

Pharmacist/Patient Dialogues - Script

Dialogue #1

Patient: Hi, I was wondering if you could give me some advice. I was swimming in the ocean today, and when I got out, I noticed that I had all of these red bumps from my waist down.

Pharmacist: Do they itch?

Patient: Yeah, and I can't stop scratching them.

Pharmacist: I can see from your scratch marks. You only went into the water up to your waist? Did you feel a sting?

Patient: Yeah, come to think of it, I did. That's why I left the water.

Pharmacist: Well, it looks like you have a bumpy rash caused by a jellyfish sting.

Patient: A jellyfish sting? What should I do to get rid of this itch?

Pharmacist: Are you allergic to any medications?

Patient: Not that I know of but I don't think so.

Pharmacist: I would recommend Benadryl tablets and hydrocortisone cream. You'll find them in aisle 5.

Patient: I have a hard time swallowing tablets and pills. Does Benadryl come in a liquid?

Pharmacist: Sure. You can get it in liquid form. Follow the directions for both the Benadryl and the hydrocortisone cream. And if the itching and rash continue, call your doctor.

Patient: Thank you so much.

Pharmacist: No problem. Glad to be of help.

Dialogue #2

Patient: I was wondering what I could do about the problem I'm having with my big right toe.

Pharmacist: What seems to be the problem?

Patient: Here, I'll show you. I thought it was just oozy and blistery, but this morning when I got up and tried to put my foot in my shoe, it really hurt.

Pharmacist: Is it sensitive to the touch?

Patient: Yeah. That's why I'm wearing open-toe sandals so that the toe won't rub against anything. Even when I put a Band-Aid on it, it really hurts.

Pharmacist: Have you been wearing tight shoes? When did you notice the watery blisters?

Patient: Well, actually I ran a 10K race this past weekend and it was raining and my sneakers got wet, and that's when my toe started to hurt and I saw the watery blisters.

Pharmacist: Well, it looks like the wet sneakers and maybe not enough room at the tip of your sneakers caused the nail to get soft and the skin to get blisters. It looks like you have a fungal infection.

Patient: Fungus? Where would I get fungus?

Pharmacist: Well, a fungal infection is caused by the moist environment created by your wet sneaker and socks rubbing against your toes. That's what has happened to your right toe.

Patient: What's going to happen to my toenail?

Pharmacist: Well, it will most likely turn black from the dead nail and blood underneath it. Eventually, it will fall off, but in time your toenail will grow back.

Patient: What should I put on it?

Pharmacist: Do you have any allergies to certain medications?

Patient: Well, I'm allergic to sulfa and iodine.

Pharmacist: OK. Don't put Betadine on your toe. But if you go to aisle 3, you'll find Lamisil. This will help with the tenderness that you're feeling and will prevent the fungal infection from spreading. Follow the directions on the bottle.

Patient: How long will it take before my nail grows back?

Pharmacist: It could take a while before your toenail will grow back, maybe a few months. If you continue to have problems, or if it begins to ooze more blood, I suggest you make an appointment with a podiatrist, a foot doctor, or call your primary care doctor. Also, keep your toe dry and well ventilated until you feel comfortable enough to wear closed shoes.

Patient: Thank you so much. I'll be more careful next time I run another race.

Pharmacist: Take care of your toes.

Dialogue #3

Pharmacist: Hello. Can I help you?

Patient's mother: I hope so. We're on vacation so I can't make an appointment to see our pediatrician and was hoping you could help us. My daughter has been scratching her head a lot I thought maybe she's scratching because of the sun.

Pharmacist: Let me take a look at her hair and her scalp. Has she had head lice before?

Patient's mother: No.

Pharmacist: How old is your daughter?

Patient's mother: She's 6.

Pharmacist: It looks like she's got her first case of head lice.

Patient's mother: She must have picked it up at day camp.

Pharmacist: Maybe. It's not anything to be embarrassed about I suggest you buy a metal louse comb and soak it in rubbing alcohol and run it through her hair to remove the wingless insects. They look like sesame seeds. I also recommend a medicated antilice treatment Nix works well. You can find both in the shampoo aisle. It's also a good idea to wash her sheets, pillowcases, towels, and her clothes.

Patient's mother: Is it hard to use?

Pharmacist: No. First, wash her hair with shampoo, rinse it, and towel dry. Then rub the Nix cream into her hair. Make sure her scalp is fully covered with it, as well as behind the ears and behind her neck. Leave the Nix on for 10 minutes and then rinse. After that, use the louse comb to remove the lice.

Patient's mother: How long will it be before the lice are gone?

Pharmacist: If after a week she still has lice, repeat the process.

Patient's mother: Is head lice contagious?

Pharmacist: Yes, it is, so I recommend you and the rest of your family use Nix too, and wash your sheets, pillowcases, and clothes, too.

Patient's mother: Thank you so much.

Discussing treatment

A

Offering options

When discussing options with a patient, doctors may say:

There are a couple of options we can use. The first option is to try tablets like Prozac that lift you up a bit. The other option is counselling.

It can be caused by diet or stress. There are some quite simple tests we can do. If you're still concerned, we can refer you to a hospital.

B

Advising a course of action

When advising a course of action, doctors may say:

Some time off work might help. If you felt that would be helpful, you could take a week off and see how you felt after that.

Carry on drinking lots of fluids.

If you still have some pain, you can keep taking paracetamol.

Other things might help, like raising the head of your bed. That's one of the simple things we could start you off with. You said you haven't tried indigestion remedies. That's something you could try.

C

Advising patients to avoid something

When advising patients to avoid something, doctors may say:

There are a few things about your lifestyle we could address. Perhaps cut down on the amount you're drinking. Giving up smoking would help.

Cut out fatty foods.

You should try to avoid tight clothing, sitting in deep armchairs and bending, especially after meals.

D

Warnings

When a doctor wants to warn a patient that the consequence of ignoring the advice could be serious, he or she may say:

If you aren't feeling better in 7 to 14 days, you really must come back and see me again.

If you keep damaging it, you're going to end up with a long-term problem.

If you feel that things aren't settling, aren't getting back to normal, it's important that you see me again.

It's very important you don't stop taking the tablets suddenly or your symptoms will return.