

BEFORE YOU
Panic
COMMON HEALTH PROBLEMS

DR. ARSHAD ALI KHAN



BlueRose ONE^{com}
S t o r i e s M a t t e r
New Delhi • London

BLUEROSE PUBLISHERS

India | U.K.

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BlueRose ONE
Stories Matter
New Delhi • London

For permissions requests or inquiries regarding this publication,
please contact:

BLUEROSE PUBLISHERS

www.BlueRoseONE.com

info@bluerosepublishers.com

+91 8882 898 898

+4407342408967

ISBN: 978-81-69726-29-0

Typesetting: Sagar

First Edition: June 2026

Preface

Every day, I see people worried about their health — some panic over minor issues, while others ignore warning signs until it's too late. Fever, headache, high blood pressure, or sudden weakness — these are signals your body is giving you. Yet most of us don't understand what they really mean.

I wrote this book to help you understand your body in simple, practical language. My goal is to guide you so you can make informed decisions, avoid unnecessary fear, and act early when it matters most.

This book is written in clear, easy-to-read language, without complicated medical jargon. Each chapter focuses on a common health problem and explains:

- When to relax — symptoms that are usually harmless
- When to act — simple home measures that help
- When to rush — signs you should never ignore

You will also find practical tips, lifestyle advice, and a doctor's perspective to help you take care of yourself and your loved ones.

Health is a journey, not a destination. By understanding your body and listening to its signals, you can prevent many complications before they happen. Think of this book as your trusted companion, ready to guide you step by step.

I hope this book empowers you to take charge of your health with confidence, knowledge, and calm.

— Dr Arshad Ali Khan, MBBS

About the Author

Dr Arshad Ali Khan, MBBS

Doctor and Health Educator

Dr Arshad Ali Khan is committed to making medical knowledge simple, practical, and understandable for everyone. With years of experience treating patients and educating people about common health problems, he believes that prevention and early awareness are the keys to a healthy life.

Through this book, Dr Khan aims to empower readers with the knowledge to listen to their bodies, identify warning signs, and take the right action before minor problems become serious. His approach is clear, calm, and practical, focusing on actionable advice that anyone can follow.

Welcome!

Your body is constantly sending you signals. Sometimes it whispers, sometimes it shouts. Fever, headache, high blood pressure, or sudden weakness — these are signs your body is giving you.

Many people panic over minor problems. Others ignore warning signs until it's too late. I wrote this book to help you understand your body in simple, practical language — without fear and without confusion.

Here, you will learn:

- When to relax — most common symptoms are harmless
- When to act — simple home measures that help
- When to rush — signs you should never ignore

Each chapter explains a health problem step by step, with tips and advice you can trust. No complicated terms, no unnecessary panic — just clear guidance from a doctor.

Think of this book as your trusted health companion, helping you make informed decisions and take care of yourself and your family.

Contents

1. Fever — When Is It Normal, and When Is It Dangerous?	1
2. High Blood Pressure — The Silent Killer We Ignore.....	5
3. Diabetes (Sugar) — Early Signs People Ignore	9
4. Chest Pain — Gas or Heart Attack?	13
5. Headache — Stress, Migraine, or Something Serious?.	17
6. Cough & Cold — Why Antibiotics Are Overused	22
7. Dizziness & Weakness — What Your Body Is Trying to Tell You.....	26
8. Sleep Problems & Mobile Addiction — The Silent Health Thief	31
9. Fatty Liver — Can It Be Reversed?	35
10. Kidney Problems — Early Warning Signs You Should Never Ignore	39
11. Breathing Difficulty — When to Relax and When to Rush	43
12. Weight Gain & Hormones — Why Losing Weight Feels So Hard	47
13. Anxiety vs Real Illness — How to Tell the Difference	51
14. Food Myths in Indian Homes — What to Believe, What to Ignore.....	55

15. Home Remedies — What Really Works and What Doesn't	58
16. Emergency Symptoms People Ignore.....	61
17. Medical Tests — Which Are Really Needed	64
18. When Google Helps & When It Harms.....	67
19. Final Advice from a Doctor to Every Family.....	70
 Acknowledgements.....	 73

Chapter 1:

Fever — When Is It Normal, and When Is It Dangerous?

Fever is one of the most common reasons people panic.

A child feels warm, a thermometer shows 100°F, and suddenly the family is scared.

Let me tell you something very important first:

Fever itself is not a disease.

It is a **sign** that your body is fighting something.

What Is Fever, Actually?

Normal body temperature is around **98.6°F (37°C)**.

When your temperature goes **above 100.4°F (38°C)**, we call it fever.

Fever means your immune system is active — it is doing its job.

So yes, **mild fever is often a good thing.**

Common Causes of Fever

Most fevers are caused by:

- Viral infections (most common)
- Bacterial infections
- Seasonal flu
- Throat infection
- Urinary infection
- Food poisoning

Most fevers are viral and settle on their own.

Fever That Is Usually NOT Dangerous

You usually don't need to panic if:

- Fever is less than 102°F
- Patient is alert and drinking fluids
- Fever comes down with paracetamol
- No breathing difficulty
- No severe pain

In such cases:

- Rest
- Fluids
- Use paracetamol in recommended doses.
- Observation

That's it.

Fever That Needs Attention

You should **see a doctor immediately** if fever is accompanied by:

- Fever lasting **more than 3 days**
- Very high fever (**above 103°F**)
- Difficulty breathing
- Severe headache or neck stiffness
- Persistent vomiting
- Confusion or unconsciousness
- Chest pain
- Seizures
- In babies **below 3 months**

Fever is dangerous not because of the number, but because of associated symptoms.

A Common Mistake People Make

Many people think:

“Fever means infection, so antibiotics are needed.”

This is **wrong**.

Antibiotics **do not work** for viral fever.

Unnecessary antibiotics cause:

- Resistance
- Weak immunity
- Stomach problems
- Long-term harm

Only a doctor should decide if antibiotics are needed.

Should You Reduce Fever Immediately?

Mild fever does not always need medicine.

Use paracetamol if:

- Fever causes discomfort
- Body pain or headache is present
- Child is irritable

Avoid:

Overdosing

Combining multiple fever medicines

Using antibiotics on your own

A Doctor's Simple Advice

Fever is a friend, not an enemy

Treat the cause, not just the temperature

Observe the patient, not only the thermometer

When in doubt, consult — don't Google panic

Final Words

Fever is one of the body's smartest defence mechanisms.

Understanding it properly can save you from unnecessary fear, money loss, and wrong treatment.

Chapter 2:

High Blood Pressure – The Silent Killer We Ignore

High blood pressure is one of the most misunderstood health problems.

Many people say:

“Doctor, I feel fine. How can my BP be high?”

That’s exactly why high blood pressure is dangerous.

Most people with high BP feel absolutely normal.

What Is High Blood Pressure?

Blood pressure is the force with which blood pushes against your blood vessels.

Normal BP is around 120/80 mmHg.

Persistent readings above the normal range (generally above 130-140/80-90 mmHg) may indicate high blood pressure (hypertension).

One high reading does not mean you have BP disease.

Why Is It Called the Silent Killer?

Because high BP:

- Usually has no symptoms
- Slowly damages organs
- Is often discovered after a complication

It can silently damage:

- Heart (heart attack, heart failure)
 - Brain (stroke)
 - Kidneys (kidney failure)
 - Eyes (vision problems)
-

Common Myths About BP

Myth 1: “I have headache, so my BP is high.”

Not true. Most BP patients have no headache.

Myth 2: “Once BP is normal, I can stop medicines.”

Dangerous thinking.

Myth 3: “BP medicines are addictive.”

They are not addictive; they are protective.

Who Is at Risk?

You are more likely to develop high BP if you:

- Are above 35 years
- Have family history
- Eat excess salt
- Are overweight

- Have diabetes
 - Don't exercise
 - Are under constant stress
 - Smoke or consume alcohol
-

How to Measure BP Correctly

Wrong measurement leads to wrong fear.

Sit quietly for 5 minutes

Feet flat on the floor

Arm supported at heart level

No tea, coffee, or smoking 30 minutes before Take two readings and average them

Don't panic over a single reading.

When Is BP an Emergency?

Rush to hospital if BP is high along with:

- Chest pain
- Shortness of breath
- Sudden weakness of one side
- Difficulty speaking
- Loss of vision
- Severe confusion

High BP with symptoms is dangerous.

Treatment: More Than Just Medicines

Medicines help, but lifestyle matters equally.

What really helps:

Reduce salt

Daily walking (30 minutes)

Weight control

Stress management

Regular sleep

Stop smoking

Small changes make a big difference.

A Doctor's Honest Advice

Check BP regularly after 30 years

Don't stop medicines without advice

BP control prevents stroke & heart attack

Feeling "normal" doesn't mean BP is normal

Final Words

High blood pressure doesn't shout.

It whispers — and damages quietly.

Control it early, and it will never control your life.

Chapter 3:

Diabetes (Sugar) – Early Signs People Ignore

Diabetes is often taken lightly.

Many people say:

“Doctor, little sugar is normal nowadays.”

That “little sugar” is exactly how diabetes starts — quietly.

Diabetes does not come overnight.

It develops slowly, and that’s why many people miss the early signs.

What Is Diabetes?

Many people may have no symptoms in the early stages of diabetes. Diabetes means high sugar (glucose) levels in the blood.

Normally, insulin helps sugar enter the body’s cells for energy.

In diabetes:

- Either insulin is not produced enough
- Or the body does not use insulin properly

As a result, sugar stays in the blood and damages organs over time.

Why Is Diabetes Dangerous?

Because high sugar slowly affects:

- Eyes (vision loss)
- Kidneys (kidney failure)
- Heart (heart attack)
- Nerves (numbness, burning, foot ulcers)
- Brain (stroke)

And most of this damage happens before symptoms become obvious.

Early Warning Signs People Ignore

Many patients tell me later:

“Doctor, I had these signs, but I ignored them.”

Watch out for:

- Frequent urination (especially at night)
- Excessive thirst
- Unexplained weight loss
- Increased hunger
- Constant tiredness
- Recurrent infections
- Slow wound healing
- Blurred vision

- Tingling or burning in feet

Having more than one of these signs needs testing.

Who Is at High Risk?

You are at higher risk if:

- You have family history of diabetes
 - You are overweight
 - You don't exercise
 - You eat high-carbohydrate junk food
 - You have BP or cholesterol problems
 - You had diabetes during pregnancy
-

How Is Diabetes Diagnosed?

Simple blood tests:

- Fasting blood sugar
- Post-meal blood sugar
- HbA1c (gives 3-month average)

Don't rely on symptoms alone.

Tests give clarity.

Can Diabetes Be Prevented?

In many cases — YES.

Lifestyle changes can delay or prevent diabetes:

- 30–45 minutes daily walking
- Reduce sugar and refined carbs

- Eat more vegetables and fiber
- Control weight
- Sleep well
- Manage stress

Small steps taken early make a huge difference.

A Common Mistake

Some people stop medicines once sugar becomes normal.

This is dangerous.

Sugar becomes normal because of treatment, not because diabetes is gone.

Never stop medicines without medical advice.

A Doctor's Simple Advice

Get sugar tested after 30 years

Don't ignore early symptoms

Lifestyle is as important as medicine

Controlled diabetes = normal life

Final Words

Diabetes doesn't hurt in the beginning —

but uncontrolled diabetes hurts later.

Early diagnosis and discipline can save your eyes, kidneys, heart, and feet.

Chapter 4:

Chest Pain — Gas or Heart Attack?

Chest pain is one of the most frightening symptoms.

The first thought in most people's mind is:

“Is this a heart attack?”

Sometimes it is.

Many times, it is not.

Knowing the difference can save a life — or save you from unnecessary panic.

Why Chest Pain Happens

Chest pain can arise from:

- Heart
- Stomach (gas, acidity)
- Muscles
- Lungs
- Anxiety or panic attacks

Not every chest pain is related to the heart.

Features Suggesting Heart-Related Pain

Chest pain may be dangerous if it:

- Is heavy, tight, squeezing, or pressure-like
- Occurs in the center or left side of chest
- Radiates to left arm, neck, jaw, or back
- Is associated with sweating
- Comes with breathlessness
- Is associated with nausea or vomiting
- Occurs during exertion
- Lasts more than 10–15 minutes

Do not wait if these symptoms are present.

Features Suggesting Gas or Acidity

Chest pain is more likely non-cardiac if:

- Pain is burning in nature
- Pain changes with position
- Pain occurs after meals
- Relieved by burping or antacids
- Pain is sharp and localized
- Pain increases with deep breathing or movement

Still, when in doubt — rule out heart first.

Who Is at Higher Risk for Heart Attack?

Chest pain is more concerning if the person:

- Is above 40 years

- Has diabetes
 - Has high BP
 - Smokes
 - Has high cholesterol
 - Has family history of heart disease
 - Is obese or physically inactive
-

A Dangerous Mistake People Make

Many people wait at home thinking:

“Let’s see if it settles.”

Delay can be fatal in heart attack.

Golden rule:

If chest pain is suspicious, reach hospital immediately.

What To Do Immediately?

If someone has severe chest pain:

- Stop all activity
- Sit or lie down comfortably
- Loosen tight clothing
- Do not self-medicate randomly
- Rush to nearest hospital or call emergency services

Time saved = heart muscle saved

Can Anxiety Cause Chest Pain?

Yes.

Anxiety and panic attacks can cause:

- Chest tightness
- Palpitations
- Sweating
- Shortness of breath

But remember:

Anxiety is diagnosed after ruling out heart disease, not before.

A Doctor's Practical Advice

Never ignore chest pain

Don't assume it is gas

Heart pain doesn't always come with dramatic symptoms

Early action saves lives

Final Words

It is better to be embarrassed at the hospital
than to be late at home.

When it comes to chest pain, don't take chances.

Chapter 5:

Headache – Stress, Migraine, or Something Serious?

Headache is one of the most common complaints in medical practice.

Many people say:

“Doctor, I have headache almost every day.”

The good news is:

Most headaches are not dangerous, but some need medical attention.

The important part is knowing which ones need attention.

Common Causes of Headache

Headache can be due to:

- Stress and tension
- Lack of sleep
- Long mobile or screen use
- Dehydration
- Skipping meals

- Migraine
- Sinus problems
- High BP (rarely)

Serious causes are uncommon, but must not be missed.

Tension Headache (Most Common)

This is the usual “daily headache”.

Features:

- Dull, tight band-like pain
- Usually on both sides
- Mild to moderate intensity
- No vomiting
- Increases with stress
- Relieved by rest or sleep

Not dangerous

Very common

Lifestyle related

Migraine Headache

Migraine is not “just a headache”.

Typical features:

- Throbbing or pulsating pain
- Usually on one side
- Moderate to severe intensity
- Associated with nausea or vomiting

- Sensitivity to light and sound
- May worsen with movement
- May have warning signs (aura)

Migraine needs proper diagnosis and treatment.

Sinus Headache

Features:

- Pain around forehead, eyes, or cheeks
- Worse on bending forward
- Associated with cold or nasal blockage
- Facial heaviness

Not all facial pain is sinus — this is often overdiagnosed.

Headache That Needs Urgent Attention

See a doctor immediately if headache:

- Is sudden and very severe (“worst headache of life”)
- Is associated with fever and neck stiffness
- Comes with vomiting or altered consciousness
- Is associated with weakness or speech difficulty
- Occurs after head injury
- Wakes you from sleep
- Is new onset after age 50
- Is increasing in severity

These are red flags.

A Common Mistake

Many people:

- Take painkillers daily
- Increase dose on their own
- Ignore lifestyle causes

Overuse of painkillers can itself cause headache.

Simple Preventive Measures

Regular sleep

Adequate hydration

Limit screen time

Manage stress

Regular meals

Exercise

Small changes can reduce headaches significantly.

A Doctor's Advice

Most headaches are benign

Identify your headache type

Avoid self-medication for long periods

Red flags should never be ignored

Final Words

A headache is the body's way of asking for attention —
not always for panic.

Understanding your headache can bring relief without fear.

Chapter 6:

Cough & Cold – Why Antibiotics Are Overused

Cough and cold are among the most common reasons people visit a doctor.

And one of the most common questions I hear is:

“Doctor, give a strong antibiotic so it settles fast.”

Let me say this clearly:

Most coughs and colds do NOT need antibiotics.

Why Do We Get Cough & Cold?

Most coughs and colds are caused by:

- Viruses
- Weather change
- Dust and pollution
- Allergies
- Seasonal infections

Viruses are the most common cause, and antibiotics do not work against viruses.

How Long Is a Normal Cold?

A typical viral cold:

- Starts with throat irritation
- Followed by running nose, sneezing
- Then cough
- Usually settles in 5–7 days
- Sometimes cough lasts 2–3 weeks

This is normal healing, not weakness.

When Are Antibiotics NOT Needed?

Antibiotics are usually not required if:

- Fever is mild
- Nasal discharge is clear or watery
- Cough is dry or mild
- Patient is otherwise active
- Symptoms are improving

In these cases:

Rest

Fluids

Steam inhalation

Symptomatic medicines

That's enough.

When Might Antibiotics Be Needed?

Antibiotics may be required if:

- High fever persists beyond 3 days
- Thick yellow/green sputum with fever
- Breathlessness
- Chest infection suspected
- Elderly or immune-compromised patient
- Symptoms worsen instead of improving

Decision should be made by a doctor, not Google.

Why Overuse of Antibiotics Is Dangerous

Unnecessary antibiotics cause:

- Antibiotic resistance
- Weak response when truly needed
- Stomach upset and diarrhea
- Allergy and side effects
- Long-term harm to immunity

Antibiotics should be treated like reserved weapons, not daily tools.

Cough Syrups: Helpful or Harmful?

Not all cough syrups are safe.

Many contain:

- Sedatives
- Addictive components

- Unnecessary combinations

Use only prescribed syrups

Avoid self-medication, especially in children

Home Care That Really Helps

Warm fluids

Steam inhalation

Salt water gargles

Adequate sleep

Avoid cold drinks & smoking

Simple things work surprisingly well.

A Doctor's Honest Advice

Cold is self-limiting

Antibiotics are not magic pills

Give your body time to heal

Consult if symptoms worsen

Final Words

Every cough does not need an antibiotic.

Every cold does not need fear.

Using medicines wisely today protects us tomorrow.

Chapter 7:

Dizziness & Weakness — What Your Body Is Trying to Tell You

“Doctor, I feel dizzy.”

“Doctor, I feel weak all the time.”

These are very common complaints — and also very confusing ones.

Dizziness and weakness are symptoms, not diseases.

The key is to understand why they are happening.

What Do People Mean by “Dizziness”?

Different people mean different things when they say dizziness:

- Feeling light-headed
- Feeling like the room is spinning
- Feeling unsteady while walking
- Feeling about to faint

Each type points to a different cause.

Common Causes of Dizziness & Weakness

Most cases are due to simple reasons:

- Low blood pressure
- Dehydration
- Skipping meals
- Anemia (low hemoglobin)
- Lack of sleep
- Stress and anxiety
- Sudden change in posture
- Viral illness recovery

Many causes are easily treatable.

Vertigo: When the Room Spins

Vertigo is a special type of dizziness.

Features:

- Sensation that surroundings are spinning
- Worse on head movement
- May be associated with nausea
- Often sudden in onset

Common cause:

- Inner ear problem (very common, not dangerous)

Vertigo feels scary but is usually not life-threatening.

Weakness Due to Anemia

Very common, especially in:

- Women
- Vegetarians
- People with poor diet

Symptoms include:

- Tiredness
- Breathlessness on exertion
- Pale skin
- Dizziness
- Palpitations

A simple blood test can diagnose it.

When Dizziness Is Serious

Seek urgent medical help if dizziness or weakness is associated with:

- Sudden weakness of one side of body
- Difficulty speaking
- Loss of vision
- Severe headache
- Chest pain
- Fainting
- Confusion

These may indicate stroke or heart-related problems.

A Common Mistake People Make

Many people:

- Ignore symptoms for months
- Take random tonics
- Don't get basic tests done

Tonics don't treat the cause.

Find the reason — treat the reason.

Simple Things That Help

Drink enough water

Don't skip meals

Stand up slowly

Get adequate sleep

Manage stress

Get basic blood tests done

Small habits matter.

A Doctor's Practical Advice

Dizziness is common, panic is not needed

Identify the type of dizziness

Treat the cause, not just the symptom

Red flags should never be ignored

Final Words

Your body gives signals before it breaks down.

Dizziness and weakness are early warnings, not enemies.

Listen to them early — and they usually go away easily.

Chapter 8:

Sleep Problems & Mobile Addiction — The Silent Health Thief

Many people say:

“Doctor, I sleep... but I don’t feel fresh.”

Sleep problems have become extremely common — and the biggest reason today is mobile addiction.

Sleep is not a luxury.

It is a basic health requirement.

Why Sleep Is So Important

Good sleep helps:

- Brain function
- Memory and concentration
- Hormone balance
- Immunity
- Heart health
- Mental well-being

Poor sleep slowly affects every organ.

How Mobile Phones Damage Sleep

Mobile use at night affects sleep by:

- Blue light reducing melatonin (sleep hormone)
- Keeping the brain alert
- Delaying sleep time
- Fragmenting deep sleep
- Creating addiction and anxiety

Scrolling before sleep is one of the worst habits for health.

Common Sleep Problems

People commonly experience:

- Difficulty falling asleep
- Frequent waking at night
- Early morning awakening
- Non-refreshing sleep
- Daytime sleepiness

These are signals — not normal aging.

Effects of Poor Sleep

Chronic poor sleep can lead to:

- Weight gain
- Diabetes
- High BP
- Anxiety and depression

- Poor memory
- Reduced immunity
- Increased heart risk

One bad night is okay.

Bad sleep for months is not.

Signs of Mobile Addiction

You may be addicted if:

- You check phone immediately after waking
- You scroll even when sleepy
- You feel restless without phone
- You sleep late due to screen time
- You wake up tired daily

Awareness is the first step.

Simple Steps for Better Sleep

Fix a regular sleep time

Stop mobile use 1 hour before bed

Dim lights at night

Avoid caffeine at night

Keep bedroom dark and quiet

Use bed only for sleep

Small habits give big results.

Sleeping Pills: Yes or No?

Sleeping pills are not first-line treatment.

They:

- Don't fix the root cause
- Can cause dependence
- Affect sleep quality

They should be used only under medical guidance, and usually short-term.

A Doctor's Honest Advice

Protect your sleep like your health

Mobile is a tool, not a master

Natural sleep is the best medicine

Consistent routine beats any pill

Final Words

You can survive without many things —

but not without good sleep.

Fix your sleep, and half your health problems improve automatically.

Chapter 9:

Fatty Liver — Can It Be Reversed?

Fatty liver is being diagnosed more often than ever before.

Many people are shocked when an ultrasound report says:

“Doctor, my liver is fatty. Is it serious?”

The good news first:

Fatty liver is reversible — especially in early stages.

What Is Fatty Liver?

Fatty liver means excess fat accumulation in liver cells.

It commonly occurs due to:

- Overweight and obesity
- Diabetes
- High cholesterol
- Excess junk food
- Lack of exercise
- Alcohol consumption

Many patients have no symptoms at all.

Why Should Fatty Liver Be Taken Seriously?

If ignored, fatty liver can progress to:

- Liver inflammation
- Liver fibrosis
- Liver cirrhosis (in severe cases)

Early detection gives a chance to reverse the damage.

Symptoms (Often Silent)

Most people have:

- No pain
- No obvious symptoms

Some may experience:

- Fatigue
- Heaviness on right side of abdomen
- Mild discomfort

Fatty liver is usually found during routine tests.

Can Fatty Liver Be Reversed?

Yes — in most cases.

The liver is a strong organ and can heal itself if given the right support.

What Really Helps the Liver

Weight loss (even 5–10% helps)

Daily physical activity

Reduce sugar and refined carbs

Avoid junk and fried food

Control diabetes and cholesterol

Stop or reduce alcohol

There is no magic tablet that cures fatty liver.

Role of Medicines

Medicines may be advised in some cases:

- To control sugar or cholesterol
- To reduce liver inflammation

But lifestyle change is the main treatment.

A Common Mistake

Many people depend only on:

- Liver tonics
- Herbal remedies

Without lifestyle change, these do not work.

A Doctor's Practical Advice

Take fatty liver seriously, not fearfully

Focus on habits, not only medicines

Regular follow-up is important

Early action prevents permanent damage

Final Words

Fatty liver is not a punishment — it's a warning.

Listen early, act early, and your liver can return to normal.

Chapter 10:

Kidney Problems – Early Warning Signs You Should Never Ignore

Kidneys work silently.

They clean our blood, remove waste, and balance fluids — without making noise.

That's why kidney disease is often discovered late.

By the time symptoms appear, damage may already be significant.

What Do Kidneys Do?

Your kidneys:

- Filter waste from blood
- Control body fluids
- Maintain blood pressure
- Help produce red blood cells
- Balance minerals like sodium and potassium

Healthy kidneys = healthy body.

Why Kidney Problems Are Increasing

Kidney disease is rising due to:

- Diabetes
- High blood pressure
- Excess painkiller use
- Recurrent infections
- Dehydration
- Poor lifestyle habits

Diabetes and BP are the biggest enemies of kidneys.

Early Warning Signs

Kidney problems often start quietly.

Watch for:

- Swelling of feet, face, or eyes
- Reduced urine output
- Frothy or foamy urine
- Frequent urination at night
- Fatigue and weakness
- Loss of appetite
- Nausea
- Persistent itching

These signs need evaluation.

A Dangerous Habit

Many people take painkillers frequently for:

- Headache
- Body pain
- Back pain

Long-term or unsupervised use damages kidneys.

Painkillers are not harmless.

Who Is at High Risk?

You should be extra careful if you:

- Have diabetes
- Have high BP
- Have family history of kidney disease
- Are above 40 years
- Use painkillers regularly

Regular testing can detect problems early.

Simple Tests That Help

- Urine routine examination
- Blood creatinine
- Blood urea
- Blood pressure check
- Sugar testing

Early detection saves kidneys.

Can Kidney Disease Be Prevented?

In many cases — YES.

Control sugar and BP

Drink adequate water

Avoid unnecessary painkillers

Treat infections early

Regular health check-ups

Prevention is far better than dialysis.

A Doctor's Honest Advice

Kidney disease progresses silently

Early signs should not be ignored

Small tests can prevent big problems

Protect your kidneys daily

Final Words

You can live without many things —

but you cannot live without kidneys.

Take care of them before they ask for help.

Chapter 11:

Breathing Difficulty – When to Relax and When to Rush

Breathing is automatic — we don't think about it until it becomes difficult.

Shortness of breath is one symptom that should never be ignored.

Sometimes it is minor.

Sometimes it is an emergency.

Knowing the difference can save a life.

What Do People Mean by “Breathing Problem”?

People may describe it as:

- Tightness in chest
- Not getting enough air
- Fast or heavy breathing
- Breathlessness on walking
- Difficulty lying flat

Each description gives important clues.

Common Causes (Usually Not Dangerous)

Breathing difficulty can occur due to:

- Anxiety or panic attack
- Mild asthma
- Chest infection
- Allergy
- Obesity
- Deconditioning (lack of fitness)

These usually improve with proper treatment.

When Breathing Difficulty Is an Emergency

Rush to hospital immediately if breathlessness is associated with:

- Sudden onset
- Chest pain
- Bluish lips or fingers
- Severe wheezing
- High fever
- Swelling of face or throat
- Confusion or drowsiness
- History of heart disease

Do not wait at home in these situations.

Asthma & Inhalers: Common Fear

Many people avoid inhalers thinking:

“Once I start inhaler, I can’t stop.”

This is false.

Inhalers are safe

They act directly in lungs

They save lives

They prevent hospitalisation

Fear of inhalers causes more harm than inhalers themselves.

Breathlessness Due to Anxiety

Anxiety-related breathlessness:

- Comes suddenly
- Associated with palpitations
- Improves with reassurance
- No abnormal test results

But remember:

Anxiety is diagnosed after ruling out medical causes.

What You Can Do Immediately

If someone has breathing difficulty:

- Sit them upright
 - Loosen tight clothes
 - Ensure fresh air
 - Avoid crowding
 - Seek medical help if not improving
-

A Doctor's Practical Advice

Breathlessness is a serious symptom

Don't self-diagnose

Early treatment prevents complications

Inhalers are friends, not enemies

Final Words

Breathing difficulty is the body's alarm system.

Don't silence the alarm — find the cause.

Chapter 12:

Weight Gain & Hormones – Why Losing Weight Feels So Hard

Many people say:

“Doctor, I eat very little, still I gain weight.”

Weight gain is not always about willpower.

Sometimes, your hormones are involved.

Understanding the reason makes weight loss possible.

Why Weight Gain Happens

Common causes include:

- Excess calorie intake
- Lack of physical activity
- Poor sleep
- Stress
- Hormonal imbalance
- Certain medicines

Weight gain is usually multi-factorial, not one single reason.

Role of Hormones in Weight

Hormones control:

- Appetite
- Fat storage
- Metabolism
- Energy usage

When hormones are imbalanced, losing weight becomes difficult even with diet.

Common Hormonal Causes

Thyroid Problems

Low thyroid (hypothyroidism) can cause:

- Weight gain
- Fatigue
- Cold intolerance
- Constipation
- Hair fall

A simple blood test can diagnose it.

Insulin Resistance

Common in:

- Overweight people
- PCOS
- Pre-diabetes

It leads to:

- Easy weight gain
- Difficulty losing weight
- Increased belly fat

Lifestyle change is the key treatment.

PCOS (in Women)

Features include:

- Irregular periods
- Weight gain
- Facial hair
- Acne
- Difficulty conceiving

Early management helps greatly.

Stress & Cortisol

Chronic stress increases cortisol, which:

- Promotes belly fat
- Increases cravings
- Disturbs sleep

Stress management is an important part of weight loss.

A Common Mistake

Many people:

- Follow extreme diets

- Skip meals
- Take weight-loss supplements

These harm metabolism and cause weight regain.

What Actually Helps

Balanced diet (not starvation)

Regular physical activity

Adequate sleep

Stress control

Treat hormonal issues

Consistency over shortcuts

Slow weight loss is sustainable weight loss.

A Doctor's Honest Advice

Weight loss is a process

Hormones matter

Crash diets don't work

Health is more important than the scale

Final Words

Your body is not your enemy.

It is asking for balance, not punishment.

Fix the cause — and weight will follow.

Chapter 13:

Anxiety vs Real Illness — How to Tell the Difference

Many people come to the clinic worried and confused:

“Doctor, all my reports are normal, but I still don’t feel okay.”

This is where anxiety often hides.

Anxiety can create real physical symptoms — even when tests are normal.

That doesn’t mean the problem is “imaginary”.

What Is Anxiety?

Anxiety is a state where the mind is constantly on high alert.

It affects:

- Thoughts
- Emotions
- Body sensations

The body reacts as if there is danger — even when there isn’t.

Common Physical Symptoms of Anxiety

Anxiety can cause:

- Chest tightness or pain
- Palpitations
- Shortness of breath
- Dizziness
- Weakness
- Sweating
- Trembling
- Stomach discomfort
- Sleep problems

These symptoms feel very real and frightening.

How Is Anxiety Different from Real Illness?

Anxiety-related symptoms often:

- Come suddenly
- Fluctuate in intensity
- Improve with reassurance
- Occur during stress
- Have normal investigations

Medical illness usually:

- Progresses steadily
- Has objective findings
- Does not disappear with reassurance
- Has abnormal test results

Doctors rule out physical illness first, then consider anxiety.

A Common Fear

Many people think:

“If it’s anxiety, people will think I’m weak.”

This is wrong.

Anxiety is a medical condition, not a weakness.

When Anxiety Becomes a Problem

Anxiety needs treatment if it:

- Interferes with daily life
- Affects sleep regularly
- Causes repeated hospital visits
- Creates constant fear of illness

Early treatment prevents long-term suffering.

What Helps Anxiety

Understanding the condition

Regular sleep

Physical activity

Breathing exercises

Reducing caffeine

Limiting Google searches

Counseling or therapy

Medicines may be needed in some cases — under medical guidance.

A Doctor's Honest Advice

Anxiety can mimic serious illness

Normal reports are reassuring, not useless

Mind and body are connected

Help-seeking is strength

Final Words

If your body keeps alarming but tests are normal,
listen to your mind as well.

Treating anxiety can give back a peaceful, healthy life.

Chapter 14:

Food Myths in Indian Homes – What to Believe, What to Ignore

Every Indian home has its own set of food rules and beliefs. Some are helpful, some are harmless, and some can actually be harmful.

People often ask:

“Doctor, is ghee really healthy?”

“Should I avoid ice cream when I have cold?”

“Does drinking hot water cure everything?”

This chapter will separate fact from fiction, so you can make healthy food choices without confusion.

Common Food Myths

“Ghee is bad for your heart”

- Truth: Ghee in moderation is not harmful. Excess calories and fried foods are more dangerous than a small amount of ghee.
- Tip: Use 1–2 teaspoons per day in cooking or on rotis.

“Cold water or ice causes cold”

- Truth: Cold water does not cause infections. Colds are caused by viruses.
- Tip: Drink water at a comfortable temperature — your body will stay hydrated.

“Avoid milk during illness”

- Truth: Milk is nutritious and can be continued unless lactose intolerance is present.
- Tip: Ensure milk is fresh and hygienic.

“Spicy food is always harmful for digestion”

- Truth: Mild spices are often healthy and can improve appetite. Excessive spice may irritate the stomach in sensitive people.
- Tip: Adjust spice levels to your tolerance.

“Honey can cure all ailments”

- Truth: Honey is healthy in moderation, but it cannot cure serious diseases. Avoid giving honey to children below 1 year.

Why These Myths Persist

- Passed down through generations
- Cultural or religious beliefs
- Marketing claims by food companies
- Misunderstanding small personal experiences

How to Decide What’s True

- Look for scientific evidence
- Focus on balanced diet — not single “miracle” foods
- Moderation is key

- Avoid extreme restrictions unless medically advised
-

Practical Advice for Healthy Eating

Eat a variety of foods — vegetables, fruits, grains, protein

Avoid over-processed foods

Limit sugar, fried foods, and junk foods

Drink enough water daily

Listen to your body — not myths

A Doctor's Honest Advice

Not every “home remedy” is harmful, but some are overrated

Balance and moderation are better than strict avoidance

Focus on healthy habits, not fear of food

Final Words

Food is meant to nourish, heal, and give energy.

Learn the difference between myths and facts — and your health will thank you.

Chapter 15:

Home Remedies – What Really Works and What Doesn't

Home remedies are part of every household. From turmeric milk for cold to ginger for digestion, many people rely on these treatments before seeing a doctor.

But the question is: which remedies actually help, and which are myths?

Why Home Remedies Work

- Some remedies have scientific backing:
 - Honey for mild sore throat
 - Ginger for nausea
 - Warm salt water gargle for throat infection
 - Some work because of psychological comfort, not medical effect.
-

Common Remedies That Help

- Turmeric milk – anti-inflammatory, can soothe mild cold or body ache

- Ginger tea – good for mild nausea and digestion
 - Honey – can calm mild coughs
 - Steam inhalation – helps nasal congestion temporarily
 - Warm compress – relieves minor muscle aches
-

Remedies That Don't Always Work

- Drinking lots of water will not cure fever by itself
 - Lemon in water cannot “detox” your body instantly
 - Certain herbal mixes can be harmful if overused or taken with medications
 - Home remedies cannot replace treatment for serious conditions like high fever, infection, or chest pain
-

Safe Use of Home Remedies

Use them for mild symptoms

Stop if symptoms worsen

Do not replace doctor's treatment for serious illness

Avoid overdosing or mixing too many remedies

A Doctor's Honest Advice

Home remedies can support recovery, but they are not cures for serious conditions

Understand what works and what doesn't

Know when to seek medical help immediately

Final Words

Home remedies are time-tested and comforting, but knowledge is key.

Use them wisely, and always pay attention to warning signs that require professional care.

Chapter 16:

Emergency Symptoms People Ignore

Many serious health problems start quietly. People often ignore warning signs, thinking:

“It’s probably nothing” or “It will go away on its own.”

This can be dangerous. Recognizing emergencies early can save lives.

Common Emergency Symptoms

Chest Pain or Pressure

- Sudden, severe pain in the chest or left arm
- May radiate to neck, jaw, or back
- Sweating, nausea, or shortness of breath

Could indicate a heart attack — seek medical help immediately.

Shortness of Breath

- Difficulty breathing at rest or sudden breathlessness
- Bluish lips or fingers
- Wheezing or choking sensation

Could indicate asthma attack, heart failure, or lung problem.

Sudden Weakness or Numbness

- Weakness on one side of the body
- Slurred speech
- Facial drooping

Could indicate a stroke — call emergency services immediately.

Severe Abdominal Pain

- Intense, sudden pain in the stomach or lower abdomen
- Nausea, vomiting, or swelling

Could indicate appendicitis, gallstones, or other surgical emergencies.

High Fever with Confusion

- Fever over 104°F (40°C)
- Severe headache, stiff neck, confusion, or seizures

Could indicate meningitis or severe infection.

Uncontrolled Bleeding

- Bleeding that does not stop with pressure
- Vomiting blood or blood in urine/stool

Could indicate serious internal injury or disease.

Severe Allergic Reaction

- Swelling of lips, tongue, or throat
- Difficulty breathing
- Rash or hives

Could indicate anaphylaxis — use epinephrine if available and seek emergency help immediately.

Why People Ignore These Symptoms

- Fear of hospital bills
- Thinking “it’s not serious”
- Lack of awareness
- Hoping it will go away

Ignoring these warning signs can lead to permanent damage or death.

A Doctor’s Practical Advice

Learn these emergency signs and act fast

Do not wait for symptoms to improve on their own

Call an ambulance or go to a hospital immediately if in doubt

Early action saves lives

Final Words

Your body sends warning signals for a reason.

Listen carefully, act promptly, and never ignore red flags — it could make all the difference.

Chapter 17:

Medical Tests – Which Are Really Needed

Many people get confused and worried about medical tests. Some undergo dozens of tests unnecessarily, while others ignore important tests that could prevent serious problems.

This chapter will help you understand which tests matter, when to do them, and how to avoid unnecessary procedures.

Why Tests Are Important

Medical tests help your doctor:

- Detect disease early
- Monitor ongoing conditions like diabetes or high blood pressure
- Decide the best treatment
- Prevent complications

Without tests, it's like driving without a dashboard — you won't know if something is wrong until it's too late.

Common Tests People Often Ask About

Blood Tests

- Complete Blood Count (CBC): Checks overall health, infections, anemia
- Blood Sugar (Fasting/PP): Detects diabetes early
- Liver Function Test (LFT) / Kidney Function Test (KFT): Checks organ health

Urine Tests

- Detect infections, kidney problems, or sugar in urine

Imaging Tests

- X-ray / Ultrasound: For bones, lungs, abdomen
- CT / MRI: Only when detailed imaging is needed

Heart Tests

- ECG / Echocardiography: For chest pain, palpitations, or high BP
- Stress Tests: For suspected heart disease

Tests That Are Often Unnecessary

- Full-body scans without symptoms
- Routine advanced imaging for mild symptoms (like headache or mild back pain)
- Expensive vitamin or hormone tests without doctor guidance

Doing unnecessary tests can cause stress, false alarms, and extra expenses.

How to Decide Which Tests You Need

- Discuss symptoms honestly with your doctor
 - Ask “Do I really need this test now?”
 - Avoid self-prescribing tests based on Google searches
 - Repeat tests only as advised
-

A Doctor’s Practical Advice

Tests are tools, not the final answer

Always consider symptoms, history, and risk factors

Prevention and early detection are better than excessive testing

Trust your doctor — don’t rely on random online advice

Final Words

Medical tests are important when used wisely.

Understanding their purpose helps you avoid unnecessary procedures, save money, and focus on your real health needs.

Chapter 18:

When Google Helps & When It Harms

The internet has made health information more accessible than ever. You can search symptoms, read about diseases, or watch videos on remedies. But this can be both helpful and dangerous.

Knowing when to trust online information and when to ignore it can save you unnecessary stress — and sometimes, even your life.

How Google Can Help

- Basic awareness: Learn about common symptoms, healthy habits, and prevention
- Patient education: Understand your lab tests, medications, or procedures
- Lifestyle guidance: Exercise tips, diet plans, and stress management advice

Used wisely, Google can make you more informed and empowered.

How Google Can Harm

- Self-diagnosis: Reading about severe diseases can make you panic unnecessarily

- Ignoring serious symptoms: Believing online remedies instead of seeing a doctor
- Conflicting information: Every website says something different — it can confuse you
- Unverified treatments: Following random remedies can be harmful

Example: A simple headache might be read as “brain tumor” online. Most headaches are harmless, but this creates unnecessary fear.

Guidelines to Use Google Safely

- Use trusted sources: Government, hospital, or medical websites
 - Avoid panic searches: Don’t type worst-case scenarios
 - Check multiple sources: Cross-verify information
 - Do not skip a doctor’s visit: Online advice cannot replace professional consultation
-

A Doctor’s Practical Advice

Google is good for education, not diagnosis

Use it to learn preventive habits and lifestyle tips

Never rely solely on the internet for serious symptoms or emergencies

Always discuss concerns with a qualified healthcare provider

Final Words

Knowledge is power, but only when used wisely.

Use Google as a guide, not a judge, and let your doctor be your final decision-maker.

Chapter 19:

Final Advice from a Doctor to Every Family

After reading this book, you already know the basics of common health problems, preventive measures, and when to seek help. Now, let me share some final advice that every family should follow — simple steps that protect your health and wellbeing.

1. Listen to Your Body

Your body constantly sends signals. Pain, fatigue, dizziness, or unusual changes are messages — don't ignore them. Early attention can prevent serious complications.

2. Maintain a Healthy Lifestyle

- **Balanced diet:** Include fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and protein
- **Regular exercise:** 30 minutes a day keeps your heart, muscles, and mind healthy
- **Sleep:** 7–8 hours daily, avoid mobile screens before bedtime
- **Stress management:** Meditation, hobbies, and family time

3. Preventive Health Checks

- Regular screenings for blood pressure, blood sugar, cholesterol, liver and kidney function
- Vaccinations for children and adults
- Routine dental and eye check-ups

Prevention is always better than cure.

4. Home Remedies Are Helpful — But Know Their Limits

Simple remedies like turmeric milk, ginger tea, or warm compresses can support health. But serious symptoms always need a doctor, not just home treatment.

5. Use Online Resources Wisely

Google and health apps are educational tools, not substitutes for professional advice. Always verify information and consult a doctor before acting.

6. Keep Emergency Contacts Ready

- Know your local hospital and ambulance numbers
 - Teach your family basic first aid
 - Learn to recognize red-flag symptoms early
-

7. Health Is a Family Effort

- Encourage healthy habits in children and elderly

- Avoid junk food and sedentary lifestyle at home
 - Support each other during illness and recovery
-

Final Words

Health is the greatest wealth. Small, consistent habits, early attention to symptoms, and trusted medical guidance can prevent most serious problems.

This book is your guide — now it's up to you and your family to take action, stay informed, and protect your wellbeing.

Remember: Knowledge without action is useless. Listen to your body, trust reliable guidance, and make health a priority for your entire family.

Acknowledgements

I would like to sincerely thank all the patients, families, and colleagues who have trusted me with their health over the years. Your experiences, questions, and concerns have inspired much of the content in this book.

A special thanks to my family for their constant support and encouragement, and for reminding me that health education should be simple, practical, and accessible to everyone.

Finally, I am grateful to all the readers who pick up this book. Your curiosity and willingness to learn are what make the journey of writing this book meaningful.