

Signs of Serious Illness

A serious illness often has *one or more* of the following signs and symptoms. Remember, never attempt to treat someone if symptoms are beyond your ability to handle - seek professional medical help.

- Severe pain
- Inability to talk
- Convulsions
- Rapidly worsening condition
- High fever, (over 103 °F.)
- Low body temperature, (below 97 °F.)
- Prolonged chilling, (feeling cold with or without shivering)
- Extreme sleepiness or even coma
- Frequent fainting or any loss of consciousness
- Marked weakness or prostration, (unable to sit or stand up)
- Severe persistent vomiting or diarrhea, (more than 6-8 times/day)
- Wheezing or very difficult breathing
- Weakness or paralysis of face, arms or legs
- Pain in heart area, (with or without associated radiating pain)
- Coughing or vomiting of blood
- Prolonged or heavy menstrual bleeding
- Blood in the urine or stool, (red blood in stool; or black stool)
- Painful urination
- A growing lump or mass

Questions about Illness

These are questions you will want to know the answers to when you seek professional help.

- ✓ When did the symptom begin?
- ✓ How severe is the symptom?
- ✓ Does it come and go with increasing severity?
- ✓ Is the symptom localized or generalized?
- ✓ Does the symptom radiate outward from a central point?
- ✓ What time of day are the symptoms most prominent?
- ✓ What makes the symptom get worse and what makes it get better?
- ✓ What has the person done to seek relief?
- ✓ Is the symptom related to anybody function, such as eating, sleeping, menstrual cycle, bowel or bladder excretions?