

Lesson 11**VISITING THE PHARMACY**

Ann goes to the pharmacy to get medicine for her husband, who has a rash on his back. She talks to Ken, the pharmacist.

Ann: My husband has a rash on his back. It's **driving him nuts**.

Ken: When did the rash **break out**?

Ann: Yesterday morning. What do you think it could be?

Ken: It could be **any number of things**.

Ann: Such as?

Ken: **For starters**, it could be an **allergic reaction** to something.

Ann: I recently started using a new brand of laundry detergent. You may have **hit the nail on the head!**

Ken: If it is small red dots, it may be hives.

Ann: What do you recommend he take for it?

Ken: Is he **on** anything now?

Ann: No.

Ken: Try an **over-the-counter** anti-itch cream or a pill like Claritin.

Ann: What if those don't work? What if it gets worse?

Ken: If it doesn't **clear up**, he should see a doctor. It's probably nothing serious, but **better safe than sorry**.

Ann: Right! We should **nip this in the bud**.

IDIOMS & EXPRESSIONS

allergic reaction – sensitivity to things that come into contact with the body (causing problems such as rashes, trouble breathing, coughing, etc.)

- Irene had an **allergic reaction** to some peanuts. Her throat swelled up and she could barely breathe.

any number of things – one of many possibilities

- “What’s causing my ankles to swell?” — “It could be **any number of things.**”

better safe than sorry – it’s good to be extra careful (to avoid trouble or disaster)

- Check the airline’s website to make sure the flight hasn’t been canceled. **Better safe than sorry.**

(to) break out (in) – to appear; to occur (often suddenly)

- Shortly after taking the medication, Karen **broke out** in hives.

NOTE: This is often used to describe acne that can suddenly appear on the face, especially among teenagers. Example: Emily was horrified when her face **broke out** just before the dance.

(to) clear up – to get better; to go away (when talking about problems with the skin, such as a rash or acne)

- Fortunately, Tyler’s face **cleared up** before the school dance.

(to) drive one nuts – to annoy someone very much

- It **drives me nuts** when people talk during movies.

for starters – to name just one problem or example; for example

- What’s wrong with Ted? **For starters**, his back is killing him.

(to) hit the nail on the head – to be right; to guess correctly

- The doctor **hit the nail on the head** when she said I needed to start exercising.

(to) nip (this, that or it) in the bud – to stop something before it gets any worse

- Your son has started to spend every night surfing the Web instead of doing his homework? You need to **nip that in the bud**.

on something – taking medication or prescription drugs

- Nancy is **on** Claritin for her allergies.

NOTE: This can also mean that one is taking illegal drugs. Example: That guy on the street corner is in bad shape. I wonder what he's **on**.

over-the-counter – available on the pharmacy shelf instead of by prescription

- Your headaches are getting worse? Maybe you should start taking a prescription drug instead of **over-the-counter** medications.

NOTE: sometimes you will see the abbreviation: OTC

Practice the Expressions

Fill in the blank with the missing word:

- 1) How long did it take for your rash to clear ____?
a) out b) away c) up
- 2) Everything went wrong on my date with the doctor I met online. For ____, he left his wallet at home!
a) starters b) beginners c) problems



Language Lens: "What if"

"What if" questions are a way of asking what will happen in a certain situation. Use it to express worry or concern about a possible outcome. Note that we use the simple present form of the verb with "what if" even though we are referring to events that might happen or are possible *in the future*.

Examples:

- What if the car breaks down during our trip to California? (NOT: ~~What if the car will break down...~~)
- What if the movie is sold out by the time we get to the movie theater? (NOT: ~~What if the movie will be sold out...~~)
- What if nobody volunteers to organize the holiday party? (NOT: ~~What if nobody will volunteer...~~)
- What if somebody breaks into our house while we're on vacation? (NOT: ~~What if somebody will break...~~)
- What if I don't get into any of the law schools I applied to? (NOT: ~~What if I will not get into...~~)
- What if Angela decides to marry Pierre and move to France? (NOT: ~~What if Angela will decide...~~)

Here's what happens when you change a statement about the future into a "what if" question:

I'm worried I **won't** have enough money for college. → What if I **don't** have enough money for college?

Note how the future tense verb **won't** (= will not) changes to a present tense verb (**don't**) in the "what if" question.

Here are more examples, with the verbs in bold:

- The company **will have** layoffs. → What if the company **has** layoffs?
- Erin **will get** lost on her way to your house. → What if Erin **gets** lost on her way to your house?
- Nobody **will volunteer**. → What if nobody **volunteers**?

Quick Quiz

I'm a "worrywart." A worrywort is someone who worries too much. Re-write my worries so I don't always have to start all my sentences with "I'm worried that." Use "What if" questions instead:

Example:

I'm worried that we won't make it to the airport on time.

Answer: What if we don't make it to the airport on time?

- 1) I'm worried that Joe won't get into college.
- 2) I'm worried that there won't be enough snow for skiing.
- 3) I'm worried that the restaurant will be all booked.
- 4) I'm worried that you won't like the movie.
- 5) I'm worried that our company will have layoffs next year.
- 6) I'm worried that the store will go out of business.
- 7) I'm worried that we'll run out of candy on Halloween.
- 8) I'm worried that our flight will be delayed.
- 9) I'm worried that my husband will lose his job.
- 10) I'm worried that our house won't sell.