

BREAKS FOR EVERYBODY

Sick Dreams | Zinzi Buchanan & Fayer Koch

Migraine

HOW LONG?

Sick note for 1-2 days, one week max., but its often possible! It's best to call the doctor the same day that you need the sick certificate.

WHAT HAPPENED?

- You call and say you have an attack of migraines and can't come out of bed. The next day, you turn up to the doctor.
- You're a migraine patient, but you have never been to the doctor you are at now.
- Yesterday, you had a terrible attack of migraines. You're familiar with these kinds of attacks, but this time it was particularly bad.
- You woke up tired and irritable.
- You couldn't eat anything for breakfast. Your stomach felt like it was all tied up.
- After being tired for about an hour, headaches kicked in: thumping, pressing and pulsating, on both sides, particularly in the area of the forehead/temples/eyes.
- You had to close the curtains, because brightness became a problem all of a sudden. You felt sensitive to noise, too
- Then you felt nauseous. You had to throw up (yellow-ish, bitter), had rushes of sweat
- Your headaches haven't fully disappeared yet. You still feel nauseous, but you don't have to throw up anymore.
- In general, you're in the midst of a very busy period.
- Attacks of migraines often come after drinking alcohol (a glass of wine can be enough), or with stress, changing weather or menstruation.
- Several family members of yours suffer from migraines, too.
- The actual attacks of migraines only last for a day, but the day after you're too destroyed to be able to go back to work.

WHAT ELSE?

- It's best to look a little hung-over: Pale, eyelids a bit tense as if looking into bright light.
- There are severe forms of migraine which damage your organs. To rule that out, the doctor can ask you about fuzzy vision, visual impairments, speech impediments, tingle in hands and arms, etc. Its better to deny all of these, as it will only bring trouble. You won't get a sick certificate for more then a week anyway.
- You can say you take a certain medication (e.g. Almogran or Dolotriptan), and that it helps you. If the doctor prescribes you anything: collect it from the pharmacy, but don't take it.
- Measuring blood pressure and blood draw are harmless. Tests with a neurologist to rule out epilepsia are harmless, too. Refuse injections (you feel sick thinking about needles, once you fainted at getting an injection). Refuse x-rays.
- If the doctor doesn't mention it, you have to bring it up yourself: You need a sick note for yesterday and today.

Gastritis

HOW LONG?

Sick notes are given mostly for one week, up to four weeks after further examinations.

WHAT HAPPENED?

- You've been feeling sick for two or three days, you threw up a few times, you've got acid regurgitation. You're not hungry anymore.
- There's a pressure in your stomach, between your bellybutton and ribs. Sometimes it increases to an actual pain, then it ebbs away.
- In general, lots of things affect your stomach lately. Something annoying happens, and immediately you feel it in your belly area.
- You had stomach issues before, but never took it seriously.

WHAT ELSE?

- Its best not to mention the name of the sickness yourself. Just describe your symptoms.
- Possibly the doctor might not examine you at all the first time you visit and just ask you some questions. Maybe they will touch your belly and ask you where you feel pain. Maybe they will take your blood or shit and send it to the lab: In either case, it's harmless.
- The doctor might ask you if your symptoms get better or worse after eating. It doesn't matter what you answer.
- Most of the times, the doctor will prescribe you some pills and recommend that you relax and eat food that's easy to digest. That's it.
- Later on, the doctor might suggest to do a gastroscopy on you. If they suggest to do it the first time you visit, you should reject. However, if you want a longer sick certificate, you might consider to agree. Most doctors can't do gastroscopies themselves. You will be asked to book an appointment with a specialist. Everything will be pleasantly delayed.
- Gastroscopies are unpleasant: The doctor will use a long hose to look into your stomach through your throat. If you don't want that, you should get well before the appointment.
- If they can't find anything during the gastroscopy, it doesn't automatically mean you are faking your sickness. It's very normal for people to have symptoms without „objective“ bodily correlates.
- Don't agree to x-ray your stomach. Radiation exposure is bad for you.
- By the way: If the doctor knows you have issues with the stomach, it might help for the next time.

Nervous Exhaustion

HOW LONG?

Sick note for 1-4 weeks. It's best to go to the doctor the day you need the sick note.

WHAT HAPPENED

- Three days ago, you had a debility attack. All of a sudden you were sweating, your hands were wet and shaky, everything went black, your heart was racing, you felt very weak.
- You lay down immediately. It was okay after a while.
- Now you're worn down. Every physical exertion is too much for you. During the day, you feel like crying; in the evening you just want to go to sleep. You can't concentrate anymore.
- If you lay down for a longer stretch of time and then sit back up, everything goes black (sometimes if you bend down, too). In the morning everything is a bit worse than in the evenings.
- You have had these kind of symptoms before, but never quite as bad.
- You need a lot of sleep but when you sleep, are restless and wake up often.
- Your hands and feet are often cold, sometimes sweaty and wet.
- You don't have a sex drive anymore. Maybe your period is off.
- Now, sitting in front of the doctors, you feel a little better.
- By the way: A good friend of yours died recently, or your partner broke up with you, or something bad happened. Maybe it could be to do with that?

WHAT ELSE?

- The doctor will measure your blood pressure, will listen to your heart, maybe draw blood, and do an ECG. All of it is harmless. If they can't find anything, they will give you a sick certificate anyway. If they do: don't panic. Many people don't have norm-results and it doesn't mean they are sick.
- If the doctor prescribes you pills, collect them from the pharmacy, but don't take them. Refuse injections (you always feel sick around needles, once you even fainted when being injected).
- There is no guarantee you will get a sick note, you might need to bring up the topic yourself.

Created for the performance SICK DREAMS by Zinzi Buchanan and Fayer Koch on 8/9/11 July 2021 in LOFFT – DAS THEATER Leipzig.

Based on the zine Diagnose Kapitalismus, Therapie Pause by Die Überflüssigen