



Korean Ladder Study Note

아프다 / 병원 / 약국

First Words for Feeling Sick

Level	Topic	Focus
A2 · Elementary TOPIK 2	Vocabulary Body & Health	아프다 / 병원 / 약국 First Words for Feeling Sick

Study Links

Open this lesson on Korean Ladder

<https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-A2-VOCAB-BOD-001>

Watch the full video on YouTube

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b6Bj53Fh9TM>

Visit koreanladder.com for all free lessons

<https://www.koreanladder.com>

Core Idea

Okay, real question. If I feel sick in Seoul, what is the very first word I should know?

And in English we split it up — “I’m sick,” “it hurts,” “I’m in pain.” Does Korean need three different words too?

좋은 질문이에요. Korean is kinder here. One verb covers almost all of it — 아프다.

아프다 means to hurt, to be sore, to feel sick. In everyday speech we say 아파요. So 아프다 is the dictionary form, and 아파요 is what you’ll actually say.

Conversation Snapshot

Speaker	Korean	Meaning
Junho	어서 오세요. 어디가 아프세요? —	Come in. Where does it hurt?
Hana	감기에 걸렸어요. 목이 아프고 열이 나요. —	I caught a cold. My throat hurts and I have a fever.



Speaker	Korean	Meaning
Junho	기침도 나요? —	Do you have a cough too?
Hana	네, 기침도 나요. —	Yes, I have a cough too.
Junho	이 약을 하루에 세 번 드세요. —	Take this medicine three times a day.

Vocabulary & Useful Expressions

Word	Meaning	Example
아프다 → 아파요 apeuda → apayo	to hurt / be sick → “it hurts” (polite)	아프다 means to hurt, to be sore, to feel sick. In everyday speech we say 아파요. So 아프다 is the dictionary form, and 아파요 is what you'll actually say.
___이/가 아파요 ___-i/ga apayo	My ___ hurts.	And to say WHERE it hurts, we mark the body part as the subject with 이 or 가. The pattern is simple — body part, plus 이 or 가, plus 아파요.
머리가 아파요 meori-ga apayo	My head hurts.	Listen to a real one. 머리가 아파요. My head hurts.
목이 아파요 mok-i apayo	My throat hurts.	머리 ends in a vowel, so we use 가. 머리가 아파요. Now a body part that ends in a consonant — 목이 아파요. My throat hurts.
머리가 / 목이 meori-ga / mok-i	vowel → 가, consonant → 이	Hear the difference? 머리가 — vowel, so 가. 목이 — consonant, so 이. Same rule you already know for marking a subject.
배가 아파요 bae-ga apayo	My stomach hurts.	Let me try to reason it out. 배 — stomach — ends in a vowel, so... 배가 아파요? My stomach hurts?
열이 나요 yeol-i nayo	I have a fever. (lit. a fever comes out)	Now three symptoms you'll say the most. First — 열. That's a fever. And fevers don't “hurt,” they “come out” — 열이 나요.
감기에 걸렸어요 gamgi-e geollyeosseoyo	I caught a cold.	Next — 감기. A cold. For catching a cold we say 감기에 걸렸어요 — literally, I got caught by a cold.



Grammar / Structure Notes

아프다 → 아파요

아프다 → 아파요 — to hurt / be sick → “it hurts” (polite)

아프다 = dictionary form; 아파요 = everyday polite form

___이/가 아파요

___이/가 아파요 — My ___ hurts.

이 after a final consonant, 가 after a vowel

머리가 아파요

머리 + 가 + 아파요 — My head hurts.

Listen to a real one. 머리가 아파요. My head hurts.

목이 아파요

목 + 이 + 아파요 — My throat hurts.

머리 ends in a vowel, so we use 가. 머리가 아파요. Now a body part that ends in a consonant — 목이 아파요. My throat hurts.

머리가 / 목이

머리가 / 목이 — vowel → 가, consonant → 이

the ending sound of the body part decides it

Pronunciation Loop

Phrase	How to practice
모기 아파요	mok-i apayo
목이 아파요	mok-i apayo
여리 나요	yeol-i nayo
열이 나요	yeol-i nayo

Self-Check

- 1 Say 아프다 / 병원 / 약국 three times: slow, natural, then inside a short sentence.
- 2 Write one original sentence that was not in the video.
- 3 Rewatch the YouTube lesson and pause when the same pattern appears.

Related / Subsequent Studies



Lesson	Why study it next	Link
머리 / 배 / 목이 아파요 Body Parts and Saying Where It Hurts	B1 Vocabulary: compare 머리 / 배 / 목이 아파요 with this lesson so the boundary becomes clearer.	Open lesson https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-B1-VOCAB-BOD-001
손 / 발 / 눈 / 코 Your First Korean Body Words	A1 Vocabulary: compare 손 / 발 / 눈 / 코 with this lesson so the boundary becomes clearer.	Open lesson https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-A1-VOCAB-BOD-001
증상 / 처방 / 진료 At the Clinic and Pharmacy	B2 Vocabulary: compare 증상 / 처방 / 진료 with this lesson so the boundary becomes clearer.	Open lesson https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-B2-VOCAB-BOD-001
맵다 / 짜다 / 달다 / 시다 Describing How Food Tastes	A2 Vocabulary: compare 맵다 / 짜다 / 달다 / 시다 with this lesson so the boundary becomes clearer.	Open lesson https://www.koreanladder.com/lesson.html?id=KOR-A2-VOCAB-FOO-001

My Notes

Your ladder to fluent Korean. This PDF, the website, and the video lessons are free for personal study.