Part 1. What kind of patient are you when you feel under the weather? Choose the one that sounds most like you, then say which one describes someone you know.

The Soldier *Never takes a day off. Soldiers on with a stinking cold and tells everyone they're "fine".*	**The Drama Star** *One sniffle and they're on the sofa under three blankets, telling everyone how terrible they feel.*
The Self-Diagnoser *Looks up every symptom online and is convinced it's something serious by lunchtime.*	**The Home Remedy Expert** *Has a cure for everything: ginger, garlic, honey, and something their grandmother swore by.*

Part 2. Discuss the questions.

- How often do you come down with something, for example in the colder months or when the seasons change?
- What's the first sign that you're getting ill?
- When you're ill, do you want to be looked after or left alone?
- Do you go to the doctor quickly, or wait and see?
- Is being ill as an adult better or worse than being ill as a child? Why?

Part 3. Look at these remedies. Which have you tried? Which do you swear by, and which sound like an old wives' tale? What does your family swear by?

Chicken soup	Honey and lemon
Ginger tea	A hot bath
Raw garlic	Vitamin C
Sleeping it off	Sweating it out under lots of blankets
A hot toddy (whisky, honey and lemon)	Going for a run to shake it off

© Wellbeing English. All rights reserved. For personal classroom use only.

Part 4. Fact or old wives' tale? Tick your answer for each one and explain your thinking. Then check the answers with your teacher. Which one surprised you most?

	Fact	*Old wives' tale*	*Not sure*
1. You lose most of your body heat through your head.			
2. "Feed a cold, starve a fever."			
3. Antibiotics help you get over a cold faster.			
4. Chicken soup can help when you've got a cold.			
5. Cold weather on its own makes you ill.			
6. Washing your hands regularly helps you avoid catching colds.			
7. Taking vitamin C every day stops you catching colds.			

Part 5. Which would you rather? Choose one in each pair and explain why.

Staying in bed	*or*	carrying on as normal
Being looked after	*or*	being left alone
Asking a pharmacist	*or*	looking it up online
Taking medicine straight away	*or*	letting your body deal with it
Working from home while ill	*or*	taking a proper day off

© Wellbeing English. All rights reserved. For personal classroom use only.

Part 6. What would you do? Choose an option or come up with a better one.

You wake up with a sore throat and a pounding headache on the morning of an important presentation.

1. *Soldier on and go in. You can rest later.*
2. *Ask to give the presentation online from home.*
3. *Ask a colleague to cover for you.*
4. *Postpone it. Your health comes first.*

A colleague comes into the office coughing and sneezing everywhere. "It's just a cold," they say.

1. *Say nothing and keep your distance.*
2. *Suggest, kindly, that they go home and rest.*
3. *Hand them some tissues with a meaningful smile.*
4. *Mention it to your manager.*

Friends have invited you to a birthday dinner you've been looking forward to for weeks. You're feeling a bit rough.

1. *Go anyway. It's only a cold.*
2. *Go, but leave early.*
3. *Cancel and send a little gift instead.*
4. *Join for a few minutes on a video call.*

Part 7. What's the worst thing about being ill? Number your top three and explain your choices.

Not being able to sleep		A blocked nose	
Missing out on plans		Feeling useless	
Losing your sense of taste		Being on your own	
People telling you what to do		The pile of work waiting afterwards	

© Wellbeing English. All rights reserved. For personal classroom use only.

Part 8. Do you agree, disagree or partly agree? Explain why.

- People who come to work ill aren't dedicated, they're just spreading germs.
- Some people make a huge fuss over a little cold.
- You shouldn't need a doctor's note for a day or two off sick.
- Working from home has made it harder to take a proper sick day.
- Home remedies are more about comfort than cure.
- It's better to rest for two days than struggle on for a week.

Part 9. Tell the story of a time you got ill at the worst possible moment: on holiday, before an exam, at a wedding, on the first day of a new job…

Think about:

- Where you were and what was supposed to happen
- How you felt, and what you did
- Who helped, or didn't
- Whether you can laugh about it now

Reflection

Complete the sentences in your own words.

1. When I'm under the weather, the thing that helps me most is…
2. A remedy I swear by is…
3. One thing I'll do to stay well is…

© Wellbeing English. All rights reserved. For personal classroom use only.