

Reported Speech

Patients say things like:

- 'I have a sore back.'
- 'My symptoms started a week ago.'
- 'I have been experiencing nausea.'

In OET, we do not repeat what patients say but we do report:

- **Repeat:** The patient said 'I have a sore back'
- **Report:** The patient said he had a sore back.

We have to choose how we report speech:

Reported Expressed Complained of Said Request	+	object: Noun / gerund <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • symptoms • accident • feeling • side effect • change A gerund is a noun form of an action: Mr Smith reported headaches and back pain. Mr Smith reported feeling anxious.
Note: Present participles/Gerunds are also used (and often preferred in OET model letters): Mr Smith presented / returned today + verb+ ing + noun <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr Smith presented today complaining of increased pain • Mr Smith returned today expressing concern about his son's progress • Mr Smith returned today reporting increased pain. Additionally, the pain has spread to his elbow. 		
Reported Expressed Complained Said Request	+ that	Mr Smith reported that + verb phrase <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr Smith reported that <i>he had been experiencing chest pain.</i> • Mr Smith reported that <i>he was experiencing nausea.</i> Note: We have to choose tense, active/passive etc!

General Rule with Reported Speech

We generally 'take a step back' in reported speech when we discuss things that are reported in the 'real past'

28th February: Pt report: 3 weeks GI issues – diarrhoea, cramps, occasional vomiting

Mr Smith said:

'I have been experiencing diarrhoea, cramps and vomiting for three weeks'



Today: 13th September

Reported Speech: On the 28th February, Mr Smith reported that *he had been experiencing* diarrhoea, cramps and vomiting for three weeks.

This is a technique / grammar that you will use in 'real past' timeline paragraphs – when we discuss past events.

Using reported speech with 'Today' – an exception for OET

Today: 15th June

- 13th June: painful wrist – pain score 3/10
- 15th June: pain – wrist & elbow – pain score 7/10

Patient actually said: 'The pain has spread to my elbow and the pain has increased.'

Using reported speech according to the rules: The patient reported that his pain had spread to his elbow and the pain had increased.

The reason we have used past perfect is to follow the rules of reported speech...but it doesn't seem very natural.

This is more natural:

The patient reported that the pain has spread to his elbow and the pain has increased.

Natives will generally focus on the situation in the present, and not blindly follow the rules of reported speech.

OET Model Letters

reporting/complaining

- Ms Bennet saw me today reporting problems with dizziness, headaches and diarrhoea. She asked to discontinue the
- He first presented to me a month ago complaining of new-onset indigestion, which had not resolved despite him self-medicating with antacids. I prescribed a proton pump inhibitor (omeprazole 20mg twice daily) and asked to see him

adjective + that

- She initially presented on 29/12/18 concerned that her blood sugar levels were no longer well controlled. Her BP

Exercise

Can you write a quick summary, choosing the right tenses?

1) **Today's date:** 18th July

3rd March: blocked nose / slight cough - Pt: 'Getting worse'

10th March: Pt report: Severe sinus pain / constant headache

2) **Today's date:** September 23rd

June: TKR – successful

September 23rd: Pt report: full mobility- social life back to normal

Answers

1) **Today's date:** 18th July

3rd March: blocked nose / slight cough - Pt: 'Getting worse'

10th March: Pt report: Severe sinus pain / constant headache

- Mr Smith reported that he *had had* severe sinus pain and constant headaches for a week.
- Patient reported that he *had* severe sinus pain and a constant headache.
- On 10th March, Mrs Smith reported that she *had experienced* severe sinus pain and constant headache.
- On the 10th March the patient reported a one-week history of severe sinus pain and constant headache.
- On 10 March patient *reported having* experienced a sore throat for 1 week.
- On the 10th March the patient reported severe sinus pain and constant headache. His symptoms *had started* 1 week before and since then *had been worsening*.

2) **Today's date:** September 23rd

June: TKR – successful

September 23rd: Pt report: full mobility- social life back to normal

- **Follow the rules of reported speech:** Today, Mr Smith reported that he had made a full recovery and his social life was back to normal.
- **Native speaker:** Today, Mr Smith reported that he has made a full recovery and his social life is back to normal.
- **OET Model letter:** Today, Mr Smith reported **making** a full recovery and having a normal social life.