



**The New York City Health Literacy Campaign:**  
**From Knowledge to Action.**  
Sample Lessons

**PREVENTION & DETECTION**  
**ESL LEVELS 5 & 6**

STUDENT'S EDITION



Developed by the Mayor's Office of Adult Education

Version 2008-2009

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

## INTRODUCTION: PREVENTION, EARLY DETECTION AND HEALTH SCREENINGS

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### 1. What are some common health problems?

- What words mean the same thing as “health problems”?
- 

### 2. Disease Prevention

- Define the word *prevent*:
  
  - Use *prevent* in a complete sentence:
  
  - What is *disease prevention*?
  
  - How can we *prevent* disease?
- 

### 3. Early Detection

- Define the word *detect*:
  
  - Use *detect* in a sentence:
  
  - What does early *detection* of an illness mean?
- 

### 4. Health Screenings

- Define the term *health screenings*:

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## ACTIVITY 1: ATTENDING A HEALTH SCREENING: MILA'S STORY<sup>1</sup>



Mila is thirty-five years old and an immigrant from the Dominican Republic. She has lived in New York City for five years. Mila attends an ESL class to improve her English. Recently, Mila has been thinking about her health a lot. This is because she has been learning about health in her class. She has learned that the prevention of disease means eating healthy food and being more active. She has also learned about how important the early detection of illness can be. Mila's teacher said that the best way to detect an illness early is to attend a health screening.



Mila just found out her class will be taking a trip to a free or low-cost health screening offered at a public hospital or clinic near her school. Her teacher told the class that they will be screened for diseases like high blood pressure and diabetes. Mila is nervous for several reasons. First, she has not been to see a doctor in three years and she is worried that she might have a disease. Secondly, she does not know what happens during screenings or what she will do with her results. She is also nervous because she has no papers and she is worried that the hospital will report her to the authorities. Finally, she has no insurance and cannot afford to pay for the health screening. To feel better, Mila decided to ask her teacher some questions.

### Questions for small group discussion:

1. **What is Mila's problem?**
2. **Does this problem relate to your life?**
3. **How?**
4. **What can Mila do to feel better about going to the screening?**

<sup>1</sup>Adapted from a health lesson developed by Tilla Alexander and Diana Raissis at MMALC

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## ACTIVITY 2: MILA'S QUESTIONS ABOUT THE HEALTH SCREENING<sup>2</sup>

**Teacher:** How are you Mila? You look nervous.

**Mila:** I can't go to the health screening. I don't have any documentation or insurance.

**Teacher:** Don't worry. The hospital promises to keep all of your information confidential and the health screening will be free if you do not have insurance.

**Mila:** I feel perfectly healthy though. Why should I go to the screening?



Blood pressure cuff

**Teacher:** Everybody needs to get screened, even people that feel healthy like you. This is because many people have life-threatening diseases like high blood pressure but never know it. This is because high blood pressure has no symptoms. The only way to know if you have high blood pressure is to get screened by a healthcare provider.

**Mila:** Why does checking my blood pressure matter?

**Teacher:** High blood pressure can hurt your whole body. It can lead to a stroke, heart attacks, heart failure or kidney failure if it goes untreated.

**Mila:** How will healthcare providers check my blood pressure?

**Teacher:** Healthcare providers will put a cuff on your arm. This will measure your blood pressure. It is fast, easy and painless. By the way, it is important to get your blood pressure checked by your doctor on a regular basis, not just at health screenings.

*Continued*

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**Mila:** What will happen if I have high blood pressure?

**Teacher:** Everything will be okay. If you have high blood pressure, you will just have to make some small but important changes. First, you will have to visit your regular doctor for screenings. If you do not have a regular doctor, there are people who work at the hospital where we are going that would be happy to help you. You will also have to make changes in your diet such as eating less fats and salt. If you smoke, you will have to quit smoking. Finally, you may have to take medicine.



An ESL student getting her blood pressure checked at a health screening

<sup>2</sup>From American Heart Association's High Blood Pressure Library found at:  
[http://www.americanheart.org/beatyourrisk/en\\_US/main.html](http://www.americanheart.org/beatyourrisk/en_US/main.html)

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## ACTIVITY 2: QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

- 1. High blood pressure is often called “the silent killer”. Judging from the reading, why do you think people call it that?**
- 2. The hospital promises to keep all information “confidential”. What does this mean?**
- 3. How did Mila feel about health screenings before talking to her teacher? Why?**
- 4. How do you think she feels after talking to her teacher? Why?**
- 5. What is the point of going to a health screening?**



# TAKE CARE NY

Get Screened.  
Stay Healthy.

A simple health check for asthma, diabetes, high blood pressure, cholesterol, HIV, depression or cancer can help keep you healthy. This October, NYC public hospitals and health centers will offer the health screenings you or your family need at little or no cost.\*

Dial **311** or visit **[nyc.gov/hhc](http://nyc.gov/hhc)** to find the HHC hospital or health center near you.

**And Take Care, NY.**



[nyc.gov/hhc](http://nyc.gov/hhc)

Bellevue • Belvis • Coler-Goldwater • Coney Island  
Cumberland • East New York • Elmhurst • Gouverneur  
Harlem • Jacobi • Kings County • Lincoln • McKinney  
Metropolitan • Morrisania • North Central Bronx  
Queens • Renaissance • Sea View • Woodhull

\*If you have health insurance, it will be billed. You will be responsible for any co-payments. If you don't have insurance, there is no cost to you.

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### **ACTIVITY 3: “GET SCREENED. STAY HEALTHY.”**

#### **Questions for Discussion**

- 1. What does it mean to “take care”?**
- 2. What does it mean to “get screened”?**
- 3. What are all of the diseases mentioned?**
- 4. Why should people get screened?**
- 5. How much will it cost?**
- 6. What does TCNY stand for?**
- 7. What does HHC stand for?**

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### ACTIVITY 3: “GET SCREENED. STAY HEALTHY.”

Common Diseases	Prevention	Early Detection
High Blood Pressure →	Eat healthy and be active →	Blood pressure cuff
Diabetes		
Asthma		
Cholesterol		
HIV		
Depression		
Cancer		

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## ACTIVITY 4: MILA CONVINCES RICARDO TO ATTEND A HEALTH SCREENING

Mila left her class feeling much better about attending the health screening. She was happy because she asked her teacher questions and she doesn't feel nervous anymore. When she got home she decided to tell her friend Ricardo about what she learned in class today.

**Ricardo:** Hey Mila, how are you? What did you learn in class today?

**Mila:** Hey Ricardo, I am fine. I learned about health screenings in class today.

**Ricardo:** What are health screenings?

**Mila:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Ricardo:** What kind of screenings can I get?

**Mila:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Ricardo:** Who should get health screenings?

**Mila:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Ricardo:** Why should I attend a health screening?

**Mila:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Ricardo:** Where can I get a health screening?

**Mila:** \_\_\_\_\_

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## HOMWORK: NEW WORD JOURNAL<sup>3</sup>

New Word	Page #	Part of Speech	Definition
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
6.			
7.			
8.			
9.			
10.			

<sup>3</sup>Borrowed from Hillary Gardner at the English & Civics Program Center for Immigrant Education and Training, LaGuardia Community College

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## ACTIVITY 6: NEW WORDS AND TERMS

Symptom (n.)	Nervous (adj.)	Early Detection (n.)
Health Screening (n.)	Prevention (n.)	High Blood Pressure (n.)
Confidential (adj.)	Failure (n.)	Disease (n.)
	Healthcare Provider (n.)	

### MATCH NEW WORDS AND TERMS TO THEIR DEFINITION

1.	<b>Take actions such as eating healthy foods and exercising to avoid getting sick or to stop a disease from getting worse</b>
2.	<b>Another word for illness or sickness</b>
3.	<b>To become aware of a disease early so that you can begin treatment as early as possible</b>
4.	<b>A test or check-up</b>
5.	<b>To feel worried or afraid</b>
6.	<b>Doctor, nurse, or lab technician</b>
7.	<b>Not able to function</b>
8.	<b>Another word for secret</b>
9.	<b>A sign of disease</b>
10.	<b>A disease that can only be detected through screening because it has no symptoms</b>





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## ACTIVITY 7: SHARE YOUR KNOWLEDGE

**Directions: Make a PowerPoint Presentation with your group. Be sure to answer every question with one paragraph and to use pictures from clip-art or the internet to make your slides interesting!**

### **Titles of Slides:**

1. Title and name of presentation.
2. What is "prevention"?
3. What is "early detection"?
4. What are "health screenings"?
5. Who should get screened?
6. Where did you go to get screened?
7. What screenings did you do?
8. Why should I get screened?
9. What was your experience like?
10. What is one thing you would tell a friend about health screenings?

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## ACTIVITY 7: SHARE YOUR KNOWLEDGE

**Directions:** You will be assigned one question from the list below. On your poster, you will need to answer the question in one paragraph. Use markers, magazines or colored paper to make your poster interesting!

### Poster Titles:

1. Title of presentation
2. What is "prevention"?
3. What is "early detection"?
4. What are "health screenings"?
5. Who should get screened?
6. Where did you go to get screened?
7. What screenings did you do?
8. Why should people get screened?
9. What was your experience like?
10. What is one thing you would tell a friend about health screenings?