

MEDICAL TERMINOLOGY

THE BASICS

FOUNDATION OF MEDICAL WORDS

A. Structure

Most medical words are composed of two or more terms. To define a medical word:

- divide the word into its terms
- analyze the terms
- define the word

Examples:

Pericarditis

peri = around, *card* = heart, *itis* = inflammation
 Inflammation around the heart

Oncology

onc = tumor, *olog* = study of
 Study of tumors

B. Terms

Term + Term (____ + ____) = medical word

There are five categories of terms:

1. Prefix - beginning of a word

(ex., *pre*, *post*)

Designated by a "____" after the term.

2. Suffix - ending of a word

(ex., *ology*, *itis*)

Designated by a "____" before the term.

3. Root - foundation/base of a word (ex., *hepat*, *gastr*)

4. Combining vowel - vowel (usually "o") added to a root (ex., *gastro*).

Use a combining vowel when joining:

- Root to another root (ex., *gastrohepatic*)
- Root to a suffix beginning with a consonant (ex., *cardiomegaly*)
- Combining form + root + vowel (ex., *hepatic*, *gastric*)

Designated by a "+" between the root and the vowel

Examples:

Hyperleukocytosis

hyper (prefix) = excessive
leuko (combining form) = white
cyt (root) = cell
osis (suffix) = condition of

Definition: condition of excessive white blood cells (leukocytes)

Hematoxic

hemat (combining form) = blood
tox (root) = poison
ic (suffix) = pertaining to

Definition: pertaining to blood poisoning

TIPS:

1. Some terms have more than one definition. To determine the correct definition in a particular medical word, analyze the other terms in the word.

Example:

Polymyelitis

polio = gray (matter)
myel = spinal cord, bone marrow
itis = inflammation

Definition: Inflammation of the gray matter of the spinal cord. The bone marrow does not have gray matter.

2. Some terms may function as a root/combining form in one word and a suffix in another word.

Classification depends upon the specific medical word.

Examples:

Cytology

cyte (combining form) = cell
logy (suffix) = study of

Definition: Study of cells

Erythrocyte

erythro (combining form) = red
cyte (suffix) = cell

Definition: Red blood cell

THE HUMAN BODY

A. Development

Cells - tissues - organs - systems - organism

1. Cells: Major Components

- Cell membrane
- Cytoplasm
- Nucleus

2. Tissues: Primary Types

- Connective
- Epithelium
- Muscle
- Nervous

3. Organs

- Composed of two or more different tissues
 - Have specific functions
4. Systems: Related organs with common functions
 5. Organisms: A living person

B. Cavities

A space containing organs

1. Dorsal

- Cranial
- Vertebral (spinal)

2. Ventral

- Abdominal
- Pelvic
- Thoracic

C. Planes

An imaginary flat surface

- Frontal - anterior/posterior
- Sagittal - right/left
- Transverse - upper/lower

D. Positions

A reference point for location or direction.

- Anterior/Ventral - front of the body
 Posterior/Dorsal - back of the body
- Deep - away from the surface
 Superficial - on the surface
- Inferior - situated below
 Superior - situated above
- Lateral - pertaining to the side
- Medial - pertaining to the middle
- Prone - lying face down
 Supine - lying face up

TERMS

TERMS	DEFINITIONS	WORDS
acidic	acid, sour, bitter	acidity
acne	pus-filled	acneiform
acute/a, acutis	sharp, severe	acute
adipic	fat	adipomectomy
acric	bit, gas	acrophagia
agile	agility, nimbness	agility
algic	pain	algology
ambled	to walk	ambulatory
anomalic	irregular	anomaly
anthracic	coal, carbon, anthracite	anthracosis
anthropic	man, human being	anthropometry
astric	astrum	astronomy
aphetic	short	aphasia
apic	apex	apical
aqueic	water	aqueous
astmic	steam, vapor	asthma
astric	astrum	astronomy
baric	weight, pressure	bariatrics
baric	heavy, dull, hard	bariatrics
basal	walking	basal
bathic, bathic	deep, depth	bathic
biic, bio	life, living	biology
blastic, -blast	early embryonic stage, immature	blastocyst
-calculus	to compute	calculi

caloric	heat	calorimetry
capptic	heat	capillary
capptic, captic	capable, container	capillary
caric	cancer	carcinoma
caric	cancer, carcinoma	carcinogenic
-cataphic	affirmation	cataphoric
catartic	cleansing, purging	catartic
catartic	sitting	acathic
catartic	tail	catartic
catartic, catic	hollow, cavity	catartic
chemic	chemical, chemistry	chemosurgery
chemic	time, timing	chemotherapy
clitic	to slope, bend	climatology
-clitic	sleeping	climatology
-coma	deep sleep	coma
comic	conscious, aware	consciousness
comictic	narrowing, binding	constriction
comictic	to break	comictic
corpore	body	corporeal
critic	crisis, dangerous	critical
critic	gold	criticism
critic, -critic	cell	criticism
critic	people	criticism
critic	to dry	criticism
critic	enlarge, expand	criticism
critic	long	criticism
critic	pain	criticism
critic	back	criticism
critic	to lead	criticism
critic	power, strength	criticism
critic	pain	criticism
critic	bad, difficult, painful	criticism
critic	spicy, prickly	criticism
critic	compositional absence	criticism
critic	oil	criticism
critic	the correct measure, proportioned	criticism
critic	opposite, opposed	criticism
critic	equality, equal	criticism
critic	irritation	criticism
critic	cause	criticism
critic	good, normal, well	criticism
critic	to cause, make	criticism
critic	happen	criticism
critic	feet	criticism
critic, fibril	thread, threadlike	criticism
critic	filament	criticism
critic	specified shape, form	criticism
critic, fibril	cold	criticism
critic	performance	criticism
critic	to freeze, congeal	criticism
critic	twice	criticism
critic	producing, generating	criticism
critic	production, formation	criticism
critic	produced by, forming	criticism
critic	aged, old age	criticism
critic	step	criticism
critic	simple, single	criticism
critic	heredity	criticism
critic	condition	criticism
critic	tissue	criticism
critic	indecisive, constant, uncertain	criticism
critic	water, hydrogen	criticism
critic	treatment, physician	criticism
critic	specialist	criticism
critic	ion	criticism

Australian Basic Medical Terminology List

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