

15 Symptoms Not to Ignore

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We often wonder whether symptoms will go away on their own or whether they should be attended to as soon as possible. Here are symptoms that require medical attention, some more urgently than others.

- 1. Chest pain:** Sometimes it is hard to distinguish between chest pain coming from the heart or from heartburn. If the pain goes away with an antacid, it's less likely to be related to the heart. Pain that is a dull, pressure-like sensation with or without pain running down the left arm should be evaluated immediately.
- 2. Shortness of breath:** Colds, sinus problems or allergies may cause some difficulty breathing. However, if you are unable to catch your breath or gasping and wheezing, these symptoms may need to be evaluated urgently to rule out more serious problems.
- 3. Sudden weakness, loss of vision or speech:** These symptoms could be signs of a stroke or transient ischemic attack (TIA) and should be brought to the attention of a medical professional as soon as possible.
- 4. Severe headaches:** Headaches that are concerning and require medical attention include:
 - Sudden onset of a severe headache "like a clap of thunder"
 - Headache accompanied by fever, stiff neck, rash, confusion or seizures
 - One-sided headache near the temple in middle-aged person.
- 5. Abdominal pain:** There are many causes of abdominal pain; some more serious than others. The characteristics of the pain are important: Is it related to eating? Where does it radiate? What makes it feel worse? Is it positional? Abdominal pain that persists more than a few hours warrants a call to your doctor and urgent evaluation.
- 6. Delirium:** Sudden confusion and rapid changes in your mental state could have many possible causes, but a change in mental status should be assessed urgently.
- 7. Flashes of light:** May indicate retinal detachment and treatment should be sought immediately.
- 8. Persistent or high fever:** Temperatures over 102°F for 3 days or high fever over 104°F require medical attention.
- 9. Hot, red, swollen joint:** This could be a joint infection, which should be treated immediately. It could also be a sign of gout or arthritis.
- 10. Unexplained weight loss:** A loss of 10% of your weight during the past 6 months unrelated to dieting should be brought to the attention of a medical professional.

11. Unexplained change in bowel habits:

The presence of these symptoms may require medical attention:

- Bloody stools
- Diarrhea lasting a week
- Constipation that lasts more than three weeks
- Black or tarry colored stools
- Unexplained urges to have bowel movement

12. Bruising and bleeding: If you have spontaneous recurrent bruising or unusual bleeding that will not stop, please seek medical attention.

13. New moles or change in appearance of old moles: Changes in color, shape or size could indicate a skin cancer and should be brought to the attention of a medical professional.

14. Early satiety: Feelings of being full after eating smaller portions than usual should be discussed with your physician, especially if accompanied by nausea, vomiting, or bloating.

15. Sadness/loss of interest in life: Depression is treatable and care may begin with your primary care physician.

If you are experiencing symptoms that require immediate medical assistance, please go directly to the emergency room and/or call 911.

If you would like an appointment with a highly sought-after medical specialist for a second opinion or diagnostic appointment or an appointment for treatment, please call us at 866-968-2467 or 440-893-0830 or email help@healthnetworkfoundation.org.

***Dr. Locke's Prescription
for a Better Life***



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