# Ill or Sick?

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| **"ill" - is the general word to use to indicate not being well.** | |
| | *I don't feel very well. Something is wrong with me. (It might or might not be serious.)* |
| | *I don't feel well. (a little stronger than above)* |
| | *I felt ill this morning. (worse - could be serious)* |
| | *I felt quite ill this morning. (worse still - I called the doctor.)* |
| | *I was very ill last year. (I had a serious illness and could have died.)* |
| | *He died after a short/sudden illness. (NOT sickness)* |

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| **"sick" is usually associated with feeling nauseous:** | |
| | *I feel sick. = I think I might vomit.* |
| | *He was sick all night after eating mussels.* |
| | *Just thinking about eating snails makes me want to be sick. (vomit or throw up (coll))* |

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| **You don't use "sick" to indicate feeling generally unwell. (except in the USA)** | |
| **BUT "sick" is nevertheless used in a variety of expressions which indicate general illness.** | |
| | *At school anyone ill used to have to go to the sick-bay.* |
| | *He was ill and confined to his sick-bed for a week.* |
| | *During the wedding ceremony you promise to love each other in sickness and health.* |
| | *Sleeping sickness is a serious disease in Africa.* |
| | *John called in sick and said he would be away for several days.* |

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| **idioms & expressions:** | *I am sick and tired of listening to his excuses.* |
| | *I am sick of all these complaints about the government.* |
| | *I am sick of always feeling ill.* |
| | *What's the matter with you? Not feeling lovesick AGAIN!!* |
| | *After three weeks in Outer Mongolia I felt a bit homesick.* |
| | *I'd never go on a cruise. I get seasick too easily. (also: carsick - airsick)* |
| | *Come on! Get up off your sickbed! We need you in the office …...* |
| | *In some jobs if you are off ill (or sick) for a day or two you have to bring a sicknote to work when you return.* |
| | *I felt sick with fear.* |
| | *Mind that sick on the ground …… (usually outside city centre pubs in England on Friday and Saturday nights)* |
| | *The football manager was sick as a parrot after his team lost the Cup Final. (coll)* |

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| **"Sick" is also used to describe non-humans:** | |
| | *The economy is rather sick. (not ill) - Our order books look a bit sick ……* |

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| **NOTE:** | *He was taken to hospital after suddenly being sick during lunch. (He vomited.)* |
| | *He was taken to hospital after suddenly falling ill during. (it could be related to the lunch - we don't know. He may or may not have been sick ….)* |