
BBC LEARNING ENGLISH

The English We Speak

Cyberchondriac



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This is not a word-for-word transcript

Feifei

Hello and welcome to The English We Speak with me, Feifei...

Sian

...and me, Sian. Hello! Hey Feifei what are you doing on your phone? We've got a programme to record.

Feifei

Well you see I've got a really bad headache and it says here on this website that I might have a head injury, or maybe a tumour or...

Sian

Or maybe you've just got a headache! Give me that phone... you're just scaring yourself!

Feifei

Hang on it says here that I should go to the hospital if I have these other symptoms. Maybe I do have a fever... I am feeling quite hot.

Sian

That's because it's boiling in here – I'm hot too... and I'm starting to get a headache. I know exactly what's wrong with you – you have a case of cyberchondria!

Feifei

Cyberchondria? Oh dear I knew something was wrong. That sounds serious – what is it?

Sian

A cyberchondriac is someone who looks up medical advice on the internet for every symptom they have and then gets really anxious because they think they have a serious illness! Just like you're doing.

Feifei

Oh, like a 'hypochondriac' - that's someone who imagines illnesses that they don't have, isn't it?

Sian

Exactly, this term is a combination of 'cyber' – relating to computers – and hypochondriac. Let's hear some examples:

Examples

There are so many medical websites online nowadays, it's no wonder more and more people are self-diagnosing and becoming cyberchondriacs.

Ana: I was convinced that I had this really rare disease that I read about online. Turns out that I just wasn't drinking enough water!

Joe: Ha! You're such a cyberchondriac!

Feifei

Right, let's get on with the programme – I haven't brought my glasses today so I'm afraid I can't read the script very well.

Sian

What? You've forgotten your glasses? Well no wonder you've got a headache.

Feifei

Oh yeah that could be it. Phew I was convinced something terrible was wrong with me. Right, let's get on with the programme.

Sian

Hang on there's a link here to the 'ten most dangerous tropical diseases' I'll just have a quick look....

Feifei

But you haven't even been to a tropical country lately. Put the phone down!

Sian

Alright! See you later. Bye!

Feifei

Bye!