

Semicolons

A period is a break between the ideas in two complete sentences.

The first blood bank was opened in 1940 in New York City. It was designed and operated by an American surgeon named Richard Charles Drew.

Two sentences can be joined more closely together with a semicolon.

Some people work best in the mornings; others do better in the evenings.

A semicolon is used when the two complete sentences are **short** or **medium** in length. When the two complete sentences are long or very complex, a semicolon should **not** be used because the reader will not be able to keep track of too many ideas in one long sentence.

A semicolon can be used in the following situations:

- 1) **A semicolon often works nicely when the second sentence begins with a transition.**

*Many medical websites are interesting; **however**, some are not accurate.*

- 2) **Sometimes, a semicolon is used when the second sentence offers an explanation of the first sentence:**

*My friend is not answering her phone; **she may be taking a test.***

- 3) **A semicolon can also be used when the second sentence offers an effect of the first sentence.**

*She suffers from a blood clotting disorder; **she wears compression stockings on long flights.***

- 4) **A semicolon can indicate contrast.**

*The students doctors are hungry; **they haven't decided where to eat.***

- 5) **A semicolon can add closely related information of equal value.**

*Sugar must be consumed in minimal qualities; **fats must also be consumed sparingly.***

Notice the close connection between the ideas in the two sentences in all of these examples; they are felt to be too closely related to be separated by a period. Also, notice how the idea from the first sentence is carried into the second sentence when a semicolon is used.

Semicolons help achieve variety in writing, but shouldn't be overused! Using one, two, or three semicolons in each essay is enough to achieve variety.

Semicolons: Exercise

Directions: Supply semicolons. Add commas and periods where necessary.

- 1) She believes that daily exercise has many benefits however she cannot fit it into her schedule.
- 2) People suffering from paranoia exhibit extreme and unjustified mistrust of other people's actions they constantly replay and analyze the day's events in their heads.
- 3) Individuals with this mental illness assume that others want to deceive, harm, or exploit them they doubt the loyalty of friends.
- 3) The statistical evidence is there it cannot be denied.
- 4) The patient should watch for fever and swelling, which indicate the presence of an infection antibiotics are usually prescribed for 7 days in this case.
- 5) The medical supervisor saw no objection to the suggestion after the meeting she decided to accept it.
- 6) Abdominal exercises help prevent back pain proper posture is also important.
- 7) Acute lymphoblastic leukemia is the most common cancer to afflict children for this reason it is also known as childhood leukemia.
- 8) Corticosteroids are not used to treat bacterial conjunctivitis this type of eye drop makes the condition worse.

- 9) Chemotherapy is quite effective at treating cancer however it can lead to many side effects that diminish the patient's quality of life.
- 10) In 70% of the cases, kidney stones are caused by the accumulation of calcium in the urine high amounts of calcium could be due to excessive consumption of vitamin D, an overactive parathyroid gland, or kidney disease.
- 11) Dermatomyositis most often affects women between the ages of 50 and 60 in fact two-thirds of patients with this condition are middle-aged women.
- 12) The drug study was inconclusive therefore the company did not begin producing the drug in pill form.
- 13) The pain varies widely in severity it can be a mild ache, a severe burning sensation, or agonizing pain that prevents the person from moving.
- 14) In the United States, about 2 people per 1,000 have insulin-dependent diabetes by the age of 20 overall the insulin-dependent form affects about 150 to 200 people per 100,000.