story



This is Jeff.

Jeff has been feeling upset a lot lately.

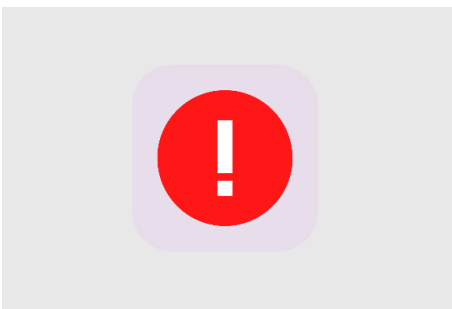


It is hard for him to work.

He is not caring for himself.



His workmates notice he has changed.



Jeff might need help with his mental health.

Jeff should go to the doctor this week.



## Medicine – Ray’s story



This is Ray.



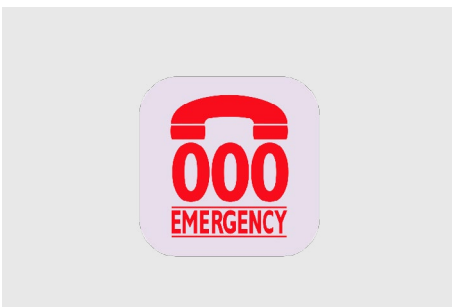
Ray takes a new medication.



It is hard for her friend to wake her up the next day.



She vomits and she is very sleepy.



Ray might be having a bad reaction to the new medication.

Ray or someone around Ray should call an ambulance on **000**.

# Swallowing – Oscar’s story

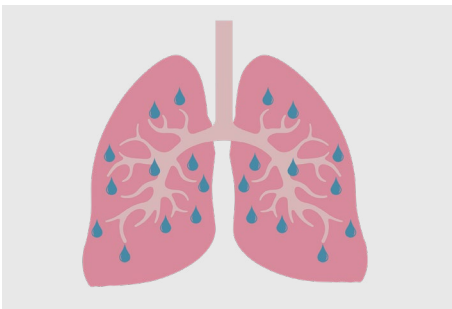


This is Oscar.

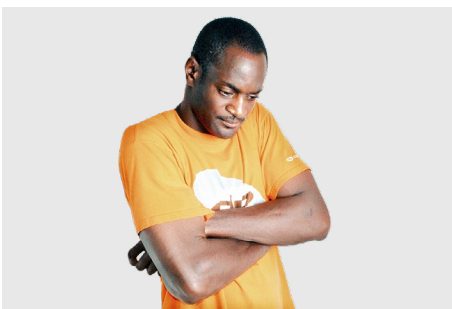


Oscar is eating lunch.

He starts to cough.

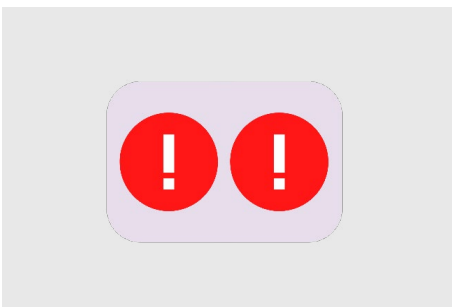


Oscar also gets lots of chest infections.



Food gets caught in his throat a lot.

These things happen more as he gets older.



Oscar might have swallowing problems.

Oscar should go to the doctor today.

# Stomach pain – Josie’s story



This is Josie.



Josie is feeling sick.

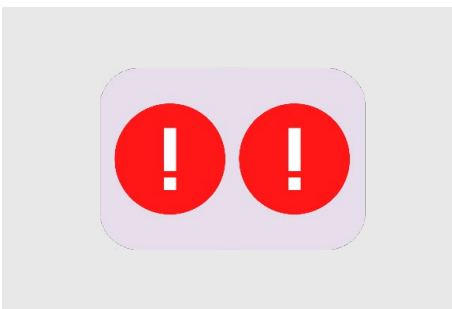
They have pain in their tummy.

They feel like vomiting.



It hurts when Josie tries to poo.

This happens a lot.



Josie is having problems with their stomach.

Josie should go to the doctor today.

## Diabetes and heart problems – Mario's story



This is Mario.

Mario is out shopping.



He is feeling sick.

He is sweating.

His skin is pale.



He cannot stand up all of a sudden.



Mario might have diabetes.

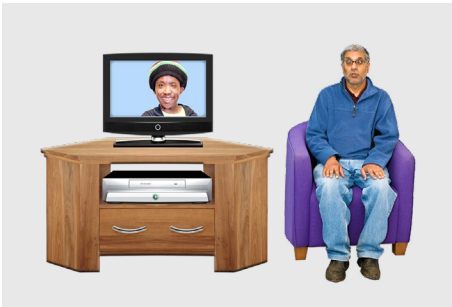
He might also have heart problems.

Mario or someone around Mario should call an ambulance on **000**.

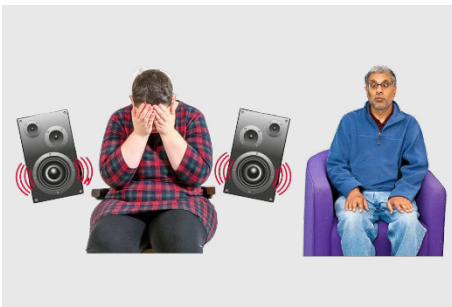
## Hearing – Kaleb’s story



This is Kaleb.

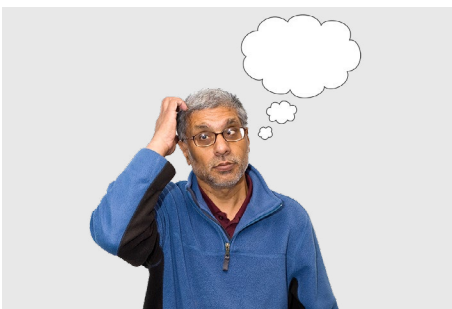


Kaleb is watching TV.



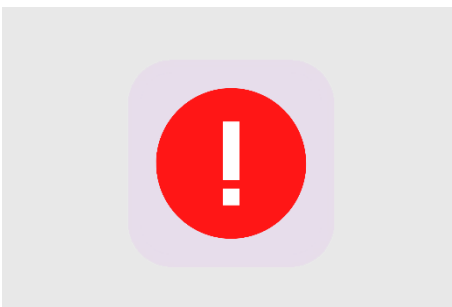
His friend is angry with him.

She says the TV is too loud.



Lots of people say that.

Kaleb does not think the TV is too loud.



Kaleb might have problems with his hearing.

Kaleb should go to his doctor this week.

## Eyes – Pat's story



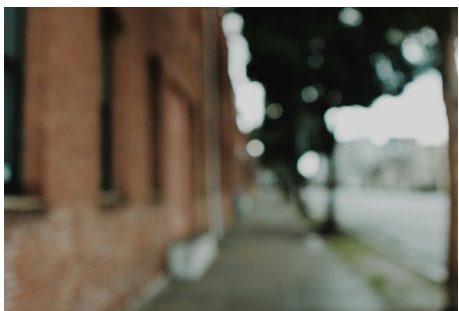
This is Pat.

Pat used to like going to new places.

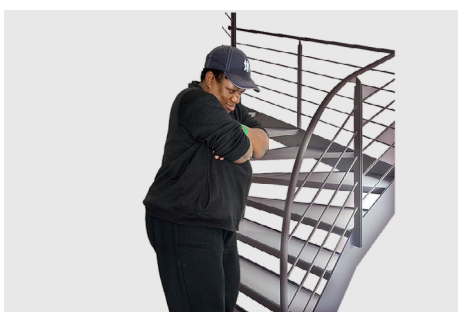
Now she gets worried about tripping on things.



She is not sure why she trips over so much.



She says things have started to look blurry.



Today she is worried about going up the steps.



Pat might have problems with her eyes.

She might not be seeing things very well.

Pat should go to his doctor this week.

# Teeth – Frank’s story

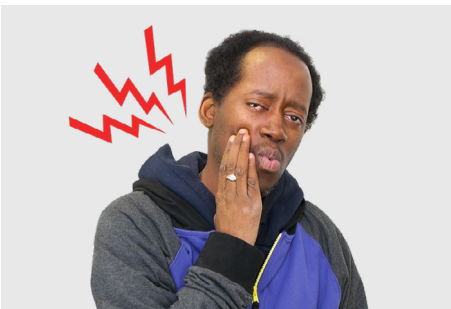


This is Frank.



Frank is eating dinner.

He tries to chew his food.



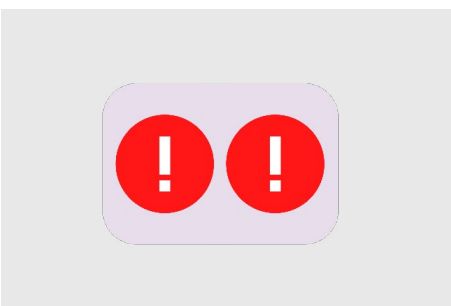
Frank has a toothache.

It hurts a lot.



He might have dental or gum disease.

This can cause other health problems too.



Frank should go to his doctor or dentist today.

## More information



Please note this guide is not the same as advice from a doctor.

You should always talk to your doctor about your health.



You can call **Healthdirect** if you cannot get to your doctor.

They can give you information on the phone.

Call **1800 022 222**.



My Health Matters Folder helps you tell doctors and other health workers what is important to you.

You can order or download the My Health Matters folder here

[www.cid.org.au/resource/my-health-matters-folder](http://www.cid.org.au/resource/my-health-matters-folder)



See other Easy Read health guides here

[www.cid.org.au/health-guide](http://www.cid.org.au/health-guide)





## Contact CID

-  1800 424 065
-  [info@cid.org.au](mailto:info@cid.org.au)
-  [www.cid.org.au](http://www.cid.org.au)
-  [facebook.com/NSWCID](https://facebook.com/NSWCID)
-  [twitter.com/CIDvoice](https://twitter.com/CIDvoice)
-  [instagram.com/council\\_intellectualdisability](https://instagram.com/council_intellectualdisability)

Council for Intellectual Disability made this document Easy Read. CID for short. You need to ask CID if you want to use any pictures in this document. You can contact CID at [health@cid.org.au](mailto:health@cid.org.au)

This information guide was written in 2024.

We got money from the Australian Government Department of Social Services to make this guide.