

- Articles With Names of Symptoms and Diseases
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## ARTICLES WITH NAMES OF SYMPTOMS AND DISEASES

Most symptom names require an article (a, an, the) or another determiner to identify or quantify the noun.

✓ I have **a toothache**.

✓ My child has **asthma**.

As a general rule, do not use “a”, “an”, or “the” before names of illnesses or diseases.



Because most **symptom names** are countable, they usually require an article (a/the) or another determiner to identify or quantify the noun.

I had **a severe toothache** last week.

Omit the article, however, to speak about a symptom or health condition **in a general sense**.

**Stomachaches** can be caused by a range of different factors, including constipation, indigestion, and appendicitis.

As a general rule, do not use “a”, “an”, or “the” before **names of illnesses or diseases**.

My child has **appendicitis**.

But there are **exceptions**. For example, you can include the article “the” with a number of traditional diseases, such as the flu, the measles, or the chickenpox, specially in informal situations.

My whole family has **the flu**.

## 1.1 Countable Names (Colds, Sore throats, Headaches, etc.)

Most names of symptoms and self-diagnosed conditions are countable, so we say **a cold, a sore throat, a headache**, etc.

I had **two headaches** last month.

My child had **five colds** last year.

Singular countable nouns are generally preceded by an article (a, an, the) or another determiner (this, that, my, your, his, etc.).

My sister has **a sore throat**.

Resting in a quiet, dark place can help ease **your headache**.

When naming a specific group or collection of **colds, sore throats, headaches**, etc., add a determiner (the, most, many, all, those, their, etc.) to identify or quantify the noun.

**Many headaches** are caused by lack of sleep.

Avoid the determiner when using a symptom name in a general sense.

**Sore throats** are very common and generally nothing to worry about.