



EXTENSION

Name:

1 The words below appear in the text in Exercise 2. Find the words and guess their meanings. Use a dictionary to check your guesses.

- 1. diseases 2. trait

2 Read the text and complete the chart.

I Don't Feel Well ...

Hypochondria isn't a new phenomenon. The word hypochondriac was first used in the late 16th century to describe a person who was continually worried that he or she was ill. In the past, hypochondriacs had to work hard to find information about the diseases which they imagined that they had. The only sources of information were books or doctors. Now, using the Internet, hypochondriacs can get all the information they need in a few seconds. So far, no one has conducted scientific research on the effects of this new combination of hypochondria and the Internet, however, it has got a name: cyberchondria.

Hypochondria usually starts to develop when a person is in his or her 20s or 30s, and it affects men and women equally. At first, it might just seem to be a peculiar character trait, but it can turn into an obsession. Hypochondria can affect a person's personal and professional life. In addition, it costs billions of dollars a year because people take unnecessary medical tests and treatments.

Many people think that hypochondriacs are pretending to be ill and are trying to get attention. However, according to Dr Arthur Barsky of Harvard Medical School, this is not true. He says that they really are convinced that they are ill. While a normal, healthy person may treat an upset stomach as no more than that, a hypochondriac might be convinced he or she has got cancer. What for some people may be 'just a headache' could be a possible brain tumour for a hypochondriac.

Many doctors are worried about the increase in the use of the Internet by hypochondriacs. Much of the health-related information that is found on the Internet is not reliable. Anyone can post their impressions about an illness that they had, or tell a story they heard on a health forum. The problem is that hypochondriacs are not always careful about where they find their information and don't always check that it really comes from a doctor.

In fact, some hypochondriacs are almost addicted to looking up diseases on the Internet and the results are often very worrying. Dr Barsky's advice is simple. "If it's just going to make you upset," he says, "don't do it."

Reason	Result
The Internet became available.	1.
2.	A lot of money is wasted.
3.	He / She might believe that he / she has got cancer.
Not only doctors write about health issues on the Internet.	4.

3 Complete the sentences according to the text using a suitable modal.

1. In the past, hypochondriacs only get information from books and doctors.
2. Hypochondria influence a person's working life.
3. Hypochondriacs check the sources of the information that they find on the Internet.
4. According to Dr Barsky, hypochondriacs read about diseases on the Internet because the information upset them.

4 Imagine your friend is ill. Write a letter to a doctor's medical forum explaining your friend's symptoms and asking for advice.