

How To Guide

There is a now vast amount of medical knowledge available on the Internet. The problem is that to use it you need to know what you are looking for. If you don't, it won't help very much. Isabel solves this problem by enabling you to search medical knowledge with a pattern of symptoms. Isabel is based on the professional Isabel Diagnosis Checklist System used by doctors around the world when they're unsure of a diagnosis. Using Isabel gives patients access to the most up-to-date and accurate information available online. Just feed in your symptoms (unlike most symptom checkers, you can put in as many symptoms as you wish) and Isabel will provide you with a list of the most likely diagnoses that could be the cause of those symptoms. Each diagnosis is linked to medical knowledge that you can read up on. Isabel isn't meant to replace your doctor. Instead, it will help you become more informed and have a more productive discussion with your doctor about your diagnosis.

This is a detailed 'how to' user guide explaining Isabel's various functions.

How to use Isabel?

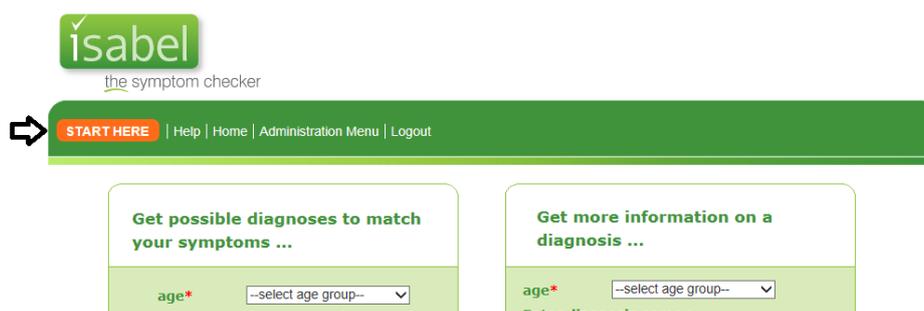
What does Isabel do?

Isabel is designed to suggest a list of possible diagnoses that you can discuss with your doctor.

Where do I start?

The first screen is a landing page that offers 2 search options (see screen shot below). If you are experiencing symptoms and wish to find the possible diagnoses that could be the cause of your symptoms, start with the left hand box entitled 'Get diagnoses to match your symptoms...' If you already know your diagnosis and just want to find additional information about it, use the right hand box entitled 'Get more information on a diagnosis...'

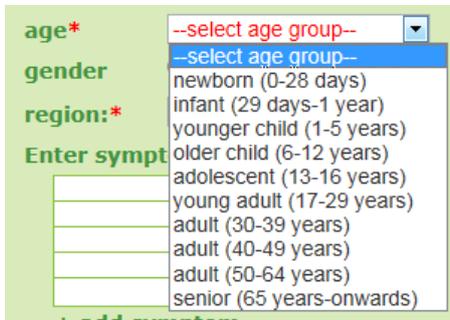
If, at any point, you want to start again – click on the 'START HERE' button on the top toolbar which will take you back to the landing page.



The screenshot shows the Isabel symptom checker interface. At the top left is the Isabel logo with the tagline 'the symptom checker'. Below the logo is a green navigation bar containing a 'START HERE' button and links for 'Help', 'Home', 'Administration Menu', and 'Logout'. Below the navigation bar are two main search options:

- Get possible diagnoses to match your symptoms ...**: This option includes a dropdown menu for 'age*' with the text '--select age group--' and a search input field.
- Get more information on a diagnosis ...**: This option includes a dropdown menu for 'age*' with the text '--select age group--' and a search input field labeled 'Enter diagnosis name:'.

'Age' drop down box



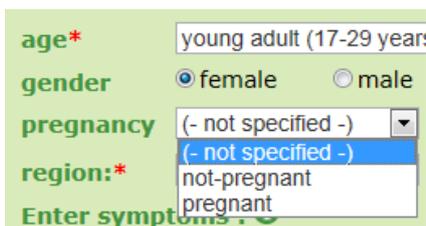
The age group field is required for all queries.

Gender buttons

Filling in the gender field is highly recommended. If you do not specify a gender, the diagnoses suggested may not reflect gender differences. Diagnoses applicable to both male and females will be displayed with appropriate ♂ (male) and ♀ (female) symbols next to them. If you do specify a gender, diagnoses specific to the opposite gender will be excluded.

'Pregnancy option'

If you have selected female and the pregnancy option appears, you can leave it as 'unspecified'. However, your results may not be as relevant. If you do know you are pregnant, select 'pregnant' or are sure you are not pregnant then select, 'not pregnant' to obtain the most accurate results.



What symptoms can I type in?

You can enter any combination of symptoms or results of laboratory tests you may have had, as long as you describe them in words rather than numbers. It is best to place each symptom on a separate line by using the 'Enter' or 'Return' key to do this.

You will see the predictive text function working after you type in the 3rd letter. This works very much like it does in Google. If you see what you want in that list then just click on it. If the word or phrase you want is not on the list then just type it in.

Simple rules for entering your symptoms:

- 1.** Use medical terms as far as possible. "Abdominal pain" is better than "tummy hurts" for example.
- 2.** Do not use numbers in the query box. If you have been given a test result, then enter into the system the meaning in words and not the numbers. For example, if you have been given a test result of blood pressure 160/100, then type in "high blood pressure".
- 3.** Enter only abnormal test results. Do not enter the ones you have been told are normal.
- 4.** Check your spelling. If a word is mis-spelt, Isabel will highlight this on the results page.

There are only 5 lines, what if I have more symptoms?

If you have more than 5 symptoms, you can add any number of additional lines by clicking on '+ add symptom'.

Results Layout Explanation

What do the results mean?

The first list of diagnoses will appear as in the screen shot below. These are the system's top 10 suggestions based on how well the symptoms you entered matched our database of diseases. In other words, they are not shown in order of how medically likely they are for you but displayed in order of 'match' to the disease database. The results may appear alarming as they will often include cancers and other diagnoses you may not have heard of. At this stage, you should not get alarmed as *it is very unlikely that you will have any of these diseases.*

enter your symptoms

age*

gender* female male

region:* i

Enter symptoms: i

[+ add symptom](#)

[clear search](#)

possible diagnoses i

i

Hand and Wrist Fractures 🚩 common	Bone
Gout common	Metab
Hand and Wrist Ligament Injuries	Bone
De Quervain's Tendinitis	Bone
Scaphoid Fractures	Bone
Carpal Tunnel Syndrome common	Nerve
Lateral Epicondylitis common	Bone
Leukemia	Cancer
Tendinitis common	Bone
Distal Radius and Ulna Fractures 🚩	Bone

[show all](#) next step

You can then sort this list in various ways:

- **Show 10** - the top 10 possible diagnoses ranked according to the symptoms matched in our database; NOT how likely they are for you in particular.
- **Show all**- this shows all the suggested diagnoses so will include many that are very unlikely. This list normally includes about 30 diagnoses.
- **Red flags** (🚩)- these are diagnoses that can cause severe harm if not treated quickly. If you suspect that you may have one of these red flagged diseases, then call or visit the emergency service immediately.
- **Common** - The diseases that are marked as common are, in general, those where there are more than 50 per 100,000 of population with the disease. The diseases not marked as common are rare and are, generally, those where there are fewer than 50 per 100,000 of population.
- **Medical Speciality**-The column on the right of the diagnoses includes the abbreviation for the medical specialty that deals with each particular diagnosis. So 'Infec' is Infectious diseases and 'Cardio' is cardiology for example.

Next step

The **Next Step** button takes you to advice about what to do once you have the results. You should focus on reading about the diagnoses by clicking on them and then getting a short list of diagnoses which you think best fit your symptoms which you can then discuss with your doctor.

'Action' icons

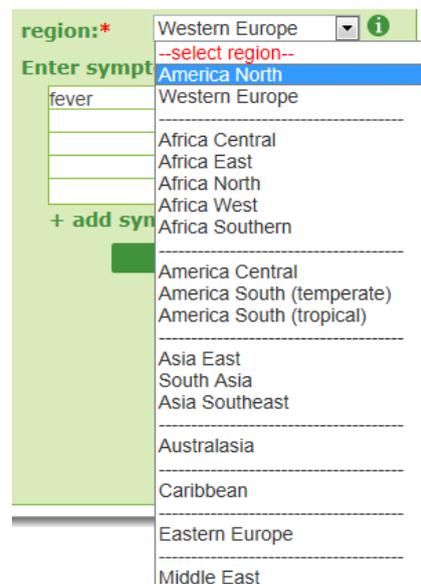
These enable you to save, print or email results so that you can share them more easily with your doctor or family, for example.

Refining your results

Once you get the results you can modify the symptoms you entered and press the 'search' button again. You can use this as an opportunity to reconsider what you have entered in the light of the diagnoses suggested and any reading you have done about the symptoms normally associated with those diseases.

Region drop down box

This should be set for the region where you live, for example, living in the USA the region should be set for North America or if you live in Spain set it to Western Europe. The system is set to pick up your country of registration but please check that it is set correctly.



The screenshot shows a web form with a 'region:' label and a dropdown menu. The dropdown menu is open, showing a list of regions. The current selection is 'Western Europe'. Below the dropdown, there is a text input field with 'fever' entered, and a '+ add symt' button. The dropdown menu lists the following regions: Western Europe, America North, Africa Central, Africa East, Africa North, Africa West, Africa Southern, America Central, America South (temperate), America South (tropical), Asia East, South Asia, Asia Southeast, Australasia, Caribbean, Eastern Europe, and Middle East.

If you have been abroad and become ill shortly after returning home, you may be affected by a disease more common in that region. This would be particularly likely if you have been to a tropical region. In this case, you can use this function to modify the results according to the region you have visited. If you have recently travelled to Kenya, for example, set the region to East Africa. The regions are those as defined by the World Health Organisation. This could be very important to mention to your doctor, as they may not have considered the fact you have travelled recently, and this could be the cause of your illness.

More information about each diagnosis

Each of the diagnoses listed is linked to medical knowledge from other websites. If you click on a diagnosis name, it will link to information on that diagnosis from Wikipedia. In the left hand panel you will also see links to other well-known web resources with information on the diagnosis you are researching.



You can access the same information on a diagnosis from the **landing page**:

tch your

cup--

male

Get more information on a diagnosis ...

age*

Enter diagnosis name :

search

Notice Board :

Select an age and enter a diagnosis name that you would like to read up on. From the list returned, select the diagnosis and you will see the same page as above.

Finding a doctor

Once you have researched your symptoms and read the various resources, you will hopefully have a good idea of 2-3 diseases that appear likely which you can discuss further with your doctor. It is extremely important that you discuss your thoughts with your doctor before changing, stopping or ordering any medications or planned treatment

At the bottom of the left hand panel in the screen shot above, you will see a heading called 'Find a doctor' with links to various web resources that offer to help with this. Where possible we will offer links that automatically take the diagnosis you have selected, the medical specialty and your location and return to you a list of relevant specialists in your area.

*For further comments about using the Isabel Symptom Checker, please visit [General Advice](#). You can also read the [Patient Stories](#) where you can find out how others have used the tool or read about cases that have been publicised where we outline how the tool could have been used.