

## **Explaining what is Mabayo by Dr Chireka**

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## **Explaining what is Mabayo**

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**By Dr Brighton Chireka**

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Mabayo is a Shona word that is causing a lot of debate among the Zimbabwean community. Questions are being asked as to what actually is "Mabayo". Some have even suggested that it means pneumonia which is chest infection. The question that remain unanswered is if Mabayo is pneumonia why is it that some get it in their lower tummy area? Is it still chest infection when one is getting Mabayo in the groin area.

The problem lies in people not understanding Mabayo hence the confusion when people try to come up with a definition. I will try to explain what Mabayo is and hopefully bring the debate to an acceptable conclusion.

## **Mabayo is a symptom**

Mabayo is a symptom and as such it is a subjective evidence of a disease , while a sign is evidence of disease. Mabayo is a phenomenon that is experienced by the individual affected by the disease , while a sign is a phenomenon that can be detected by someone (doctor , nurse etc) other than the individual affected by the disease.

The problem comes when people try to diagnose themselves and start giving their symptoms such as Mabayo a diagnosis such as pneumonia (Chest infection) . Mabayo like stomachache, lower-back pain, and fatigue,are symptoms and can only be felt by the patient; they are subjective - others only know about it if the patient tells them

The better you can describe your pain or Mabayo the easier it may be for your doctor to find the cause of the pain and treat your pain. Information that is helpful to your doctor includes:

- 1-How long you have had your Mabayo**
- 2-Where you feel it**
- 3-Whether it is in one spot or spread out**
- 4-How it feels and how severe it is**
- 5-Whether it is constant or comes and goes**
- 6-What activities make it worse or improve it**
- 6-How it limits what you can do**
- 7-How often it occurs and how long it lasts**
- 8-Anything that triggers it**

Keeping a pain diary or record of your Mabayo is a good way to track what triggers it as well as symptoms over time. Be as specific as possible. Some words that can help you describe the way your Mabayo includes:

***Aching (kurwadza)***

***Cramping ( Kuruma-ruma)***

***Fearful ( anondityisa )***

***Gnawing ( anondishupa ndinobva ndashaya chekuita)***

***Heavy ( kutsimbirirwa)***

***Hot or burning ( Kupisa)***

***Sharp ( akapinza)***

***Shooting (kunge magetsi)***

***Sickening (ndoda kurutsa)***

***Splitting ( kutsemura chaiko)***

***Stabbing (kubaya-baya)***

***Punishing or cruel ( kunge kutochwa chaiko)***

***Tender ( side rese kudzimba)***

***Throbbing ( kuvhita kunge mune hurwa kana kunge katururu)***

***Tiring or exhausting ( ndonzwa kuneta kana kupera simba kana atanga)***

It is important for your doctor to know which of these symptoms you mean when you say, "I have Mabayo," because the cause, diagnosis, and treatment are different for each symptom. If Mabayo are in chest area they could be due to chest infection such as pneumonia or it could be just muscular problem or anxiety. If Mabayo are located in the tummy then they could be due to diseases such as gallstones, kidney stones, appendicitis, pelvic inflammatory diseases, urinary tract infection to just mention a few . At times it could be just tummy upset , constipation or muscular strain.

Your doctor will come up with the right diagnosis if you explain your Mabayo fully without hesitating. Focus mainly on how you are feeling and not what you have read here or what others have told you about Mabayo. Mabayo is a pain symptom that can be located in the chest or abdominal area and can be like a spasm, cramp, ache, pins and needles and is caused by several diseases. Your job as a patient is to describe your Mabayo clear so that you get the right diagnosis and right treatment at the right time.

## **This is not only our problem**

Patients both English or African often use the word "dizziness" when they are talking about a variety of symptoms, including:

\* Vertigo (a feeling of spinning or whirling when you are not actually moving).

\* Unsteadiness (a sense of imbalance or staggering when standing or walking). This sometimes is

called disequilibrium.

\* Lightheadedness or feeling as if you are about to faint (presyncope). This may mean there is a heart problem or low blood pressure.

\* Dizziness caused by breathing too rapidly (hyperventilation) or anxiety.

It is important for your doctor to know which of these symptoms you mean when you say, "I am dizzy," because the cause, diagnosis, and treatment are different for each symptom.

Just be yourself and express your symptoms in simple terms answering the questions being asked by your doctor. Do not worry about memorising medical jargon, it's not your area but your doctor's, who will come up with the right diagnosis.

This article was compiled by Dr Brighton Chireka, who is a GP and a blogger based in Kent in the United Kingdom. Feel free to contact him at [info@docbeecee.co.uk](mailto:info@docbeecee.co.uk) and you can read more of his work on his blog at [DR CHIREKA'S BLOG](#)

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