

Difference between Signs and Symptoms

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Signs are what a doctor sees, Symptoms are what you experience. Did you know that 90 - 95% of a doctor's diagnosis will come from what you say? Yep! If you do not give the doctor all of your symptoms and history then you are asking him or her to diagnose you based on insufficient information. Whenever you go to the doctor, he or she will take a patient history using a mnemonic called, "OPPQRST." Every doctor on the planet follows this mnemonic. This translates into: Objective, Palliative, Provocative, Quality, Radiating, Subjective and Timing.

- ONSET: When did it start?
- PALLIATIVE: What relieves your symptoms?
- PROVOCATIVE: What provokes your symptoms?
- QUALITY: How would you describe the symptoms? Sharp? stabbing?, sore? uncomfortable? nausea? achy? throbbing? ripping? tearing?
- RADIATING: Do the symptoms or pain radiate to another area of your body?
- SEVERITY: On a scale of 1 - 10, how would you rate your pain or discomfort?
- TIMING: How often do the symptoms occur?

Typically with chest pain, the additional LMN are added to the mnemonic which means: Last, Movement and Notable Symptoms.

- LAST: When was the last episode?
- MOVEMENT: What activities could you do before you first felt chest pain and what activities can you do now?
- NOTABLE SYMPTOMS: What other symptoms do you have with your chest pain?

Here are just a few things that will automatically pop into a doctor's head when you give the following symptoms. The doctor will then perform various orthopedic, laboratory or imaging tests on you to confirm or deny his or her suspicions. Please keep in mind there are many other conditions, diseases, syndromes and illnesses that your doctor may be thinking depending on what you stated in your patient history.

1. ABDOMINAL PAIN - may be indicative of appendicitis, food allergies, food poisoning, gastro-intestinal disorders, hiatal hernia or pre-menstrual syndrome.
2. ABNORMAL VAGINAL DISCHARGE - may be indicative of yeast infection (candidiasis) , chlamydia, genital herpes, gonorrhea or trichomoniasis.
3. BACKACHE - may be indicative of back strain, DJD (degenerative disc disease), lack of exercise, obesity, female disorders, spinal injury or pancreatic disorders.
4. BLOOD IN THE URINE, STOOL, VOMIT, VAGINA OR PENIS - may be indicative hemorrhoids, infections, polyps, bowel tumors, ulcers, cancer of the kidneys, colon or bladder.
5. DIFFICULTY SWALLOWING - may be indicative of emotional stress, hiatal hernia, cancer of the esophagus.
6. EXCESSIVE SWEATING - may be indicative of thyroid disorder, menopause, stress, food allergies, fever, infection or Hodgkin's disease.
7. FREQUENT URINATION - may be indicative of bladder infection, a diuretic effect, excessively taking

- in liquid, not emptying the bladder in a timely fashion or cancer.
8. INDIGESTION - may be indicative of poor diet, lack of enzymes such as HCL (hydrochloric acid), gallbladder dysfunction, heart disease, acidosis, alkalosis, allergies, stress, adrenal, liver or pancreatic disorders.
 9. PERSISTANT COUGH - may be indicative of lung disorders, pneumonia, emphysema, bronchitis, influenza, food allergies or cancer.
 10. PERSISTANT FEVER - may be indicative of influenza, mononucleosis, rheumatic disorders, bronchitis, colds, meningitis, diabetes or chronic infection.
 11. PERSISTANT HEADACHE - may be indicative of migraines, eyestrain, need for glasses, allergies, asthma, drugs, glaucoma, high blood pressure, brain tumor, vitamin deficiencies, sinusitis or stress due to personal Life experiences.
 12. RASH WITH BLISTERS - may be indicative of Herpes Zoster or Shingles.
 13. SUDDEN WEIGHT GAIN - may be indicative of over-eating, lack of exercise, thyroid condition (underactive) or edema.
 14. SUDDEN WEIGHT LOSS (UNEXPLAINED) - may be indicative of cancer, diabetes, thyroid condition (overactive) , hepatitis, mononucleosis, parasites, infection or malabsorption syndrome.
 15. SWELLING IN THE APPENDAGES OR ABDOMEN - may be indicative of edema, heart condition, kidney dysfunction, medication, food allergies, oral contraceptives or steroids.
 16. SWOLLEN LYMPH NODES - may be indicative of chronic infection, lymphoma, various cancers, toxic metals, toxic build-up or Hodgkin's disease.
 17. THIRSTING EXCESSIVELY - may be indicative of diabetes, infection, excessive exercise or fever.

If you are experiencing any of the above symptoms or have concern for your help, please seek medical attention immediately.

Our goal is to provide you with information that may be useful in attaining optimal health. Nothing in it is meant as a prescription or as medical advice. You should check with your physician before implementing any changes in your exercise or lifestyle habits, especially if you have physical problems or are taking medications of any kind.