

## ‘How To’ guide

There is a vast amount of medical knowledge available on the Internet and becoming an informed patient about your symptoms or knowing where to find care can be a challenge. The Isabel Symptom Checker addresses these problems by using the latest Artificial Intelligence (AI) searching technology to help you understand the symptoms you are experiencing and research possible causes of the symptoms and/or where to find care.

The Isabel Symptom Checker is adapted from the Isabel Differential Diagnosis Generator which has been used by healthcare professionals around the world for the past two decades. Isabel gives patients access to the most up-to-date and accurate information available online. Choose whether to research possible conditions or to find care and enter your symptoms as you are experiencing them. Each condition is linked to medical reference knowledge to help you learn more about each one. Isabel isn’t meant to replace your doctor. Instead, it will help you become more informed and, if necessary, have a more productive discussion with your doctor about your symptoms.

This is a detailed ‘How To’ user guide explaining Isabel’s various functions.

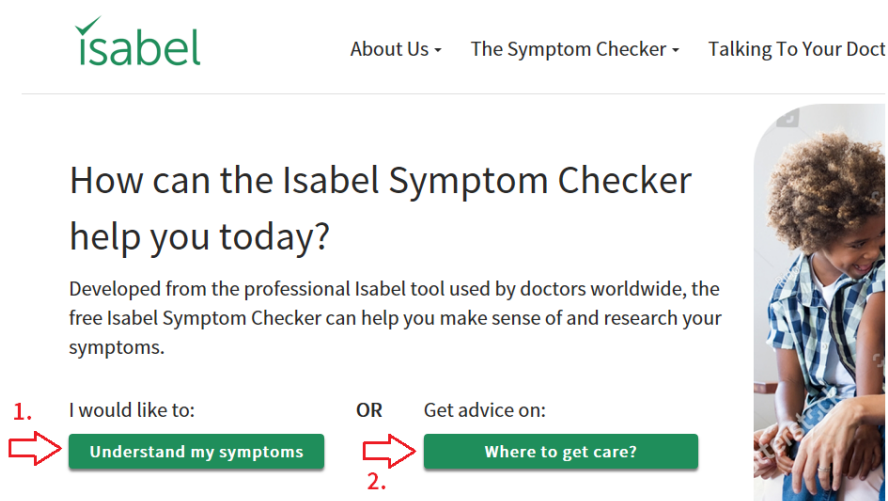
## How to use Isabel?

### What does Isabel do?

**Isabel** will help you research your symptoms, suggest possible conditions and help you decide where to find care.

### Where do I start ?

What kind of help do you need? If you want to understand what’s wrong with you, go to **‘Understand my symptoms’ (1)**. If you have already decided to seek care and need help choosing where to go, use **‘Where to get care?’ (2)**.



The screenshot shows the Isabel website header with the logo and navigation links: "About Us", "The Symptom Checker", and "Talking To Your Doct". Below the header is a section titled "How can the Isabel Symptom Checker help you today?". The text below the title reads: "Developed from the professional Isabel tool used by doctors worldwide, the free Isabel Symptom Checker can help you make sense of and research your symptoms." Below this text are two options for user input: "1. I would like to:" followed by a green button labeled "Understand my symptoms", and "OR Get advice on:" followed by a green button labeled "Where to get care?". Red arrows point to the buttons, with "1." next to the first and "2." next to the second. On the right side of the screenshot, there is a partial image of a young child with curly hair, wearing a blue and white checkered shirt, looking down at something in their hands.

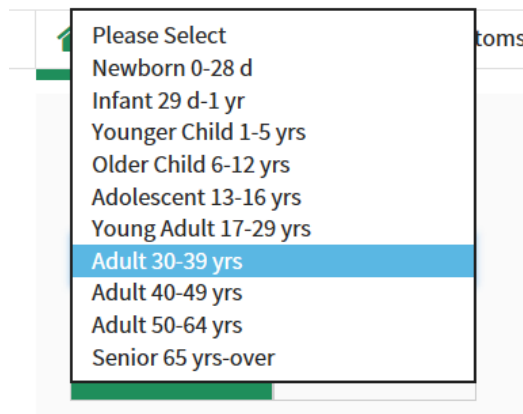
## Understand my symptoms (1)

‘Understand my symptoms’ helps you view possible conditions associated with your symptoms which you can then research and discuss with your healthcare provider.

### 1/ Tell us about your symptoms

Go through the questions displayed.

#### How old are you?



A screenshot of a dropdown menu for selecting an age group. The menu is open, showing a list of age categories. The 'Adult 30-39 yrs' option is highlighted in blue. The text 'Please Select' is at the top of the list. The text 'toms' is visible to the right of the dropdown.

- Please Select
- Newborn 0-28 d
- Infant 29 d-1 yr
- Younger Child 1-5 yrs
- Older Child 6-12 yrs
- Adolescent 13-16 yrs
- Young Adult 17-29 yrs
- Adult 30-39 yrs**
- Adult 40-49 yrs
- Adult 50-64 yrs
- Senior 65 yrs-over

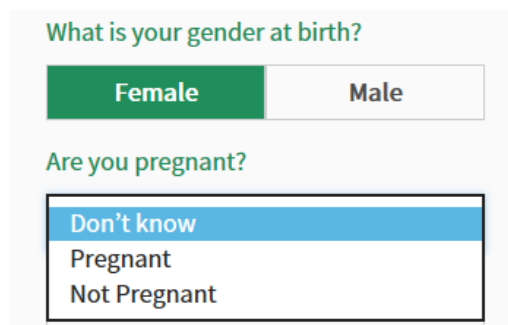
The age group is required for all queries.

#### What is your gender at birth?

Choose your gender by selecting the appropriate response.

#### Are you pregnant?

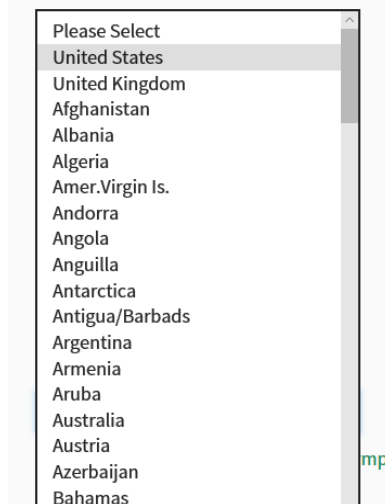
If you have selected female and the pregnancy option appears, you can leave it as ‘Don’t know’. However, your results may not be as relevant. If you do know you are pregnant, select ‘Pregnant’ or are sure you are not pregnant then select, ‘Not Pregnant’ to obtain the most accurate results.



A screenshot of two selection questions. The first question is 'What is your gender at birth?' with two radio button options: 'Female' (selected, highlighted in green) and 'Male'. The second question is 'Are you pregnant?' with a dropdown menu showing three options: 'Don't know' (highlighted in blue), 'Pregnant', and 'Not Pregnant'.

## Which country are you from?

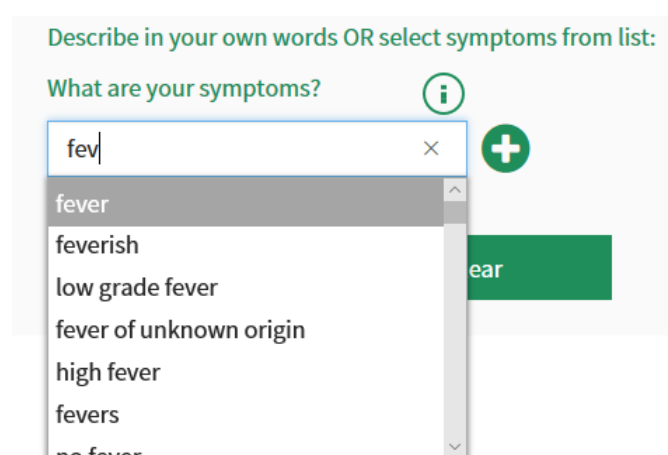
This should be set according to the country where you are currently living.



If you travelled abroad and became ill shortly after returning home, you may be affected by a disease more common in the region where you travelled. This would be particularly likely if you have been to a tropical region. In this case, you can use this function to modify the results according to the country you have visited. For example, if you have recently travelled to Kenya then select Kenya as the country and diseases found in the East Africa region will be considered in the results if they are appropriate for your symptoms. The regions used for the tropical disease are defined by the World Health Organisation (WHO). This could be very important to mention to your doctor, as he or she may not have considered the fact you have travelled recently.

## What are your symptoms?

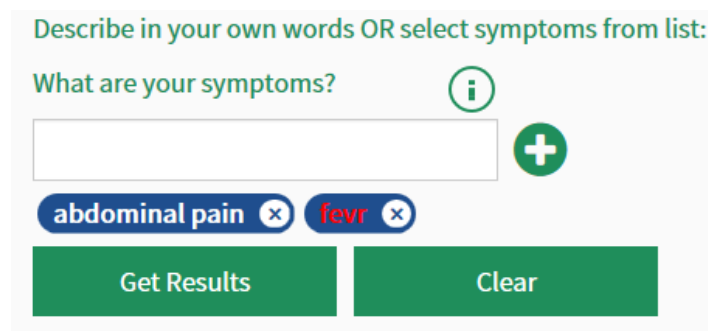
You can enter any combination of symptoms or results of laboratory tests you may have had, as long as you describe them in words and not numbers (see below). As you enter each symptom press the '+' or 'Return' key to add them into the system. What you have entered will appear below so you can review before submitting the query.



You will see the predictive text/ auto-complete function appears after you type in the 3<sup>rd</sup> character. This works very much like it does in Google. If you see your symptom in the list then select it. If the word or phrase you want is not on the list then just type it in.

### Simple rules for entering your symptoms:

1. Use medical terms as far as possible. “Abdominal pain” is better than “tummy hurts” for example.
2. Do not use numbers in the query box. If you have been given a test result, then enter into the system the meaning in words and not the numbers. For example, if you have been given a test result of blood pressure 160/100, then type in “high blood pressure”.
3. Enter only abnormal test results. Do not enter the ones you have been told are normal.
4. Check your spelling. If a word is misspelt, it will be highlighted in red on the results page.



**Please note:** Check your spelling. The term/s **fevr** may not have influenced the result.

When you’ve entered all your symptoms, press ‘Get Results’

## 2/ Possible causes

### What do the results mean?

These are possible conditions caused by your symptoms. The list of suggestions is based on how well the symptoms you entered matched our database of diseases. In other words, they are **NOT** shown in order of how clinically likely they are for you but displayed in order of relevance or match to the disease database. The results may appear alarming as they will often include cancers and other conditions you may not have heard of. At this stage, you should focus on learning more about the conditions suggested by clicking on the condition names (see below for more details).

🏠 Start
1/ Tell us about your symptoms >
2/ Possible causes

[Contact a doctor](#) [Find a lab test](#)

**Symptom details** ⓘ
[Share](#) [Print](#) [Save](#)

Gender: Female , Age: Adult 30-39 yrs [Edit](#)

Country: United States (North America)

Symptoms: Sore Throat, Headache, Feeling Feverish

Show All	Red Flag	Common
Strep Throat		common
Sinusitis		common
Tonsillitis		common
Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever	🚩	
Influenza		common
Tularemia	🚩	
Infectious Mononucleosis		common
Acute Infectious Laryngitis		common
Scarlet Fever		
Quinsy	🚩	

**Get the**

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You can then view this list in various ways:

- Show all**- this list normally includes about 30 conditions which match your symptoms
- Red flags** (🚩) these are conditions that can cause severe harm if not treated quickly. If you suspect that you may have one of these red flagged diseases, call or visit the emergency service immediately.
- Common** - Diseases marked common are, in general, those which affect more than 50 per 100,000 of the population. The diseases not marked common are rare and are generally those affecting fewer than 50 per 100,000 of the population.

**Would you like advice on where to seek care now?**

When you have finished reviewing the list of conditions, if you need advice on where to seek care for the symptoms you are experiencing, select ‘Yes’ to go on to the final stage. If you have all the information you need and don’t wish to continue, then select ‘No’ and you can return to **1/Tell us about your symptoms** to refine your current symptoms or clear your query and start a new one.

### 3/ Where to get care?

The next screen takes you to the ‘Where to get care’ Isabel triage tool which helps you decide whether you need to go to the Emergency Department immediately, see your family doctor/urgent care clinic or get care via telemedicine or similar.

The screenshot shows the Isabel triage tool interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with four steps: 'Start', '1/ Tell us about your symptoms', '2/ Possible causes', and '3/ Where to get care?'. The '3/ Where to get care?' step is highlighted with a green arrow. Below the navigation bar, the main content area is titled 'Where to get care?'. It includes a user profile box with the following information: Gender: Male, Age: Adult 30-39 yrs, Country: United States (North America), and Symptoms: Sore Throat, Headache, Feeling Feverish. There is an 'Edit' button next to the profile information. Below the profile box, there is a section titled 'How quickly did your symptoms develop?' with four radio button options: 'Over minutes/hours', 'Over days', 'Over weeks', and 'Over months'. To the right of the main content area, there is a sidebar with the Isabel logo and the text 'Isabel TIPS' and 'Where to get care?'. Below this, it says 'Please answer these 7 important questions to get advice on wh'. There is also a small image of a person sitting at a desk.

Answer the 7 general clinical questions about your symptoms and how they have affected you. These questions are ones a doctor would routinely ask during your appointment. Next, select ‘Get Results’. The triage tool will combine your symptom checker results with the answers to your questions and calculate a score shown on a gradient bar which will indicate if you should seek care via telemedicine, your family doctor, an urgent care clinic or from the emergency services. If the result looks borderline but if you are very concerned, it would be sensible to go to the Emergency Department.

## Where to get care (2)

### How can the Isabel Symptom Checker help you today?

Developed from the professional Isabel tool used by doctors worldwide, the free Isabel Symptom Checker can help you make sense of and research your symptoms.

I would like to:

[Understand my symptoms](#)

OR Get advice on:



2.

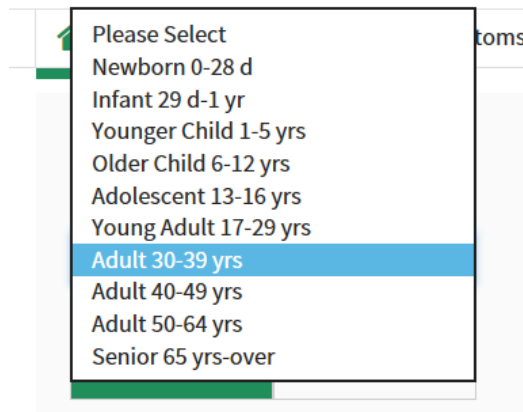
[Where to get care?](#)

If you know you need to seek care but are unsure where to go, the ‘Where to get care’ triage tool can assist you with your decision.

## 1/ Tell us about your symptoms

Go through the questions which are displayed.

### How old are you?



A screenshot of a dropdown menu for selecting an age group. The menu is open, showing a list of age categories. The 'Adult 30-39 yrs' option is highlighted in blue. The options are: Please Select, Newborn 0-28 d, Infant 29 d-1 yr, Younger Child 1-5 yrs, Older Child 6-12 yrs, Adolescent 13-16 yrs, Young Adult 17-29 yrs, Adult 30-39 yrs, Adult 40-49 yrs, Adult 50-64 yrs, and Senior 65 yrs-over.

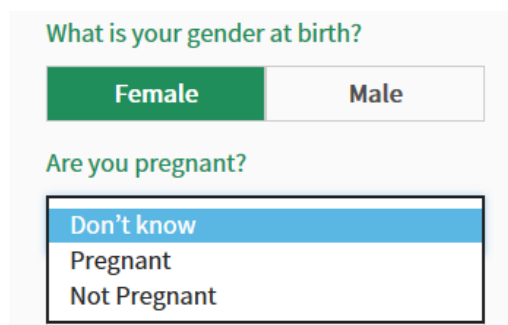
The age group is required for all queries.

### What is your gender at birth?

Choose your gender by selecting the appropriate response.

### Are you pregnant?

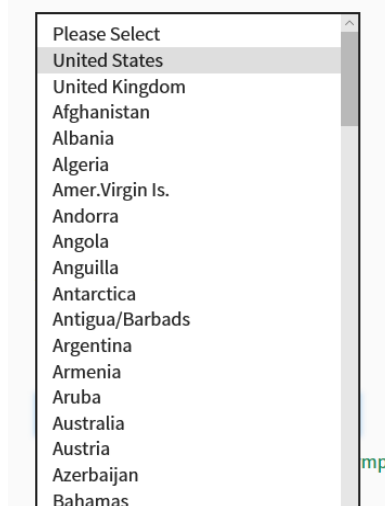
If you have selected female and the pregnancy option appears, you can leave it as ‘Don’t know’. However, your results may not be as relevant. If you do know you are pregnant, select ‘Pregnant’ or are sure you are not pregnant then select, ‘Not Pregnant’ to obtain the most accurate results.



A screenshot of a form with two sections. The first section is titled 'What is your gender at birth?' and has two buttons: 'Female' (highlighted in green) and 'Male'. The second section is titled 'Are you pregnant?' and has a dropdown menu with three options: 'Don't know' (highlighted in blue), 'Pregnant', and 'Not Pregnant'.

### Which country are you from?

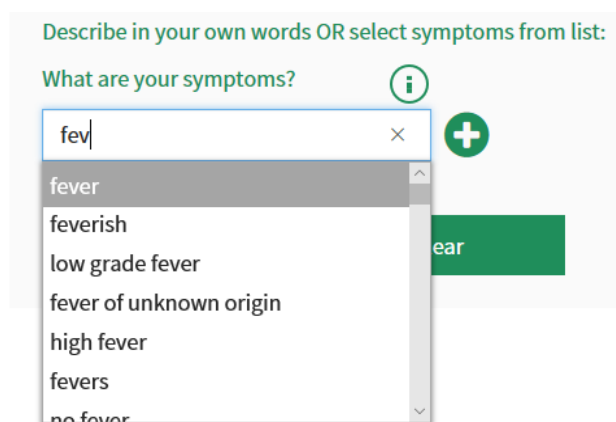
This should be set according to the country where you currently living in.



If you travelled abroad and become ill shortly after returning home, you may be affected by a disease more common in the region where that country is situated. This would be particularly likely if you have been to a tropical region. In this case, you can use this function to modify the results according to the country you have visited. For example, if you have recently travelled to Kenya then select Kenya as the country and diseases found in the East Africa region will be considered in the results if they are appropriate for your symptoms. The regions used for the tropical disease are defined by the World Health Organisation (WHO). This could be very important to mention to your doctor, as he or she may not have considered the fact you have travelled recently.

### What are your symptoms?

You can enter any combination of symptoms or results of laboratory tests you may have had, as long as you describe them in words and not numbers. As you enter each symptom press the '+' or 'Return' key to add them into the system. What you have entered will appear below so you can review before submitting the query.



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### Simple rules for entering your symptoms:

1. Use medical terms as far as possible. “Abdominal pain” is better than “tummy hurts” for example.
2. Do not use numbers in the query box. If you have been given a test result, then enter into the system the meaning in words and not the numbers. For example, if you have been given a test result of blood pressure 160/100, then type in “high blood pressure”.
3. Enter only abnormal test results. Do not enter the ones you have been told are normal.
4. Check your spelling. If a word is misspelt, Isabel will be highlighted in red on the results page.

Describe in your own words OR select symptoms from list:

What are your symptoms? (i)

 (+)

abdominal pain (x) fevr (x)

Get Results

Clear

**Please note:** Check your spelling. The term/s **fevr** may not have influenced the result.

When you’ve entered all your symptoms, press ‘Next Step’

### 2/ Where to get care

The next screen takes you to the ‘Where to get care’ Isabel triage tool which helps you decide whether you need to go to the Emergency Department now, see your family doctor/urgent care clinic or get care via telemedicine.

Start
1/ Tell us about your symptoms >
2/ Possible causes >
3/ Where to get care?

#### Where to get care?

Gender: Male , Age: Adult 30-39 yrs Edit

Country: United States (North America)

Symptoms: Sore Throat, Headache, Feeling Feverish

How quickly did your symptoms develop?


Over minutes/hours	Over days
Over weeks	Over months

#### Isabel TIPS

#### Where to get care?

Please answer these 7 important questions to get advice on wh

#### Isabel TIPS




Answer the 7 general clinical questions about your symptoms and how they have affected you. These questions are ones a doctor would routinely ask during your appointment. Once you have completed the questions, select ‘Get Results’. The triage tool will combine your symptom checker results with the answers to your questions and calculate a score shown on a gradient bar which will indicate if you should present for care via telemedicine, your family doctor, an urgent care clinic or from the emergency services. If the result looks borderline but if you are very concerned, then it would be sensible to go to the Emergency Department.

**Where to get care?** Share Print Save

Gender: Male , Age: Adult 30-39 yrs Edit  
 Country: United States (North America)  
 Symptoms: Sore Throat, Headache, Feeling Feverish

i This is just a suggestion of where you should go now to get care and must not be relied on over and above your own instinct and judgement.

Your results



**Family Physician / Urgent Care Clinic / Minor Injuries Unit**

■ Walk in clinic / Telemedicine  
■ Family Physician / Urgent Care Clinic / Minor Injuries Unit  
■ Emergency Services

Change responses

**Isabel TIPS**



**Talking to your Doctor**

Contact a doctor

- Do not be afraid of discussing things that have been dismissed.
- Remember, you are the expert on your own health.
- Reassure your doctor that Isabel is a computer program that has been used by almost 20 years and has been used by millions of people.

If you would like a report to take with you to your healthcare provider – click on ‘**Share**’ – this compiles a report recording all the details you have entered (symptoms, results and the answers to the triage questions) which you can email or take with you when you see your healthcare provider.

### Would you like to see possible conditions?

When you have finished reviewing the ‘Where to get care’ information, if you wish to review possible conditions for your symptoms, select ‘Yes’ to go on to the next stage. If you have all the information you need and don’t wish to continue, select ‘No’ and you can return to **1/Tell us about your symptoms** to refine your current symptoms or clear your query and start a new one.

### 3/ Possible causes

### What do the results mean?

[Contact a doctor](#)   [Find a lab test](#)

**Symptom details** ⓘ   [Share](#)   [Print](#)   [Save](#)

Gender: **Male**, Age: **Adult 30-39 yrs** [Edit](#)  
 Country: **United States (North America)**  
 Symptoms: **Sore Throat, Headache, Feeling Feverish**

Show All	Red Flag	Common
Strep Throat		common
Sinusitis		common
Tonsillitis		common
Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever	🚩	
Influenza		common
Tularemia	🚩	
Infectious Mononucleosis		common
Acute Infectious Laryngitis		common
Scarlet Fever		
Quinsy	🚩	

💡 Tap on the diagnosis to explore

#### isabel TIPS



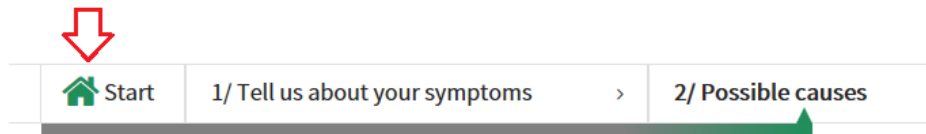
#### Get the most out of your symptom checker results

- You can now click on the condition to learn more.
- Use the information to discuss possible conditions with your doctor and ask “What else could be causing my symptoms?”
- Red Flag conditions are serious and acute and need to be seen by a Department.
- Conditions labelled as common mean they are more prevalent, but this does not necessarily mean they are more likely for you.

These are possible conditions caused by your symptoms. This list of suggestions is based on how well the symptoms you entered matched our database of diseases. In other words, they are **NOT** shown in order of how clinically likely they are for you but displayed in order of relevance to the disease database. The results may appear alarming as they will often include cancers and other conditions you may not have heard of. At this stage, you should focus on learning more about the conditions suggested by clicking on the condition names (see below for more details). You can then view this list in various ways:

- **Show all**- this list normally includes about 30 conditions which match your symptoms
- **Red flags** (🚩)- these are conditions that can cause severe harm if not treated quickly. If you suspect you may have one of these red flagged diseases, then call or visit the emergency service immediately.
- **Common** -Diseases marked as common are, in general, those that affect more than 50 per 100,000 of the population. Diseases not marked common are rare and are, generally, those affecting fewer than 50 per 100,000 of the population.

## General information



### Start

Click on 'Start' at any point and you can go back to the main landing page and start again or chose a new journey. The green indicator bar shows where you currently are.

**Symptom details** ⓘ Share Print Save

Gender: **Male** , Age: **Adult 30-39 yrs** Edit

Country: **United States (North America)**

Symptoms: **Sore Throat, Headache, Feeling Feverish**

### Edit

At any point in the process if you want to change your symptoms, or add something you may have forgotten, just click on 'edit' and you can start again with the last symptoms you entered.

### Share, Print or Save

These enable you to save, print or email the symptoms you entered and the results you received so that you can share them with your doctor or family.

### More information about each condition

isabel

**Strep Throat**  
Lung conditions

Find a Doctor

Contact a Doctor

Web Resources

Merck - Consumer

MedlinePlus

UpToDate - Patient

Mayo Clinic

Wikipedia

Google

Google Images

WebMD

**MSD MANUAL Consumer Version**  
The trusted provider of medical information since 1899

HOME HEALTH TOPICS SYMPTOMS EMERGENCIES RESOURCES NEWS ABOUT

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A | B | C | D | E | F | G | H | I | J | K | L | M | N | O | P | Q | R | S | T | U | V | W | X | Y | Z

HOME / EAR, NOSE, AND THROAT DISORDERS / SYMPTOMS OF NOSE AND THROAT DISORDERS / SORE THROAT

**IN THIS TOPIC**

- Causes
- Evaluation
- Treatment
- Key Points

**OTHER TOPICS IN THIS CHAPTER**

- Nosebleeds
- Nasal Congestion and Discharge

**Sore Throat**

By *Marvin P. Fried, MD, Montefiore Medical Center, The University Hospital of Albert Einstein College of Medicine*

**NOTE:** This is the Consumer Version. **DOCTORS:** Click here for the Professional Version

**Topic Resources**

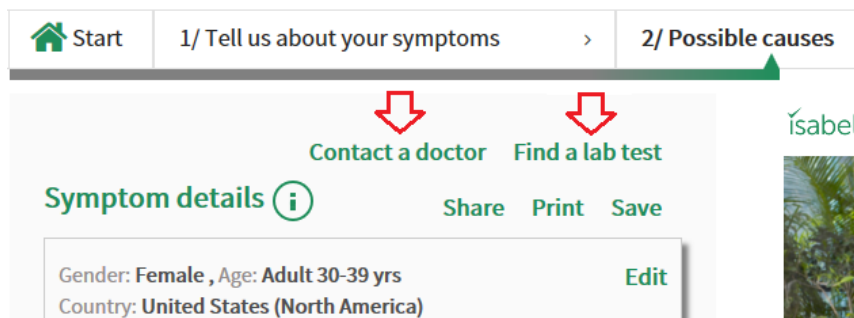
Images (1) Videos (0) Sidebar (0) Table (1) Audio (0) 3D Models (1)

Sore throat is pain in the back of the throat. The pain can be severe and is usually worsened by swallowing. Many people with sore throat refuse to eat or drink. Sometimes pain is also felt in the ear (nerves to the back of the throat run very close to nerves from the ear).

**Causes**

A sore throat usually results from infection (see table [Some Causes and Features of Sore Throat](#)). TH Cookies Non infection is

Each of the conditions listed is linked to medical knowledge from other websites. Click on a condition name and it will initially link to information on that condition from the Merck Manual consumer version. In the left-hand panel, you will also see links to other well-known web resources with information on the condition you are researching.



### Contact a doctor or Find a lab test

Once you have researched your symptoms and read the various resources, you will hopefully have a good idea of 2-3 diseases that appear to fit well with what you are experiencing which you can discuss further with your doctor. It is extremely important that you discuss your thoughts with your doctor before changing, stopping or ordering any medications or planned treatment

At the top of the results page you will see 2 options - 'Contact a doctor' and 'Find a lab Test' with links to various web resources that offer help with this. Where possible we will offer links that automatically take the condition you have selected, the medical specialty and your location and return to you a list of relevant specialists in your area.

### Access on mobile or tablet

The Isabel Symptom Checker can be used on any device that is connected to the internet providing 24/7 access anywhere when needed. Go to our main web site: <https://symptomchecker.isabelhealthcare.com>, save the shortcut to your home screen. Click on the icon – select 'login' and enter the login details specified when you registered, click 'remember me' to save login details for easy access next time.