Dictionary of Nursing

second edition

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Preface

This fully-updated dictionary provides the user with a complete guide to the vocabulary in current use by nurses and other health care professionals.

Over 11,000 terms are explained in clear, straightforward English. Areas covered include diseases and conditions, instruments, drugs, treatments and patient care, as well as medical specialisations such as surgery, psychiatry and physiotherapy. Many informal and everyday terms used by patients in describing their condition are also included.

A useful supplement also contains a guide to anatomical terms, illustrated with clear and simple diagrams.

Thanks are due to Glenda Cornwell, Rosemary Cook, Stephen Curtis, Fiona McIntosh, Lynn Davy and Dinah Jackson for their advice on the first edition of this text, and to Kathryn Jones for her helpful comments during the production of this second edition.

Publishers' Note:

While every effort has been made to be as accurate as possible, the author, advisors, editors and publishers of this book cannot be held liable for any errors and omissions, or actions that may be taken as a consequence of using it.
Pronunciation

The following symbols have been used to show the pronunciation of the main words in the dictionary.

Stress is indicated by a main stress mark (') and a secondary stress mark ( ). Note that these are only guides, as the stress of the word changes according to its position in the sentence.

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AA abbreviation Alcohols Anonymous
A & E /ei and 'iː, A & E department /ei and
iliac, pertaining /noun same as accident and
emergency department
A & E medicine /ei and 'iː, medicine /noun
the medical procedures used in A & E depart-
ments
ab- /æb/ prefix away from
ABG /ei bit: 'iːə noun the basic initial checks of
a casualty's condition. Full form: airway, breath-
ing and circulation
abdomen /aˌbədmən/ noun a space inside the
body below the diaphragm, above the pelvis and
in front of the spine, containing the stomach,
intestines, liver and other vital organs. pain in the
abdomen (NOTE: For other terms referring to
the abdomen, see words beginning with coel-,
coelic-)
abdomino- /æbˈdəməniː/ prefix same as abdomi-
no- (used before vowels)
abdominal /æbˈdəməniəl/ adjective located in
the abdomen, or relating to the abdomen
abdominal aorta /æbˈdəməniəl əˈɔːrə/ noun the
part of the aorta which lies between the
diaphragm and the point where the aorta divides
into the iliac arteries. See illustration at KIDNEY in
Supplement
abdominal cavity /æbˈdəməniəl ˈkæviəti/ noun
the space in the body below the chest
abdominal pain /æbˈdəməniəl ˈpiːn/ noun
pain in the abdomen caused by indigestion or
more serious disorders
abdominal viscera /æbˈdəməniəl ˈvɪskərə/ noun
the organs which are contained in the
abdomen, e.g., the stomach, liver and intestines
abdominal wall /æbˈdəməniəl ˈwɔːl/ noun
muscular tissue which surrounds the abdomen
abdomino- /æbˈdəməniəʊ/ prefix referring to
the abdomen
abdominopelvic /æbˈdəməniəʊ ˈpelvɪk/ adjective
referring to the abdomen and pelvis
abdominoperineal /æbˈdəməniəperˈiːniəl/ adjective
referring to the abdomen and perineum
abdominoperineal excision /æbˈdəməniəperˈiːniəl
ɪkˈsɪʒən/ noun a surgical
operation that involves cutting out tissue in both
the abdomen and the perineum
abdominoposterior /æbˈdəməniəpəˈstəriər/ adjective
referring to a position of a fetus in the uterus, where
the fetus's abdomen is facing the mother's back
abdominoscopy /æbˈdəməniəˈskɒpi/ noun an
internal examination of the abdomen, usually
with an endoscope
abdominothoracic /æbˈdəməniəθəˈræsɪk/ adjective
referring to the abdomen and thorax
abduce /æbˈdjuːs/ verb same as abduct
abducens nerve /æbˈdjuːsənz ˈnɜːrv/ noun
the sixth cranial nerve, which controls the muscle
which makes the eyeball turn outwards
abducent /æbˈdjuːsənt/ adjective referring to
a muscle which brings parts of the body away
from each other or moves them away from the
central line of the body or a limb. Compare addu-
cent
abduct /æbˈdʌkt/ verb (of a muscle) to pull a
leg or arm in a direction which is away from the
centre line of the body, or to pull a toe or finger
away from the central line of a leg or arm. Com-
pare adduct
abduction /æbˈdʌkʃən/ noun the movement of
a part of the body away from the central line of the
body or away from a neighbouring part. Opposite
adduction. See illustration at ANATOMICAL
TERMS in Supplement
abductor /æbˈdʌktər/ noun, abductor muscle /æb
ˈdʌktər/ noun a muscle which pulls a part of the
body away from the central line of the
body or away from a neighbouring part. Opposite
adductor
aberrant /əˈbɛrənt/ adjective not usual or
expected
aberration /əbərəˈʃən/ noun an action or
growth which is not usual or expected
ablation /əˈbleɪʃən/ noun the removal of an
organ or of a part of the body by surgery
abnormal /əbˈnɔːməl/ adjective not usual or
abnormality /əbˈnɔːrəlɪti/ noun a form or
condition which is not usual (NOTE: For other
terms referring to abnormality, see words beginning with a.r., arate-
abocclusion /aˈbɒkləz/ noun a condition in which the teeth in the top and bottom jaws do not touch
abort /əˈbɔːt/ verb to eject an embryo or fetus, or to cause an embryo or fetus to be ejected, and so end a pregnancy before the fetus is fully developed
abortion /əˈbɔːʃən/ noun a situation where a fetus leaves the uterus before it is fully developed, especially during the first 28 weeks of pregnancy, or a procedure which causes this to happen
abortive /əˈbɔːtrɪv/ adjective not successful ○ abortive attempt
abortion /əˈbɔːtʃən/ noun a fetus which is expelled during an abortion or miscarriage
abreaction /əˈbɛrəkʃən/ noun the act of using some-thing referring to abnormality, see words beginning with a.r., arate-
abreaction /əˈbɛrəkʃən/ noun the act of using something wrongly ○ Heroin and cocaine are drugs which are commonly abused. 2. to treat someone badly ○ sexually abused children ○ He had physically abused his wife and child.
a.c. adverb (used on prescriptions) before food.
acanthosis /aˈkænθəsɪs/ noun a disease of the prickle cell layer of the skin, where warts appear on the skin or inside the mouth
acapnia /ˌækəˈpniə/ noun the condition of not having enough carbon dioxide in the blood and tissues
acaricide /əˈkɑːrɪsɪd/ noun a substance which kills mites or ticks
acatalasia /əˌkætəˈlæzɪə/ noun an inherited condition which results in a lack of catalase in all tissue
accessory /əˈsɛrərɪ/ adjective something which helps something else to happen or operate, but may not be very important in itself. ○ accessory helping something else to happen or operate
accident /əˈsɪdnt/ noun 1. an unpleasant event which happens suddenly and harms someone’s health ○ She had an accident in the kitchen and had to go to hospital. ○ Three people were killed in the accident on the motorway. 2. chance, or something which happens by chance ○ I met her by accident at the bus stop.
accidental injury /əˈsɪdentəlj/ ɪˈndʒərɪ/ noun an injury that happens to someone in an accident
accident and emergency department /əˈsɪdnt ənd ɪˈmɜːrni diˈpɔrtmənt/ noun the part of a hospital which deals with people who need urgent treatment because they have had accidents or are in sudden serious pain. Abbreviation A & E
accident form /əˈsɪdnt ˈfɔːm/ noun a form to be filled in with details of an accident
accident prevention /əˈsɪdnt ˈprɛvəntʃən/ noun the taking of action or changing procedures to prevent accidents from happening
accident ward /əˈsɪdnt ˈwɔːd/ noun a ward for urgent accident victims. Also called casualty ward
accommodation /əˌkʌməˈdeɪʃən/ noun the ability to focus on objects at different distances, using the ciliary muscle
accommodative squint /ˌəkʌməˈdeɪtɪv skwɪnt/ noun a squint when the eye is trying to focus on an object which is very close
accouchement /əˈkʌʃmənt/ noun the time when a woman is being looked after because her baby is being born, or has just been born
accountability   /ˈkaʊntəbɪləti/  noun the state of being responsible to someone else for an action   © developing and maintaining standards of accountability
accountable   /ˈkaʊntəbəl/  adjective responsible to someone else for an action   © accountable to the public
accretion   /ˈækretʃən/  noun a gradual increase in size, as through growth or external addition   © an accretion of calcium around the joint
acetylsalicylic acid   /ˌæsɪtɪlˌsælɪsɪlik/  noun a drug which reduces both the heart rate and how strongly the heart muscles contract, used in the treatment of high blood pressure and irregular heart rhythms
acetylcoenzyme A   /ˌæsɪtlkoʊəˌsɪmənts/  noun same as angiotensin-converting enzyme inhibitor
acetaldehyde   /ˌæsɪtləld/  noun a fetus born without a head
acetabuloplasty   /ˌæsɪtləˈbʌləploʊstɪ/  noun a surgical operation to repair or rebuild the acetabulum
acetabulum   /ˌæsɪtləˈbʌləm/  noun the part of the pelvic bone, shaped like a cup, into which the head of the femur fits to form the hip joint. Also called cotyloid cavity (NOTE: The plural is acetabula.)
acetylsalicylic acid   /ˌæsɪtɪlˌsælɪsɪlik/  noun a drug which helps a person to produce more urine, used in the treatment of oedema, glaucoma and epilepsy
acetonaemia   /ˌæsɪtləˈnɛmiə/  noun same as ketonaemia
acetonemia   /ˌæsɪtləˈnɛmiə/  noun the presence of acetone in the urine, shown by the fact that the urine gives off a sweet smell
acetylcholine   /ˈæsɪtlkləˌhələn/  noun a substance released from nerve endings, which allows nerve impulses to move from one nerve to another or from a nerve to the organ it controls
acetylcholine receptors are of two types, muscarinic, found in parasympathetic post-ganglionic nerve junctions, and nicotinic, found at neuromuscular junctions and in autonomic ganglia. Acetylcholine acts on both types of receptors, but other drugs act on one or the other.
acetylcoenzyme A   /ˌæsɪstəlˌkoʊəˌsɪmənts/  noun a compound produced in the metabolism of carbohydrates, fatty acids and amino acids
acetylsalicylic acid   /ˌæsɪtɪlˌsælɪsɪlik/  noun same as aspirin
achalasia   /ˌækələˈleɪzɪə/  noun the condition of being unable to relax the muscles
aché   /ˈeɪk/  noun a pain which goes on for a time, but is not very severe. © He complained of various aches and pains.   © we had a pain in part of the body © His tooth ached so much he went to the dentist.
Achilles tendon   /ˌæklɪlz ˈtendən/  noun a tendon at the back of the ankle which connects the calf muscles to the heel and which acts to pull up the heel when the calf muscle is contracted
achillorrhaphy   /ˌækəˈlɔrtəfr/  noun a surgical operation to stitch a torn Achilles tendon
achillotony   /ˌækəˈloʊtəni/  noun a surgical operation to divide the Achilles tendon
achlorhydria   /ˌæklɔrˈhaɪdriə/  noun a condition in which the gastric juices do not contain hydrochloric acid, a symptom of stomach cancer or pernicious anaemia
acholic jaundice   /ˌæklɔlɪk ˈdʒændɪs/  noun a disease where unusually red blood cells contain the formation of gallstones. Also called hereditary spherocytosis
achondroplasia   /ˌæknədˈroʊpləzɪə/  noun an inherited condition in which the long bones in the arms and legs do not grow fully while the rest of the bones in the body grow as usual, resulting in dwarfism
achromatopsia   /ˌækrəˈmætəˌpziə/  noun a rare condition in which a person cannot see any colours, but only black, white and shades of grey
achy   /ˈeɪki/  adjective feeling aches all over the body (informal)
acid    /ˈsɪsid/  noun one of the four major types of food. © acid is any substance that causes an increase in the acidity of a solution.
acid-base balance   /ˈsɪsid ˈbeɪs/  noun the balance between acid and base, i.e. the pH level, in plasma
acidity   /ˈsɪsidɪti/  noun 1. the level of acid in a liquid. © The alkaline solution may help to reduce acidity. 2. same as hyperacidity
acidosi   /ˌæksəˈdəsi/  noun 1. a condition when there are more acid waste products such as urea than usual in the blood because of a lack of alkali. 2. same as acidity
acidotic    /ˌæksəˈdɔtɪk/  adjective relating to acidosis
acid reflux   /ˈsɪsid ˈrɛflɛks/  noun a condition caused by a faulty muscle in the oesophagus allowing the acid in the stomach to pass into the oesophagus
acquired immune deficiency syndrome
acromial /əkrəˈmiəl/ adjective relating to the acromion and the clavicle
acromion /əˈkrəmɪən/ noun the pointed top of the scapula, which forms the tip of the shoulder
acromyx /əkrəˈmɪks/ noun a condition in which a nail grows into the flesh
acroparaesthesia /ˌakrəˈpærəˈɛsthoʊriə/ noun a condition in which the patient experiences sharp pains in the arms and numbness in the fingers after sleep
acrophobia /ˌakrəˈfəʊbiə/ noun a fear of heights
acrosclerosis /ˌakrəsəˈsklərəsɪs/ noun sclerosis which affects the extremities
ACTH abbreviation adrenocorticotrophic hormone
actinomycin /ˌaktɪnəˈmɔsɪn/ noun an antibiotic used in the treatment of children with cancer
actinomycosis /ˌaktɪnəˈmɔsɪsɪs/ noun a fungal disease transmitted to humans from cattle, causing abscesses in the mouth and lungs (pulmonary actinomycosis) or in the ileum (intestinal actinomycosis)
action potential /ˈækʃɔn pəˈtenʃəl/ noun a temporary change in electrical potential which occurs between the inside and the outside of a nerve or muscle fibre when a nerve impulse is sent
active immunity /ˈæktɪv ɪˈmiʃən/ noun immunity which is acquired by catching and surviving an infectious disease or by vaccination with a weakened form of the disease, which makes the body form antibodies

activities of daily living /ækˈtɪvɪti əv ˈdeɪli ˈlɪvɪŋ/ noun a scale used by geriatrists and occupational therapists to assess the capacity of elderly or disabled people to live independently. Abbreviation ADLs
activity /ˈæktɪvɪtɪ/ noun 1. what someone does ○ difficulty with activities such as walking and dressing 2. the characteristic behaviour of a chemical ○ The drug’s activity only lasts a few hours. ○ antibacterial activity effective action against bacteria
acuity /əˈkjʊrəti/ noun keenness of sight, hearing or intellect
acupressure /ˌækjuˈpreʃər/ noun a treatment which is based on the same principle as acupuncture in which, instead of needles, fingers are used on specific points on the body, called pressure points
acupuncture /ˌækjuˈpiŋktʃər/ noun a treatment based on needles being inserted through the skin into nerve centres in order to relieve pain or treat a disorder
acute /ˈækjʊt/ adjective referring to a disease or condition which develops rapidly and can be dangerous ○ an acute abscess Opposite chronic
acute abdomen /ə'kjuːt ədəbəmən/ noun any serious condition of the abdomen which requires surgery
acute bed /'akjuːt bɛd/ noun a hospital bed reserved for people requiring immediate treatment
acute care /'akjuːt keə/ noun medical or surgical treatment in a hospital, usually for a short period, for a patient with a sudden severe illness or injury
acute disseminated encephalomyelitis /ə'kjuːt dɪˌsɪmɪtɪd enˌkaˌfələməˈnaɪtɪs/ noun an encephalomyelitis or myelitis believed to result from an autoimmune attack on the myelin of the central nervous system
acute glaucoma /ə'kjuːt ɡluːkəma/ noun same as angle-closure glaucoma
acute hospital /ə'kjuːt ˈhɒspɪt(ə)l/ noun a hospital where people go for major surgery or intensive care of medical or surgical conditions
acute illness /əˈkjuːt ɪˈlɜːʃ(ə)n/ noun a hospital where people go for major surgery or intensive care of medical or surgical conditions
acute respiratory distress syndrome /əˌkjuːt rɪˌspəˈrɛtɪəri ˈdɪsərˈtɛst ˈsɜːntrəʊm/ noun an infection of the lungs, often following injury, which prevents them functioning properly. Abbreviation ARDS
acute rheumatism /əˌkjuːt ˈrɛmətɪz(ə)m/ noun same as rheumatic fever
acute rhinitis /əˌkjuːt ˈrɛnətɪs/ noun a virus infection which causes inflammation of the mucous membrane in the nose and throat
acute suppurative arthritis /əˌkjuːt ˈsʌpərətɪv ərˈarɪtɪs/ noun same as pyarthrosis
acute toxicity /əˌkjuːt ˈtɔksɪsəti/ noun a level of concentration of a toxic substance which makes people seriously ill or can cause death
acyclovir /ˈeɪsəkloʊvər/ noun same as aciclovir
acystia /əˈsɪstə/ noun a condition in which a baby is born without a bladder
Adam's apple /əˈdæməz ˈæpəl/ noun a part of the thyroid cartilage which projects from the neck below the chin in a man. Also called laryngeal prominence
adapt /əˈdæpt/ verb 1. to change one’s ideas or behaviour to fit into a new situation. She has adapted very well to her new job in the children’s hospital, 2. to change something to make it more useful. The brace has to be adapted to fit the patient.
adaptation /əˌdæptəˈteɪʃ(ə)n/ noun 1. a change which has been or can be made to something, 2. the act of changing something so that it fits a new situation
ADD abbreviation attention deficit disorder
Addison’s anaemia /əˈdɪsənəniə/ noun same as pernicious anaemia [Described 1849. After Thomas Addison (1793–1860), from Northumberland, founder of the science of endocrinology]
Addison’s disease /əˈdɪsəndɪz dɪˌziːz/ noun a disease of the adrenal glands, causing a change in skin colour to yellow and then to dark brown and resulting in general weakness, anaemia, low blood pressure and wasting away. Treatment is with corticosteroid injections. [Described 1849. After Thomas Addison (1793–1860), from Northumberland, founder of the science of endocrinology]
adducent /əˈdjuːs(ə)nt/ adjective referring to a muscle which brings parts of the body together or moves them towards the central line of the body or a limb. Compare abducent
adduct /əˈdʌkt/ verb (of a muscle) to pull a leg or arm towards the central line of the body, or to pull a toe or finger towards the central line of a leg or arm. Opposite abduct
adducted /əˈdʌktɪd/ adjective referring to a body part brought towards the middle of the body
adduction /əˈdʌkʃ(ə)n/ noun the movement of a part of the body towards the midline or towards a neighbouring part. Compare abduction. See illustration at ANATOMICAL TERMS in Supplement
adductor /əˈdʌktər/ noun a muscle which pulls a part of the body towards the central line of the body. Opposite abductor
aden- /əˈdeɪn/ prefix same as adeno- (used before vowels)
adenectomy /əˈdɛniəktəmi/ noun the surgical removal of a gland
adenine /əˈdɛnən/ noun one of the four basic chemicals in DNA
adenitis /əˈdɛnətɪs/ noun inflammation of a gland or lymph node. See lymphadenitis
adeno- /əˈdɛnəʊ/ prefix referring to glands
adenocarcinoma /əˌdɛnəkɑːrˈsaɪnəmə/ noun a malignant tumour of a gland
adenohypophysis /əˌdɛnəhoʊˈsaɪs əˈprɪfɪs/ noun the front lobe of the pituitary gland which secretes most of the pituitary hormones
adenoid /əˈdɛnəd/ adjective like a gland
adenoidal /əˈdɛnəd(ə)l/ adjective referring to the adenoids
adenoidal tissue /əˌdɛnəd(ə)l tʃətʃ/ noun same as adenoids
adenoidectomy /əˌdɛnədɪˈektəmi/ noun the surgical removal of the adenoids
adenoids /əˌdɛnəd(ə)z/ plural noun a mass of tissue at the back of the nose and throat that can restrict breathing if enlarged. Also called pharyngeal tonsils
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Adipous /ædɪpəʊs/ A panniculus adiposus

Aditus /ædɪtəs/ Noun an opening or entrance to a passage

Adjustment /ədʒəˈstʃərn/ Noun a specific directional high-speed movement of a joint performed by a chiropractor

Adjuvant /ædʒuˈvænt/ Adjective referring to treatment by drugs or radiation therapy after surgery for cancer. Noun a substance added to a drug to enhance the effect of the main ingredient

Adjuvant therapy /ædʒuˈvænt ˌθεərəpi/ Noun therapy using drugs or radiation after cancer surgery

ADLS abbreviation activities of daily living

Admission /ədˈmɪʃən/ Noun the act of being registered as a hospital patient

Adnexa /ədˈnɛksə/ Noun plural structures attached to an organ

Adolescence /ədəˈlesəns/ Noun the period of life when a child is developing into an adult

Adolescent /ədəˈlesənt/ Noun a person who is at the stage of life when he or she is developing into an adult, an adjective describing an adult developing into an adult, or occurring at that stage of life. Adolescent boys and girls adolescent fantasies

Adoptive immunotherapy /ə.dəptɪv ɪˌmjuːnas/ a treatment for cancer in which the patient's own white blood cells are used to attack cancer cells

ADP abbreviation Adenosine diphosphate

Adrenal /əˈdrenal/ Adjective situated near the kidney. Noun same as adrenal gland

Adrenalectomy /əˈdrɛnəlektəmi/ Noun the surgical removal of one of the adrenal glands

Adrenal gland /əˈdrenal ɡlænd/ Noun one of two endocrine glands at the top of the kidneys which secrete cortisone, adrenaline and other hormones. Also called adrenal body, adrenal gland. See illustration at KIDNEY in Supplement

Adrenaline /əˈdrenəliːn/ Noun a hormone secreted by the medulla of the adrenal glands which has an effect similar to stimulation of the sympathetic nervous system

Adrenal medulla /əˈdrenal ˈmeɪdələ/ Noun the inner part of the adrenal gland which secretes adrenaline and noradrenaline. Also called suprarenal medulla

Adrenergic /ədəˈnɛrɡɪk/ Adjective referring to a neurone or receptor which is stimulated by adrenaline. β Beta blocker

Adrenergic receptor /əˌdənəˈrɛɡɪk riˈseptər/ Noun same as adrenoceptor

Comment: Three types of adrenergic receptor act in different ways when stimulated by
adrenalin/  Alpha receptors constrict the bronchi, beta 1 receptors speed up the heartbeat and beta 2 receptors dilate the bronchi.

adrenoceptor /-drenoʊ/ 'septə/ noun a cell or neurone which is stimulated by adrenaline. Also called adrenoreceptor, adrenergic receptor

adrenocortical /-driːnəʊ'kɔrtɪk(ə)/ adjective relating to the cortex of the adrenal glands

adrenocorticotropic hormone /-driːnəʊˌkɔrtɪkɔˈtrɒtɒk(ə)/ noun a hormone secreted by the pituitary gland, which makes the cortex of the adrenal glands produce corticosteroids. Abbreviation ACTH. Also called corticotrophin

adrenocorticotrophin /-driːnəʊˌkɔrtɪkɔˈtrɒfɪn/ noun a hormone secreted by the pituitary gland which makes the cortisol glands produce corticosteroids.

adrenogenital syndrome /-driːnəʊˈdʒenɪtəl/ noun a condition caused by overproduction of male sex hormones, where boys show rapid sexual development and females develop male characteristics

adrenolytic /-driːnəlɪˈtɪk/ adjective acting against the secretion of adrenaline

adrenoreceptor /-drenoʊˈreptər/ noun same as adrenoceptor

adsorbent /-dəˈzɔrbənt/ adjective being capable of adsorption

adsorption /-dəˈzɔrʃən/ noun the attachment of one substance to another, often the bonding of a liquid with a gas or vapour which touches its surface

adult /-dəldəlt/ adjective grown-up. Adolescents reach the adult stage about the age of eighteen or twenty. ■ noun someone who is no longer a child

adult coeliac disease /-dəldəlt ’sɛliæk diˌzɪəl/ noun a condition in adults where the villi in the intestine become smaller and so reduce the surface which can absorb nutrients

adult dentition /-dəldəlt dənˈtɪʃən/ noun the 32 teeth which an adult has

adulteration /-dəldəltəˈretʃən/ noun the act of making something less pure by adding another substance

adult respiratory distress syndrome /-dəldəlt riˌspɑrətɔrɪ diˈstriːs ˌsɪndrəʊm/ noun a description of various lung infections which reduce the lungs' efficiency. Abbreviation ARDS

advanced trauma life support /ədˈvɑntɪstərɪv ˈleɪf əˌsɔp/ noun the management of a trauma patient during the critical first hour after injury. Abbreviation ATLS

adventitious /-adˈvɛntʃəs/ adjective on the outside or in an unusual place

adventitious bursa /-ədˈvɛntʃəs ’bɜːsa/ noun a bursa which develops as a result of continued pressure or rubbing

adverse /-ədˈvɜːs/ adjective harmful or unfavourable

adverse occurrence /-ədˈvɜːs əˈkærəns/ noun a harmful event which occurs during treatment

advocacy /-ədˈvɒksəs/ noun active support for something, especially in order to help people who would have difficulty in gaining attention without your help

adynamic ileus /eɪ,dəˌdaɪnəmɪk ’ɪləs/ noun same as paralytic ileus

aegophony /eɡˈfɒnɪ/ noun a high sound of the voice heard through a stethoscope, where there is fluid in the pleural cavity

aer- /eə/ prefix same as aero- (used before vowels)

aeration /eəˈreɪʃən/ noun the adding of air or oxygen to a liquid

aero-/eər- prefix referring to air

aerobes /eərəˈboʊz/ noun a tiny organism which needs oxygen to survive

aerobic /eərəˈbɒɪk/ adjective needing oxygen to live, or taking place in the presence of oxygen

aerogenous /eərəˈdʒənəs/ adjective referring to a bacterium which produces gas

aerophagy /eərəˈfeɪdʒi/ noun the habit of swallowing air when suffering from indigestion, so making the stomach pains worse

aerosol /eəˈrɒsəl/ noun tiny particles of a liquid such as a drug or disinfectant suspended in a gas under pressure in a container and used as a spray

aetiology /eɪ tiˈɒlədʒi/ noun the study of the causes and origins of diseases

AFC abbreviation Agenda for Change

aferible /eɪˈfrɪbrəl/ adjective with no fever

affect /əˈfɛkt/ verb to make something or someone one change, especially to have a bad effect on something or someone. Some organs are rapidly affected if the patient lacks oxygen for even a short time. ■ noun same as affection

affection /əˈfɛkʃən/ noun the general state of a person’s emotions

affectionate /əˈfɛkʃətɪv/ adjective relating to a person’s moods or feelings

affectionate disorder /əˈfɛkʃətɪv ˈdɪsˌɔrdəs/ noun a condition which changes someone’s mood, making him or her depressed or excited

afferent /əˈfɛrənt/ adjective conducting liquid or electrical impulses towards the inside. Opposite efferent

afferent nerve /əˈfɛrənt ˈnɜrv/ noun same as sensory nerve
afferent vessel /əˈfɛrənt, ˈves(ə)l/ noun a tube which brings lymph to a gland
affinity /əˈfɪnətɪ/ noun an attraction between two substances
aflatoxin /ˌæfləˈtɒksɪn/ noun a poison produced by some moulds in some crops such as peanuts
African trypanosomiasis /ˌɛfrikənˌtrɪpənəˈsɒməsɪs/ noun same as sleeping sickness
afterbirth /əˈfɜːt bɜːθ/ noun the tissues, including the placenta and umbilical cord, which are present in the uterus during pregnancy and are expelled after the birth of a baby
aftercare /əˈfɜːt kɛə/ noun 1, the care of a person who has had an operation. Aftercare treatment involves changing dressings and helping people to look after themselves again. 2, the care of a mother who has just given birth
after-effect /əˈfɜːt ər, əˈfɛkt/ noun a change which appears only some time after the cause. The operation had some unpleasant after-effects.
after-image /əˈfɜːt ɪmˈædʒ/ noun an image of an object which remains in a person’s sight after the object itself has gone
afterpains /əˈfɜːt pɛnəz/ plural noun regular pains in the uterus which are sometimes experienced after childbirth
afloccus /əˈfʌkəs/ noun a usually fatal disease where the number of granulocytes, a type of white blood cell, falls sharply because of a bone marrow condition. Compare clausrophobia.
agglutination /əˈɡlʌtɪnənʃ(ə)n/ noun the act of coming together or sticking to one another to form a clump, as of bacteria cells in the presence of serum, or blood cells when blood of different types is mixed
agglutinin /əˈɡlʌtɪnɪn/ noun a factor in a serum which makes cells stick together in clumps
agranulocytosis /ˌæg्रuˌlʊlkətəˈsɪs/ noun a condition of being unable to put ideas into writing
AIDS /eɪdz/ noun full form artificial insemination by donor. Now called DI
AIDS /əɪdz/ Aids noun a viral infection which breaks down the body’s immune system. Full form acquired immunodeficiency syndrome, acquired immune deficiency syndrome

AIDS dementia /əɪdz ˈdɛmənti/ noun a form of mental degeneration resulting from infection with HIV

AIDS-related complex /əɪdz ˈrɛldɪd/ plural 1) complex, AIDs-related condition /əɪdz ˈrɛldɪd ˈkɒmplɛks/ noun 2) complex, AIDs-related person /əɪdz ˈrɛldɪd ˈpɜrson/ noun early symptoms shown by someone infected with the HIV virus, e.g. weight loss, fever and herpes zoster. Abbreviation ARC

AHI abbreviation artificial insemination by husband

ailment /æɪlˈment/ noun an illness, though not generally a very serious one ○ Chickenpox is one of the common childhood ailments.

air bed /eə bed/ noun a mattress which is filled with air, used to prevent the formation of bed sores. ○ conduction

airborne infection /eəˈbɔːrn ɪnˈfekʃn/ noun an infection which is carried in the air

air conduction /eəˈkɒnˌdʌkʃn/ noun the process by which sounds pass from the outside to the inner ear through the auditory meatus

air embolism /eə ˈɛmbəlɪzəm/ noun a blockage caused by bubbles of air, that stops the flow of blood in vessels

air passage /eə ˈpæsɪdʒ/ noun a passage through which air passes, especially the trachea

akathisia /əˈkæθɪəsیə/ noun restlessness

akinesia /əˈkɪnəsiə/ noun a lack of voluntary movement, as in Parkinson’s disease

akinetic /əˈkɪnɪtk/ adjective without movement

alacrima /əˈlækriːmə/ noun same as xerorhagia

alactasia /əˈlæktəsɪə/ noun a condition in which there is a deficiency of lactase in the intestine, making the patient incapable of digesting lactose, the sugar in milk

alalialgia /əˈlæliəlɪdʒə/ noun a condition in which a person completely loses the ability to speak

alanine /ˈælənɪn/ noun an amino acid

alanine aminotransferase /ˌælənɪn əˌmɪnət rɪˈtrænsfərəs/ noun an enzyme which is found in the liver and can be monitored as an indicator of liver damage. Abbreviation ALT

alar cartilage /ˈælər ˈkɑrtɪlidʒ/ noun cartilage in the nose

Albee’s operation /ˈælbiz ˈɒpəˌreɪʃən/ noun a surgical operation to fuse two or more vertebrae [After Frederick Houdlett Albee (1876–1945), US surgeon.]

albinism /əˈlɪbɪznɪz/ noun a condition in which a person lacks the pigment melanin and so has pink skin and eyes and white hair. It is hereditary and cannot be treated. ○ vitiligo

albino /əˈlɪbɪnə/ noun a person who is deficient in melanin and has little or no pigmentation in the skin, hair or eyes

albuginea oculi /əlˈbʊdʒɪnərɪəˈkjuːləri/ noun same as sclera

albumin /əlˈbjuːmɪn/ noun a common protein, which is soluble in water, found in plant and animal tissue and digested in the intestine

albuminuria /əlˈbjuːmɪnjuəriə/ noun a condition in which albumin is found in the urine, usually a sign of kidney disease, but also sometimes of heart failure

albumose /əlˈbjʊmɔʊs/ noun an intermediate product in the digestion of protein

alcohol /əˈkɒlhəl/ noun a pure colourless liquid which is formed by the action of yeast on sugar solutions and forms part of drinks such as wine and whisky

alcohol abuse /əˈkɒlhəl əˈbjuːs/ noun the excessive use of alcohol adversely affecting a person’s health

alcohol addiction /əˈkɒlhəl ədˈdɪkʃn/ noun a condition in which a person is dependent on the use of alcohol

alcohol-fast /əˈkɒlhəl ˈfɑːst/ adjective referring to an organ unable to function if alcohol is present in its bloodstream

alcohol cirmosis /əˌkɒlhəl kəˈrɪməsɪs/ noun cirrhosis of the liver caused by alcoholism

Alcoholics Anonymous /ˈælkəlɪkz əˈnɑːməsiəs/ noun an organisation of former alcoholics who  “nurture” an organisation of former alcoholics which helps people to overcome their dependence on alcohol by encouraging them to talk about their problems in group therapy. Abbreviation AA

alcoholism /əˈkɒlhəlɪzəm/ noun excessive drinking of alcohol which becomes addictive

alcohol poisoning /əˈkɒlhəl ˈpɔɪznɪŋ/ noun poisoning and disease caused by excessive drinking of alcohol

alcoholuria /əˌkɒlhəljuəˈriəriə/ noun a condition in which alcohol is present in the urine (NOTE: The level of alcohol in the urine is used as a test for drivers who are suspected of driving while drunk.)

aldosterone /əˈlɪdərˈstərən/ noun a hormone secreted by the cortex of the adrenal gland, which regulates the balance of sodium and potassium in the body and the amount of body fluid
plural is alkaline than acid

Alexander technique /æˈlɛksəndər tek/ noun a method of improving the way a person stands and moves, by making them much more aware of how muscles behave

alexia /eˈleksɪə/ noun a condition in which the patient cannot understand printed words. Also called word blindness

allacalcidol /ɔːləˈkælkədəl/ noun a substance related to vitamin D, used by the body to maintain the right levels of calcium and phosphate, and also as a drug to help people who do not have enough vitamin D

algesimeter /ˌɔːlɪdʒɪˈmɪtər/ noun a measuring instrument to measure the sensitivity of the skin to pain

algid /ˈɔːldʒɪd/ adjective referring to a stage in a disease that causes fever during which the body becomes cold

alienation /əˈlɪdʒənʃən/ noun a psychological condition in which a person develops the feeling of not being part of the everyday world, and as a result often becomes hostile to other people

alignment /ælˈnɛmənt/ noun the arrangement of something in a straight line, or in the correct position in relation to something else

alimentary canal /ˌɔːlɪˈməntəri kəˈnɛl/ noun a tube in the body, going from the mouth to the anus, including the throat, stomach and intestines, through which food passes and is digested

COMMENT: The alimentary canal is formed of the mouth, throat, oesophagus stomach and small and large intestines. Food is broken down by digestive juices in the mouth, stomach and small intestine, water is removed in the large intestine, and the remaining matter is passed out of the body as faeces.

alimentation /ˌɔːlɪmənˈteɪʃən/ noun the act of providing food or nourishment

calculated /ˌɔːlkəˈkwɛnt/ noun a part of a larger thing, especially a sample of something which is taken to be examined

alkalaeemia /ˌɔːlkəˈleɪmiə/ noun an excess of alkali in the blood

alkali /ˈɔːlkəlai/ noun one of many substances which neutralise acids and form salts (NOTE: The plural is alkalis.)

alkaline /ˈɔːlkəlaiən/ adjective containing more alkali than acid

alkalinity /ˌɔːlkəˈlɪnətɪ/ noun the level of alkali in a body. Hyperventilation causes fluctuating carbon dioxide levels in the blood, resulting in an increase of blood alkalinity.

alkaloid /ˈɔːlkəlɔɪd/ noun one of many poisonous substances found in plants and used as medicines, e.g. atropine, morphine or quinine

alkalosis /ˌɔːlkələʊˈsɪs/ noun a condition in which the alkali level in the body tissue is high, producing cramps

alkaptonuria /ˌɔːlkəˈpəʊnʊəriə/ noun a hereditary condition where dark pigment is present in the urine

allantois /əˈlæntəʊs/ noun one of the membranes in the embryo, shaped like a sac, which grows out of the embryonic hindgut

allele /əˈlɛl/ noun one of two or more alternative forms of a gene, situated in the same area on each of a pair of chromosomes and each producing a different effect

allergen /əˈlɛrɡən/ noun a substance which produces hypersensitivity

allergenic agent /əˈlɛrɡennɪk ˈeɪdʒənt/ noun a substance which produces an allergy

allergic /əˈlɛrɡɪk/ adjective having an allergy to something. She is allergic to cats. I'm allergic to penicillin.

allergy /əˈlɛrɡi/ noun an unusual sensitivity to some substances such as pollen or dust, which cause a physical reaction such as sneezing or a rash in someone who comes into contact with them. She has an allergy to household dust. He has a penicillin allergy. (NOTE: You have an allergy or you are allergic to something.)

allergy bracelet /ˈælɪdʒɪ brɛɪstl/ noun a medical alert bracelet

allied health professional /əˈlɛld ˈhelθ prəf/ noun a professional working in medicine who is not a doctor or nurse, e.g. a physiotherapist or paramedic

allo- /æˈlɒʊ/ prefix different

allocation /əˈləʊkeɪʃən/ noun the way an amount of something is divided among the various departments of an organisation, or the amount which is received by a particular department

allodynia /ˌɔːləˈdɔɪniə/ noun pain of the skin caused by something such as clothing which usually does not cause pain

alloplant /ˌɔːləˈplænt/ noun the treatment of a condition using drugs which produce opposite symptoms to those of the condition. Compare homoeopathy

allopurinol /ˌɔːləˈpjuːrɪnəʊl/ noun a drug which helps to stop the body producing uric acid, used in the treatment of gout
all or none law /ˈɔːl oʊ n lɔː/ noun the rule that the heart muscle either contracts fully or does not contract at all
allylestrol /ˈælɪlestroʊl/ noun a steroid used to encourage pregnancy
alopecia /ˈæləpjə/ noun a condition in which hair is lost. Compare hypotrichosis
alopecia areata /ˈæloʊpiˌɛktə/ noun a condition in which the hair falls out in patches
alpha /ˈælfə/ noun the first letter of the Greek alphabet
alpha-adrenoceptor antagonist /ˌælfəˌædronəˈseptər ˌæŋtəgeˈnæstık/ noun a drug which can relax smooth muscle, used to treat urinary retention and hypertension. Also called alpha blocker
alpha-fetoprotein /ˌælfəˈfiːtəˌprəˈprɪtən/ noun a protein produced by the liver of the human fetus, which accumulates in the amniotic fluid. A high or low concentration is tested for by amniocentesis in the antenatal diagnosis of spina bifida or Down's syndrome, respectively.
Alport's syndrome /ɔːlprɔʊts ˈsɪndrəʊm/ noun a genetic disease of the kidneys which sometimes causes a person to lose his or her hearing and sight
alprostadil /ˌælprəˈstædil/ noun a drug which makes blood vessels wider, used to treat impotence, prevent coagulation, and maintain babies with congenital heart conditions
ALT /ɔːlˈɛnt/ noun alanine aminotransferase
alternative medicine /ɔlˈtərəntɪv ˈmedərətɪv/ noun the treatment of illness using therapies such as homeopathy or naturopathy which are not considered part of conventional Western medicine. Compare complementary medicine
altitude sickness /ˈælɪtɪtjuːd, ˈsɪksnəs/ noun a condition caused by reduced oxygen in the air above altitudes of 7000 to 8000 feet (3600 metres). Symptoms include headaches, breathlessness, fatigue, nausea and swelling of the face, hands and feet. Also called high-altitude sickness, mountain sickness
aluminium hydroxide /ˈæləˌmɪnəm ˈhɪdrəˌɔksɪd/ noun a chemical substance used as an antacid to treat indigestion. Formula: Al(OH)3 or Al₂(OH)₃.
alveolar /ˌælvəˈlɔːər/ adjective referring to the alveoli
alveolar duct /ˌælvəˈlɔːər dʌkt/ noun a duct in the lung which leads from the respiratory bronchioles to the alveoli. See illustration at LUNGS in Supplement
alveolitis /ˌælvəˈlɔːlɪtɪs/ noun inflammation of an alveolus in the lungs or the socket of a tooth
alveolus /ˌælvəˈlɔːləs/ noun a small cavity, e.g. an air sac in the lungs or the socket into which a tooth fits. See illustration at LUNGS in Supplement (NOTE: The plural is alveoli).
Alzheimer disease /ˌæltʃəmərˈziːdʒ/ noun a disease where a person experiences progressive dementia due to nerve cell loss in specific brain areas, resulting in loss of mental faculties including memory. [Described 1906. After Alois Alzheimer (1864–1915), Bavarian physician.]
amalgam /ˈmælɡˌɡæm/ noun a mixture of metals, based on mercury and tin, used by dentists to fill holes in teeth
amaurosis /əˈmɔːrəsɪs/ noun blindness caused by disease of the optic nerve
amaurotic familial idiocy /ˌæmərəˈprɪtɪk ˈfæməˌlɪtɪk ˈɪdiəsɪ, ˌæmərəˈtɔtɪk ˈfæməˌlɪtɪk ˈɪdiəsɪ/ noun same as Tay-Sachs disease
amb- /ˈæmnb-/ prefix same as amb- (used before vowels)
ambidextrous /ˌæmbɪdɛkˈstrəs/ adjective referring to a person who can use both hands equally well and who is not right- or left-handed
amibsexual /ˈæmɪbˈʃɛksjuəl/ adjective, noun same as bisexual
amblyopia /ˈæmblɪˈɔpɪə/ noun a lack of normal vision without a structural cause. A common example is squint and other forms may be caused by the cyanide in tobacco smoke or by drinking methylated spirits.
amblyopic /ˈæmblɪˈɒpɪk/ adjective affected by amblyopia
amblyoscope /ˌæmblɪˈɔskəp/ noun an instrument for measuring the angle of a squint and how effectively someone uses both their eyes together. Also called orthoptoscope
ambulatory /ˌæmbəˈlɜːtəri/ adjective referring to a patient who is not confined to bed but is able to walk
ambulatory care /ˌæmbəˈlɜːtəri ˈkeə/ noun treatment of a patient which does not involve staying in hospital during the night
amelia /ˈæmɪliə/ noun the absence of a limb from birth, or a condition in which a limb is short from birth
amelioration /ˌæməˈlɪərəʃən/ noun the process of getting better
ameloblastoma /ˌæmələˈboʊstəˌmɑːtə/ noun a tumour in the jaw, usually in the lower jaw
amenorrhoea /ˌæmənərəˈrhiːə/ noun the absence of one or more menstrual periods, usual during pregnancy and after the menopause
amentia /ˈæməntiə/ noun the fact of being mentally underdeveloped
Aminoglycosides include drugs with names ending in the amniotic fluid during pregnancy, which covers an unborn baby. Amniotomies (/æmniˈtɒmɪz/) are a puncture of the amnion to help induce labour. Amniotic fluid (/æmniˈtɒfɪd/) contains the fluid within the amnion which surrounds an unborn baby. Amniotomy (/æmniˈtɒmɪ/) is a procedure which involves taking a sample of the amniotic fluid or amniotic sac is broken.

Aminoglycosides include drugs with names ending in -cin, such as gentamicin, toxaemia, ampicillin, and amoxicillin. Aminoglycosides are a group of antibacterial drugs which help to increase the production of urine and preserve the body’s supply of potassium. They are used to treat a variety of Gram-negative and some Gram-positive bacterial infections.

Aminophylline (/æmˌnəfɪliːn/) is a drug used to treat asthma and other respiratory conditions. It is a methylxanthine derivative that acts as a bronchodilator and a diuretic. It is often used in the treatment of asthma to relieve symptoms such as shortness of breath and coughing.

Aminophylline is a relatively weak bronchodilator compared to other methylxanthines like theophylline, and is less likely to cause side effects, such as nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea. It is also less expensive than other methylxanthines.

Amiloride (/aɪmɪˈlɔːrid/) is a diuretic drug which helps to increase urine production and reduce blood pressure. It is a potent inhibitor of the sodium channel in the distal convoluted tubule of the kidney. Amiloride is used to treat hypertension, congestive heart failure, and other conditions that require diuretic therapy.

Aminopterin (/æmɪˈpɜːtərɪn/) is a drug used to treat various forms of cancer, including lymphomas and leukemias. It is a potent folic acid antagonist, which inhibits the synthesis of nucleic acids and thymidine. Aminopterin is used in combination with other drugs to increase its effectiveness against cancer.

Amiodarone (/æmɪˈdɑːrəʊn/) is a drug used to treat various heart conditions, including heart failure, arrhythmias, and atrial fibrillation. It is a class III antiarrhythmic agent that acts by slowing the conduction of electrical signals in the heart. Amiodarone is used to prevent and treat arrhythmias, particularly those associated with heart failure.

Amitriptyline (/æmɪˈtrɪpɪlɪn/) is a tricyclic antidepressant drug which works by increasing the levels of certain neurotransmitters in the brain. It is used to treat depression, anxiety, and other mood disorders.

Ammonia (/əˈmənə/; plural: ammonias) is a gas with a strong, pungent smell, a compound of nitrogen and hydrogen. Ammonia is a weak base that is produced in the digestive system and then used by the body to form its own protein. Ammonia is also used as an industrial chemical, as a refrigerant, and as a cleaning agent.

Amphetamine (/æmˈfetəmɪn/) is a drug which helps to increase urine production and reduce blood pressure. It is a potent inhibitor of the sodium channel in the distal convoluted tubule of the kidney. Amphetamine is used to treat hypertension, congestive heart failure, and other conditions that require diuretic therapy.

Ampicillin (/æmˈpɪsɪlɪn/) is a beta-lactam antibiotic that is effective against a wide range of bacteria, including those that are resistant to other antibiotics. Ampicillin is often used in children to treat infections of the urinary tract, respiratory tract, and skin. It is also used to treat meningitis, gonorrhea, and other infections caused by susceptible bacteria.

Ampoule (/æmˈpʊl/) is a small glass container, closed at the neck, used to contain sterile drugs for use in injections. Ampoules are typically used to administer drugs that are not compatible with syringes or other injection devices. They are also used to store drugs that are sensitive to light or air.

Ampulla (/æmˈpʊlə/) is a small, almond-shaped structure that is a part of the eye. It is the opening of the efferent ciliary canal, which drains the aqueous humor from the posterior chamber of the eye. The ampulla is also known as the canal of Schlemm.

Ampsulae (/æmˈpʊlsə/) are small glass containers, closed at the neck, used to contain sterile drugs for use in injections. Ampsulae are typically used to administer drugs that are not compatible with syringes or other injection devices. They are also used to store drugs that are sensitive to light or air.

Amputation (/æmˈpyːtəʃn/) is the surgical removal of a limb or part of a limb. Amputation is a common complication of certain conditions, such as diabetes and peripheral vascular disease. It is also performed as a treatment for certain types of cancer, such as bone and soft tissue sarcomas.

Ampullae (/æmˈpʊlə/) are small glass containers, closed at the neck, used to contain sterile drugs for use in injections. Ampullae are typically used to administer drugs that are not compatible with syringes or other injection devices. They are also used to store drugs that are sensitive to light or air.
amylloid disease /əˌmɪldɪd/ noun same as amylloidosis
amylloidosis /ˌæmɪləˈdɒsɪs/ noun a disease of the kidneys and liver, where amylloid develops in the tissues. Also called amylloid disease
amylopin /ˌæmɪlˈpɪn/ noun an enzyme which converts starch into maltose
amylose /ˌæmɪləʊs/ noun a carbohydrate of starch
amytontia /əˈmɪtənˈtɪə/ noun a lack of muscle tone
amytontia congenita /əˈmɪtənˈtɪəkənˈdʒɛnɪtə/ noun a congenital disease of children in which the muscles lack tone. Also called floppy baby syndrome
amyotrophica /ái,maːtˈtrofɪkə/ noun a condition in which a muscle wastes away
amyotrophic lateral sclerosis /áiˌmaːtətɹəfɪk ˈlɛtərəl skəˈlɛəriəs/ noun a motor neuron disease in which the limbs twitch and the muscles gradually waste away. Also called Gehrig’s disease. Abbreviation ALS
amyotrophy /áiˌmaʊˈtroʊfɪ/ noun same as amyotrophy
an-/aɪn/ prefix same as ana- (used before vowels)
ana-/aɪnə/ prefix without or lacking
anabolic /aˈnæbəlɪk/ adjective referring to a substance which synthesises protein
anabolic steroid /ˌænəˈbəlɪk ˈstɛrəʊɪd/ noun a drug which encourages the synthesis of new living tissue, especially muscle, from nutrients
anabolism /aˈnæbəlɪzɪzm/ noun the process of building up complex chemical substances on the basis of simpler ones
anacrotism /əˈnækroʊtɪzm/ noun a second stroke in the pulse
anaemia /əˈnɛmɪə/ noun a condition in which the level of red blood cells is less than usual or where the haemoglobin is less, making it more difficult for the blood to carry oxygen. The symptoms are tiredness and pale colour, especially pale lips, nails and the inside of the eyelids. The condition can be fatal if not treated
anaemic /əˈnɛmɪk/ adjective having anaemia
anaerobe /ˌænəˈrəʊb/ noun a microorganism which lives without oxygen, e.g. the tetanus bacillus
anaerobic /ˌænəˈrəʊbɪk/ adjective 1. not needing oxygen for metabolism. ○ anaerobic bacteria 2. without oxygen. ○ anaerobic conditions
anaesthesia /əˈnæsθɪˌzɪə/ noun 1. a state, deliberately produced in a patient by a medical procedure, in which he or she can feel no pain, either in a part or in the whole of the body. 2. a loss of feeling caused by damage to nerves. (NOTE: The US spelling is anaesthesia.)
anesthetic /əˈnæstəˈθetɪk/ adjective inducing loss of feeling. ○ anaesthetic a substance given to someone to remove feeling, so that he or she can undergo an operation without pain
anaesthetic induction /əˈnæstəˈθetɪk ɪnˈdʌkʃən/ noun a method of inducing anaesthesia in a patient
anaesthetic risk /əˈnæstəˈθetɪk ˈrɪsk/ noun the risk that an anaesthetic may cause serious unwanted side effects
anaesthetise /əˈnɛstəθəˌtɪz/ verb to produce a loss of feeling in a person or in part of the person’s body
anaesthetist /əˈnɛstəθəˈtɪst/ noun a specialist who administers anaesthetics
anal /əˈnɛl/ adjective relating to the anus
analeptic /əˈnæləˈpɛtɪk/ noun a drug used to make someone regain consciousness or to stimulate a patient
analgesia /əˈnælˌdʒɛziə/ noun a reduction of the feeling of pain without loss of consciousness
analgesic /əˈnælˌdʒɛsɪk/ adjective relating to analgesia. ○ analgesic a painkilling drug which produces analgesia and reduces pyrexia
analyse /əˈnæliːs/ verb through the anus ○ The patient is not able to pass faeces usually. ○ The laboratory is analysing the blood samples. ○ When the food was analysed it was found to contain traces of bacteria.
analytic /ˌænəˈlɪtɪk/ noun an examination of a substance to find out what it is made of. (NOTE: The plural is analyses.)
analyse /əˈnæliːz/ verb a person who examines samples of substances or tissue, to find out what they are made of
anaesthesia /ˌænəˈθeɪziə/ noun a stage in cell division, after the metaphase and before the telophase
anaesthetic /ˌænəˈθetɪk/ adjective relating to or caused by extreme sensitivity to a substance
anaesthetic shock /ˌænəˈθetɪstʃk/ noun a sudden severe reaction, which can be fatal, to something such as an injected substance or a bee sting
anaesthesia /ˌænəˈθeɪziə/ noun 1. extreme sensitivity to a substance introduced into the body. 2. anaesthetic risk, anaesthetic induction, anaesthetic risk, anaesthetic induction ○ anaesthesia a sudden severe reaction, which can be fatal, to something such as an injected substance or a bee sting
anaesthetic /ˌænəˈθetɪk/ adjective referring to anaesthesia
anaesthesia /əˈnɛsθɪˈzɪə/ noun the loss of the ability to speak words properly
anaesthesia /əˈnæsθəˈzɪə/ noun the presence of fluid in the body tissues, ○ oedema
anaesthetise /əˈnæstəθəˌtɪz/ verb to join two blood vessels or tubular structures together
anastomosis

anastomosis /æ,næs'tə'maʊs/ noun a connection made between two blood vessels or tubular structures, either naturally or by surgery

anatomical /æn'təməkl/ adjective relating to the anatomy or the anatomical features of a fetus

anatomy /æn'təmi/ noun 1. the structure, especially the internal structure, of the body 2. the branch of science that studies the structure of the bodies of humans, animals and plants. They are studying anatomy.

ancillary worker /æn'sɛləri/ noun someone who does a job for patients such as cleaning or cooking which is supplementary to medical care

anconeus /æn'kənəs/ noun a small triangular muscle at the back of the elbow

Ancylostoma /æn'sɪləʊ'stəmə/ noun a parasitic worm in the intestine which holds onto the wall of the intestine with its teeth and lives on the blood and protein of the carrier

ancylostomiasis /æn'sɪləʊ'stə'maɪəsɪs/ noun a disease of which the symptoms are weakness and anaemia, caused by a hookworm which lives on the blood of the carrier. In severe cases the person may die.

androgen /æn'drədʒən/ noun a male sex hormone, testosterone or androsterone, which increases the male characteristics of the body

androgenic /æn'drədʒənik/ adjective producing male characteristics

andrology /æn'drələdʒi/ noun the study of male sexual characteristics and subjects such as impotence, infertility and the male menopause

androsterone /æn'drəstərən/ noun one of the male sex hormones

anencephalous /æn'ənəˌkɛfələs/ adjective having no brain

anencephaly /æn'ənəˌkɛfəlɪ/ noun the absence of a brain, which causes a fetus to die a few hours after birth

energy /æn'dʒi/ noun a state of severe weakness and lack of energy

aneurine /ə'njuərɪn/ noun same as Vitamin B1

aneuryism /æn'ɜrɪəzəm/ noun a swelling caused by the weakening of the wall of a blood vessel

angi- /æn'ʤi/ prefix same as angio- (used before verbs)

angiectasia /æn'ʤiˌɛktəsɪə/ noun a swelling of the blood vessels

angiiitis /æn'ʤiˌɪtəts/ noun an inflammation of a blood vessel

angina /æn'ʤiən/ noun a pain in the chest following exercise or eating, which is caused by an inadequate supply of blood to the heart muscles because of narrowing of the arteries. It is commonly treated with nitrates or calcium channel blocker drugs.

angina pectoris /æn'ʤiəpɛˈktrɪs/ noun the same as angina

angio- /æn'ʤiəʊ-/ prefix referring to a blood vessel

angiocardiogram /æn'ʤiəkɑrdɪəɡrɑm/ noun a series of pictures resulting from angiography

angiocardiography /æn'ʤiəkɑrdɪəˌɡrɑfɪ/ noun an X-ray examination of the cardiac system after injection with an opaque dye so that the organs show up clearly on the film

angiodyplasia /æn'ʤiədɑʊdɪsˈpləzɪə/ noun a condition where the blood vessels in the colon dilate, resulting in loss of blood

angiogenesis /æn'ʤiədʒəˈnɛsɪs/ noun the formation of new blood vessels, e.g. in an embryo or as a result of a tumour

angiogram /æn'ʤiəɡrɑm/ noun an X-ray picture of blood vessels

angiography /æn'ʤiəˈɡrɑfɪ/ noun an X-ray examination of blood vessels after injection with an opaque dye so that they show up clearly on the film

angiology /æn'ʤiələˈdʒi/ noun the branch of medicine which deals with blood vessels and the lymphatic system

angioma /æn'ʤiəˌma/ noun a benign tumour formed of blood vessels, e.g. a naevus

angioneurotic oedema /æn'ʤiənjuəˈtiːoʊtɪk/ noun a sudden accumulation of fluid under the skin, similar to nettle rash

angioptathy /æn'ʤiəˈɒptəθi/ noun a disease of vessels such as blood and lymphatic vessels

angioplasty /æn'ʤiəˈplæstɪ/ noun plastic surgery to repair a blood vessel, e.g. a narrowed coronary artery

angiosarcoma /æn'ʤiəsɑrˈkɑmə/ noun a malignant tumour in a blood vessel

angiospasm /æn'ʤiəˈspæzm/ noun a spasm which constricts blood vessels

angiotensin /æn'ʤiətɛnˈsɪn/ noun a polypeptide which affects blood pressure by causing vasconstriction and increasing extracellular volume

angiotensin-converting enzyme inhibitor /æn'ʤiətɛnˈsɪn kɑnˈtɛnˈsin ɪnˈhibitər/ noun a drug which inhibits the conversion of angiotensin I to angiotensin II, which constricts arteries, used in the treatment of hypertension and heart failure. Also called ACE inhibitor (NOTE: ACE inhibitors have names ending in -pril: captopril.)

angle-closure glaucoma /ænˈɡlɛklə ˈɡluːkəmə/ noun an unusually high pressure of fluid inside the eyeball caused by pressure of the
different from the usual
anomaly from what is usual
anodyne
annulus
annular
Ancylostoma
Ankylostoma
which the bones of a joint fuse together
ankylosis
sp
and
together
the foot is connected to the leg
state where the refraction in the two eyes is different
anisomelia
anisometric
/ənɪsəmɛt rɪkəʊ/ noun a state where the refraction in the two eyes is different
ankle /əŋkləʊ/ noun the part of the body where the foot is connected to the leg
ankyloblepharon /əŋkɪləʊˈblɛfəroʊn/ noun a state where the edges of the eyelids are stuck together
ankylosing spondylitis /ˌæŋkɪlɪʊsɪŋ sɒnˈdɪlɪtɪs/ noun a condition occurring more frequently in young men, in which the vertebrae and sacroiliac joints are inflamed and become stiff
ankylolysis /ˌæŋkɪləʊˈlaɪsɪs/ noun a condition in which the bones of a joint fuse together
Ankylostoma /ˌæŋkɪləʊˈstəʊmə/ noun same as Ancylostoma
ankylostomiasis /ˌæŋkɪləʊˈstəʊməsɪs/ noun same as ancylostomiasis
annular /ˈænjuələr/ adjective shaped like a ring
annulus /ˈænjuələs/ noun a structure shaped like a ring
ano- /ˈænəʊ/ prefix referring to the anus
anodyne /ˈænədɪn/ noun a drug which reduces pain, e.g. aspirin or codeine
anomalous /ˈænəmələs/ adjective different from what is usual
anomaly /ˈænəməlɪ/ noun something which is different from the usual
anomie /ˌænəmi/ noun a psychological condition in which a person develops the feeling of not being part of the everyday world, and behaves as though they do not have any supporting social or moral framework
anonychia /ˌænəˈnɪkiə/ noun a congenital absence of one or more nails
anopheles /əˈnɒfɪliːz/ noun a mosquito which carries the malaria parasite
anoplasty /ˌænəˈplæstɪ/ noun surgery to repair the anus, as in treating haemorrhoids
anorchism /ˌænəˈɔkrɪzəm/ noun a congenital absence of testicles
anorectal /ˌænəˈriːkəl/ adjective referring to both the anus and rectum
anorexia /ˌænəˈrɛksɪə/ noun loss of appetite
anorexia nervosa /ˌænəˈrɛksɪə ˈnɜːvəsə/ noun a psychological condition, usually found in girls and young women, in which a person refuses to eat because of a fear of becoming fat
anosmia /ˌænəʊˈzmɪə/ noun the lack of the sense of smell
anovular /ˌænəvˈjuːlər/ adjective without an ovum
anovular bleeding /ˌænəvˈjuːlər ˈbliːdɪŋ/ noun bleeding from the uterus when ovulation has not taken place
anovulation /ˌænəvˈjuːləʃən/ noun a condition in which a woman does not ovulate and is therefore infertile
anaemia /ˌænəˈmɪə/ noun a reduction of the amount of oxygen in the blood
anoxia /ˌænəˈksɪə/ noun a lack of oxygen in body tissue
anoxic /ˌænəˈtɪk/ adjective referring to anoxia or lacking oxygen
antacid /ˌæntˈæsɪd/ adjective preventing too much acid forming in the stomach or altering the amount of acid in the stomach • noun a substance that stops too much acid forming in the stomach, used in the treatment of gastro-intestinal conditions such as ulcers, e.g. calcium carbonate or magnesium trisilicate
antagonist /ˌæntəˈɡɒnɪst/ adjective 1. referring to a muscle which opposes another muscle in a movement 2. referring to a substance which opposes another substance • noun a substance which acts through specific receptors to block the action of another substance, but which has no observable physiological effect itself ○ Atropine is a cholinergic antagonist and blocks the effects of acetylcholine
ante- /ˈæntə/ prefix before
ante cibum /ˌæntə tʃɪbʌm, ˌæntɪ tʃɪbʌm/ adverb full form of a.c.
anteflexion /ˌæntəˈfleksən/ noun the curving forward of an organ, e.g. the usual curvature of the uterus
antemortem /antëmɔr'tɛm/ noun the period before death

antenatal /antën'ı'teit(ə)l/ adjective during the period between conception and childbirth

antenatal clinic /antën'ı'teit(ə)l kliniık/ noun a clinic where expectant mothers are taught how to look after babies, do exercises and have medical checkups. Also called maternity clinic

antenatal diagnosis /antën'ı'teit(ə)l daɪəgaʊs/ noun a medical examination of a pregnant woman to see if the fetus is developing in the usual way. Also called prenatal diagnosis

antepartum /antëpɑːrtəm/ noun the period of three months before childbirth. Also refers to the three months before childbirth

antepartum haemorrhage /antëpɑːrtəm ˌheərmərəˈdž/ noun a protein that is stimulated by the body to produce foreign substances such as bacteria, as part of an immune reaction. Tests showed that he had antibodies in his blood.

antibody-negative /antibɔːdi ˈnɛgətɪv/ adjective showing none of a particular antibody in the blood. Also refers to Rh-negative mothers after the birth of an Rh-negative baby. The donor tested antibody-negative.

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anticoagulant /antɪkəʊæɡələnt/ adjective slowing or stopping the clotting of blood. Also refers to the drug used to control convulsions, as in the treatment of epilepsy. Also refers to anthelmintic.

antihistamine /antɪˈhɪstəmɪn/ adjective stopping the spread of bacteria. Also refers to the drug used to control stress

antiparallel /antɪˈpærəlæl/ adjective referring to the blood

antihistamines /antɪˈhɪstəmənz/ noun a brain condition in which the per- son cannot remember things which happened recently

anterior /antɪˈɔːrɪər/ adjective in front. Opposite posterior

anterior aspect /antɪˈɔːrɪər əˈspekt/ noun a view of the front of the body, or of the front of part of the body. See illustration at anatomical terms in supplement

anterior fontanelle /antɪˈɔːrɪər ˈfɒntənəl/ noun the cartilage at the top of the head where the frontal bone joins the two parietals

anterior nares /antɪˈɔːrɪər ˈnɛrəz/ plural noun the two nostrils. Also called external nares

anterograde amnesia /antɪˈɔːrɪədʒ əˈmeniəs/ noun a brain condition in which the person cannot remember things which happened recently

anteroversion /antɪˈvɜːzən/ noun the tilting forward of an organ, whether usual, as of the uterus, or unusual

anthelmintic /antɪˈhelmɪntɪk/ noun a substance which removes worms from the intestine. Also refers to the drug used to control stress

anthrax /ænθræks/ noun a disease of cattle and sheep which can be transmitted to humans

anthropo- /ænthrəˈpəʊ-/ prefix referring to human beings

anthropology /ænthrəˈpolɒdʒi/ noun the study of human beings as a species, especially their culture or development. It differs from sociology in taking a more historical and comparative approach.

anthropometry /ænthramɛ́trɪ/ noun the study of human body measurements (note: the uses of anthropometry include the design of ergonomic furniture and the examination and comparison of populations.)

anti- /ænti/ prefix against

antiarrhythmic /æntɪˈɛriθrɪmɪk/ adjective referring to a drug which corrects an irregular heartbeat

antiasthmatic /æntɪˈæsθmətɪk/ adjective referring to a drug that is used to treat asthma

antibacterial /æntɪbækˈtɪrɪəl/ adjective destroying bacteria

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anticonvulsant /antɪkonˈvʌls(ə)nt/ adjective acting to control convulsions. Also refers to the drug used to control stress

antidepressant /æntɪˈdɛpres(ə)nt/ adjective acting to relieve depression. Also refers to the drug used to relieve depression by stimulating the mood of a depressed person. Examples are tricyclic antidepressants, selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors and monoamine oxidase inhibitors.

anti-D /ænti- ˈdi, ˈdi- D/ gamma-globulin /ænti- ˈdi, ˈdi- D/ γδ�/ noun Rh D immunoglobulin, used to treat pregnant women who develop antibodies when the mother is Rh-negative and the fetus is Rh-positive

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anti-D immunoglobulin /ænti- ˈdi, ˈdi- D/ γδ�/ noun immunoglobulin administered to Rh-negative mothers after the birth of an Rh-positive baby, to prevent haemolytic disease of the newborn in the next pregnancy
antidiuretic /ˌantidjuːsˈretɪk/ noun a substance which stops the production of excessive amounts of urine.

anticholinergic /ˌantɪkɒlɪnˈdʒɜːrɪk/ adjective acting against microorganisms that cause disease.

antimicrobial /ˌantɪmɪˈkraʊbɪl/ adjective acting against microorganisms that cause disease.

antimalarial /ˌantɪməˈrælɪər/ noun a drug used in the treatment of malaria.

antineoplastic /ˌantɪnɪˈoʊplæstɪk/ adjective referring to a drug which blocks acetylcholine receptors found on smooth muscle in the gut and eye.

antimigraine /ˌantɪmɪˈɡreɪn/ noun a drug that counteracts the effect of a poison.

antinflammatory /ˌantɪnˈfɜːrəməˈliŋguəri/ adjective referring to a drug used to control the effects of an allergy which threads worm, hookworm or roundworm.

antihelminthic /ˌantɪhelˈmɪntɪk/ adjective referring to a substance which prevents iching.

antihistamine /ˌantɪˈhɪstəməˈniːn/ noun a drug used to control the effects of an allergy which releases histamine, or reduces gastric acid in the stomach for the treatment of gastric ulcers.

antihypertensive /ˌantɪhaɪpərˈtensɪv/ adjective acting to reduce blood pressure.

antihyperventilation /ˌantɪhɪpərˈvɛnʃələn/ noun a procedure intended to prevent sepsis.

antimicrobial /ˌantɪmɪˈkraʊbɪl/ adjective acting against microorganisms that cause disease.

antimicrobial /ˌantɪmɪˈkraʊbɪl/ adjective acting against microorganisms that cause disease.

antipseudomonal /ˌantɪpɛˈsoʊdoʊməˈnɔʊl/ adjective referring to a drug which prevents germs growing or spreading.

antimetabolite /ˌantɪmɪˈteɪbəlɪt/ noun a substance which can replace a cell metabolism, but which is not active.

antimetabolite /ˌantɪmɪˈteɪbəlɪt/ noun a substance which can replace a cell metabolism, but which is not active.

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antithrombin /æntɪθrɔmbɪn/ noun a substance present in the blood which prevents clotting
antitoxic serum /æntɪtɔksɪk sɜːrəm/ noun an immunising agent, formed of serum taken from an animal which has developed antibodies to a disease, used to protect a person from that disease
antitoxin /æntɪtɔksɪn/ noun an antibody produced by the body to counteract a poison in the body
antrum /æntrəm/ noun a small projection on the outer ear opposite the tragus
anteroscopy /æntərəskəpi/ noun an examination of an antrum
anterotomy /æntərətəmi/ noun a surgical operation to make an opening in the maxillary sinus to drain an antrum
antrum /æntrəm/ noun any cavity inside the body, especially one in bone (note: the plural is antra.)
anuria /ænjuəriə/ noun a condition in which the patient does not make urine, either because of a deficiency in the kidneys or because the urinary tract is blocked
anus /ænəs/ noun a short passage after the rectum at the end of the alimentary canal, leading outside the body between the buttocks and through which faeces are passed. See illustration at DIGESTIVE SYSTEM in Supplement, UROGENITAL SYSTEM (MALE) in Supplement (note: for other terms referring to the anus, see anal and words beginning with ano-)
anvil /ænvɪl/ noun same as incus
anxiety /ænˈziːtɪ/ noun the state of being very worried and afraid
anxiety disorder /ænˈziːtɪ ˈdɪzər/ noun a mental disorder where someone is very worried and afraid, e.g. a phobia
anxiety neurosis /ænˈziːtɪ njuəˈrɒsɪs/ noun a neurotic condition where the patient is anxious and has morbid fears
anxiolytic /ænˈkɪlətɪk/ noun a drug used in the treatment of anxiety adjective treating anxiety
aorta /əˈɔːtə/ noun the main artery in the body, which sends blood containing oxygen from the heart to other blood vessels around the body. See illustration at HEART in Supplement
aortic /əˈɔːtɪk/ adjective relating to the aorta
aortic aneurysm /əˈɔːtɪk əˈnjuərɪsəm/ noun a serious aneurysm of the aorta, associated with atherosclerosis
antitoxin /æntɪtɔksɪn/ noun an immunising agent, formed of serum taken from an animal which has developed antibodies to a disease, used to protect a person from that disease
anuric /əˈnjuːrɪk/ noun a condition in which the kidney does not make urine, e.g. a kidney failure
anxiety /ænˈziːtɪ/ noun the state of being very worried and afraid
anxiety disorder /ænˈziːtɪ ˈdɪzər/ noun a mental disorder where someone is very worried and afraid, e.g. a phobia
antiviral drug /æntɪˈvɜːrəl/ noun a drug which is effective against a virus
antibody /æntɪˈbɒdɪ/ noun the substance which helps the body to fight the effects of a particular venom from a snake or insect bite
antigraft /æntɪˈgræft/ noun a graft to which the body is not immune
antral /æntrəl/ adjective referring to an antrum
antirejection /æntɪriˈdʒekʃən/ noun a condition in which the immune system does not recognise a transplanted organ
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antirejection /æntɪriˈdʒekʃən/ noun a condition in which the immune system does not recogn
aphtha |ˈæfθə| noun a small white ulcer which appears in groups in the mouth in people who have the fungal condition thrush (NOTE: The plural is aphthae.)

aphthous stomatitis |ˈæfθəs, ˈstəʊməs| noun a canker sores which affect the mucous membrane in the mouth

apical |ˈæpɪk(ə)l| adjective situated at the top or tip of something

apical abscess |ˈæpɪk(ə)l ˈæbsɛs| noun an abscess in the socket around the root of a tooth

apicectomy |ˈæpɪs.ˌɛktəm| noun the surgical removal of the root of a tooth

aplasia |ˈæpləziə| noun a lack of growth of tissue

aplastic |ˈæplæstɪk| adjective unable to develop new cells or tissue

aplastic anaemia |ˈæplæstɪk əˈnɪzmə| noun anaemia caused by the bone marrow failing to form red blood cells

apnea |ˈæpnə| noun US same as apnoea

apnoea |ˈæpnə| noun the stopping of breathing (NOTE: The US spelling is apnea.)

apneic |ˈæpnɛɪk| adjective where breathing has stopped

apocrine |ˈæpɔkrən| adjective referring to apocrine glands

apocrine gland |ˈæpɔkrən ɡlænd| noun a gland producing body odour where parts of the gland's cells break off with the secretions, e.g. a sweat gland

apocrineitis |ˈæpɔkrənɪtɪs| noun the formation of abscesses in the sweat glands

apomorphine |ˈæpəmərˈfɪn| noun a substance that comes from morphine, used to make a person cough, sleep or be sick. (NOTE: It is administered under the skin and is used to treat drug overdose, accidental poisoning and Parkinson’s disease.)

aponeurosis |ˈæpənɔrəs| noun a band of tissue which attaches muscles to each other

apophysial |ˈæpəfɪz| adjective referring to apophysis

apophysia |ˈæpəfɪz| noun a growth of bone, not at a joint

apophysitis |ˈæpəfɪs| noun inflammation of an apophysis

apoplexy |ˈæpəpleks| noun same as cerebrovascular accident (detailed)

apoptosis |ˈæpəpətəs| noun a form of cell death that is necessary for two to make room for new cells and to remove cells whose DNA has been damaged and which may become cancerous

appendage |ˈæpendɪdʒ| noun a part of the body or piece of tissue which hangs down from another part

appendectomy |ˈæpendɪktəm| noun the surgical removal of an appendix

appendicitis |ˈæpendɪk| noun inflammation of the vermiform appendix

appendicular |ˈæpendɪk| adjective 1. referring to body parts which are associated with the arms and legs 2. relating to the appendix

appendicular skeleton |ˈæpendɪk| noun part of the skeleton, formed of the pelvic girdle, pectoral girdle and the bones of the arms and legs. Compare axial skeleton

appendix |ˈæpendɪks| noun 1. a small tube attached to the caecum which serves no function but can become infected, causing appendicitis. Also called vermiform appendix. See illustration at DIGESTIVE SYSTEM in Supplement 2. any small tube or sac hanging from an organ

apperception |ˈæpərˌsɛpʃən| noun the conscious recognition of a stimulus

appetite |ˈæpətɪt| noun the feeling of wanting food

applanation tonometry |ˈæplətənəm| noun an instrument for applying a substance

aposition |ˈæpəz| noun 1. the relative positioning of two things 2. cell growth in which layers of new material are deposited on existing ones

appraisal |ˈæpriəli| noun a judgment or opinion on something or somebody, especially one which decides how effective or useful they are

apprehension |ˈæprəhənʃən| noun a feeling of anxiety or fear that something bad or unpleasant will happen

apraxia |ˈæpræks| noun a condition in which someone is unable to make proper movements

apryxia |ˈæprɪk| adjective ‘the absence of fever

aprystal |ˈæprɪstrəl| adjective no longer having any fever

aquatic |ˈækwətɪk| noun water

aqueduct |ˈækwədʌkt| noun a tube which carries fluid from one part of the body to another

aquesos |ˈækwəs| adjective referring to a solution made with water ● noun a fluid in the eye between the lens and the cornea

aquesous humour |ˈækwəs| noun same as aqueous. See illustration at EYE in Supplement
AR abbreviation attributable risk

arachidonic acid /a'rækı'dınɪk/ noun an essential fatty acid

arachnodactyly /a'ræknaʊdæktaɪli/ noun a congenital condition in which the fingers and toes are long and thin

arachnoid /a'ræknaʊd/ noun the middle of the three membranes covering the brain. § dura mater

arachnoiditis /a'ræknaʊd'ɪtɪs/ noun inflammation of the arachnoid

arachnoid mater /a'ræknaʊd 'mɛrəs/, arachnoid membrane /a'ræknaʊd 'mɛmbraʊn/ noun same as arachnoid

arachnoid vili /a'ræknaʊd 'vɪli/ plural noun vili in the arachnoid which absorb cerebrospinal fluid

arborisation /ə'bərərɪzə'si(ə)n/, arborization noun the branching ends of some nerve fibres, of a motor nerve in muscle fibre or of veins, capillaries and arteries

arbovirus /ə'bərvɑːvərəs/ noun a virus transmitted by blood-sucking insects

arc /ark/ noun a nerve pathway

ARC abbreviation AIDS-related complex or AIDS-related condition

arch /ɑrk/ noun a curved part of the body, especially under the foot

arch- /ɑrk/ prefix chief, most important

arcuate /ɑrkjʊət/ adjective arched

arcuate artery /ˌɑrkjʊə'teɪt/ noun a curved artery in the foot or kidney

arcuate ligaments /ˌɑrkjʊət 'lɪgəmənts/ plural noun three ligaments forming a fibrous arch to which the diaphragm is attached

arcus /ɑrkəs/ noun an arch

arcus senilis /'ɑrkəs sə'nɪlɪs/ noun an opaque circle around the cornea of the eye which can develop in old age

ARDS /ɑrdəz/ abbreviation adult respiratory distress syndrome

areola /ə'reələ/ noun the coloured part round a nipple

areolar tissue /ə'reɪələ tʃəs/ noun a type of connective tissue

arginine /'ɑrgɪnɪn/ noun an amino acid which helps the liver form urea

Argyll Robertson pupil /ˈɑrgəl ˈrɒbətsənˌpjʊpəl/ noun a condition of the eye, in which the lens is able to focus but the pupil does not react to light. It is a symptom of tertiary syphilis or of locomotor ataxia.

arboflavinosis /əˌraʊbəfələˈvɛnəsɪs/ noun a condition caused by not having enough vitamin B₁₂. The symptoms are very oily skin and hair and small cuts in the mouth.

Arnold-Chiari malformation /əˈrɔrnɔld kiˈɛri ˈmæfnəl; əˈmɛriʃən/ noun a congenital condition in which the base of the skull is malformed, allowing parts of the cerebellum into the spinal canal [Described 1894. After Julius A. Arnold (1835–1915), Professor of Pathological Anatomy at Heidelberg, Germany, and Hans von Chiari (1851–1916), Professor of Pathological Anatomy at Strasbourg and later at Prague, Czech Republic.]

aromatherapy /əˌrəʊməˈθɛrəpi/ noun treatment to relieve tension and promote wellbeing in which fragrant oils and creams containing plant extracts are massaged into the skin

arousal /əˈroʊz(ə)l/ noun 1. feelings and physical signs of sexual desire 2. the act of waking up from sleep, unconsciousness or a drowsy state

arrector pili /ˌɑr.ɪkˈtər pɪli/ noun a small muscle which contracts and makes the hair on the skin stand up when someone is cold or afraid

arrest /ə'rɛst/ noun the stopping of a bodily function. § cardiac arrest

arrhythmia /əˈrɪθmə/ noun a variation in the rhythm of the heartbeat

arsenic /ˈɑrsənɪk/ noun a chemical element which forms poisonous compounds such as arsenic trioxide and which was formerly used in some medicines (NOTE: The chemical symbol is As.)

artefact /ərˈtɪfəkt/ noun something which is made or introduced artificially

arter- /ɑr/ prefix same as arterio- (used before vowels)

arterial /ˈɑrətɪrɪəl/ adjective relating to arteries

arterial haemorrhage /ˌɑrətɪrɪəl ˈhɛmərərɪdʒ/ noun a haemorrhage of bright red blood from an artery

arterectomy /ərˈtɛrɪkɛtmi/ noun the surgical removal of an artery or part of an artery

arterio- /əˈtɛrɪəʊ-/ prefix referring to arteries

arteriogram /əˌtɛrɪəˈgræm/ noun an X-ray photograph of an artery, taken after injection with an opaque dye

arteriography /əˌtɛrɪəˈɡrɑːfɪ/ noun the work of taking X-ray photographs of arteries after injection with an opaque dye

arteriole /əˈtɛrɪəʊl/ noun a very small artery

arteriopathy /əˌtɛrɪəˈpɑːθi/ noun a disease of an artery

arterioplasty /əˌtɛrɪəˈplæs ti/ noun plastic surgery to make good a damaged or blocked artery

arterorrhaphy /əˌtɛrɪəˌrɔrˈfeɪ/ noun the act of stitching an artery

arteriosclerosis /əˌtɛrɪəˈslokrəsɪs/ noun the arterial disease atherosclerosis (dated)
arteriectomy /ərˈtɛri-ətəmɪ/ noun a puncture made in the wall of an artery
arteriovenous /ərˈtɛri-əvənəs/ adjective referring to both an artery and a vein
arteritis /ərˈtɛrɪ-ətɪs/ noun inflammation of the walls of an artery
artery /ərˈtɛrɪ/ noun a blood vessel taking blood from the heart to the tissues of the body
arthro-/arθr-/ prefix same as arthro- (used before vowels)
arthralgia /ərˈθrɔl-dʒə/ noun pain in a joint
arthrectomy /ərˈθrɛktəmɪ/ noun the surgical removal of a joint
arthritic /ərˈθrɪtɪk/ adjective affected by or relating to arthritis ○ She has an arthritic hip. ■ noun a person suffering from arthritis
arthritis /ərˈθrətɪs/ noun a painful inflammation of a joint. ○ osteoarthritis, rheumatoid arthritis
arthro-/arθrəʊ-/ prefix referring to a joint
arthroclasia /ərθrəˈklɑːsɪə/ noun a surgical operation to remove the arthroplasty /ərθrəˈplæstɪ/ noun a surgical operation to repair or replace a joint
arthroscope /ərˈθrɔskoʊp/ noun an instrument which is inserted into the cavity of a joint to inspect it
arthroscopy /ərˈθrɔskəpi/ noun a procedure to examine the inside of a joint by means of an arthroscope
arthrosis /ərˈθrəʊsɪs/ noun the degeneration of a joint
arthrotomy /ərˈθrətəmɪ/ noun a procedure that involves cutting into a joint to drain pus
articulate /ərˈtɪkjəlt/ adjective referring to joints
articular cartilage /ərˈtɪkjʊlər ˈkɑrtɪlɑːdʒ/ noun a layer of cartilage at the end of a bone
arthroscopy /ərˈθrəskəpi/ noun a way of reviving someone who has stopped breathing, e.g. mouth-to-mouth resuscitation
artificial /ˌɑrtɪˈfɪʃ(ə)l/ adjective 1. made by humans and not a natural part of the body ○ artificial cartilage ○ artificial kidney ○ artificial leg 2. happening not as a natural process but through action by a doctor or another person or a machine ○ artificial feeding
artificial insemination /ˌɑrtɪˈfɪʃ(ə)l ɪnˌsɛmɪˈneɪʃən/ noun the introduction of semen into a woman’s uterus by artificial means
artificial insemination by donor /ˌɑrtɪˈfɪʃ(ə)l ɪnˌsɛmɪˈneɪʃən ˈbaɪ ˈdəʊnər/ noun same as donor insemination. Abbreviation AID
artificial insemination by husband /ˌɑrtɪˈfɪʃ(ə)l ɪnˌsɛmɪˈneɪʃən ˈbaɪ ˈhʌzbənd/ noun artificial insemination using the semen of the husband. Abbreviation AIH
artificial lung /ˌɑrtɪˈfɪʃ(ə)l ˈlʌŋ/ noun a machine through which a person’s deoxygenated blood is passed to absorb oxygen to take back to the bloodstream
artificial respiration /ˌɑrtɪˈfɪʃ(ə)l ˈrɛspərəʃən/ noun a way of reviving someone who has stopped breathing, e.g. mouth-to-mouth resuscitation
artificial rupture of membranes /ˌɑrtɪˈfɪʃ(ə)l ˈrəptər əv ˈmembrəns/ noun the breaking of the amniotic sac with an amniorrhaxy, so releasing the amniotic fluid
artery /ˈɑr.tər.i/ noun a blood vessel taking blood to the tissues of the body, ○ the carotid arteries ○ the aorta ○ the subclavian arteries
ascites /ˈæs.tɪts/ noun an accumulation of fluid from the blood in the peritoneal cavity, occurring in heart and kidney failure or as a result of malignancy
ascorbic acid

aspartic acid /əsˈpɑːtɪk/ noun a protein produced from aspartic acid, used to make substances sweeter

aspartate aminotransferase /əsˈpɑːtət əˌmiːnəˈtrænsferəs/ noun an enzyme found in heart muscle, liver cells, skeletal muscle cells and some other tissues. It is used in the diagnosis of liver disease and heart attacks.

aspartic acid /əsˈpɑːtɪk/ noun an amino acid

aspect /əˈspekt/ noun a direction from which the body is viewed, e.g. the view from above is the 'superior aspect'

Asperger's syndrome /əˈspɛrər̩zɪdʒən/ noun a developmental disorder characterised by difficulty in social interaction and a restricted range of interests, more common in boys than girls. [Described 1984, After Hans Asperger (1906–80), Austrian psychiatrist.]

aspergillosis /əˈspɛrɡələsɪs/ noun infection of the lungs with the fungus Aspergillus

aspermia /əsˈpɜːrmɪə/ noun the absence of sperm in semen

asphyxia /əsˈfɪksiə/ noun a condition in which someone is prevented from breathing, e.g. by strangulation or breathing poisonous gas, and therefore cannot take oxygen into the bloodstream

asphyxiation /əsˈfɪksiəˈʃɪən/ noun the state of being prevented from breathing, or the act of preventing someone from breathing. ○ suffocation

aspiration /əsˈpɛrəˈʃɪən/ noun 1. the act of removing fluid from a cavity in the body, often using a hollow needle 2. same as vacuum suction

aspirator /əˈspɛrətor/ noun an instrument used to suck fluid out of a cavity such as the mouth or the site of an operation

aspirin /əˈspɛrən/ noun a common pain-killing drug, or a tablet containing this drug. Also called acetylsalicylic acid

asymmetric /əˌsɪmˈtrɪk/ adjective shaped or arranged so that the two sides do not match or balance each other

asthmatic /æsˈθɛmɪk/ noun adjective having the lung disease asthma, or relating to asthma ○ He has an asthmatic attack every spring.  ■ noun a person who has asthma

asthenia /æsˈθɪnɪə/ noun a condition in which someone is weak and does not have any strength

asthenia /æsˈθɪnɪə/ noun same as eyes-strain

asthmatic /æsˈθɛmɪk/ noun adjective referring to a general condition in which someone has no strength and no interest in things

asthenopia /ˌæsθəˈnɔːpiə/ noun a common pain-killing drug, or a tablet containing this drug. Also called acetylsalicylic acid
asymmetry /əˈsɪmtrɪ/ noun a state in which the two sides of the body or of an organ do not resemble each other
asymptomatic /æsɪmˈptəmætɪk/ adjective not showing any symptoms of disease
asynclitism /əˈsɪŋkltɪzɪm/ noun in childbirth, a situation in which the head of the baby enters the vagina at an angle
asynenergy /ˌæsɪˈnɛnʤə/, asynery /ˌæsɪˈnɛri/ noun awkward movements and bad coordination, caused by a disorder of the cerebellum. Also called dysynnergy
asystole /ˌæsɪˈstəlɪ/ noun a state in which the heart has stopped beating
ataractic /əˈtærətɪk/ noun a drug which has a calming effect; adjective calming
ataraxia /əˈtærəksiə, əˈtærəksi/ noun the state of being calm and not worrying
ataraxic /əˈtærəsɪk/ noun, adjective same as ataractic
ataxia /əˈtæksiə/ noun a failure of the brain to control movements
ataxic /əˈtæskɪ/ adjective having ataxia, or relating to ataxia
ataxic gait /əˈtæskɪ ˈgæt/ noun a way of walking in which the person walks unsteadily due to a disorder affecting blood pressure and angina
ateriovenous malformation /æˌtɛriəˈvɛnəs, əˌtɛriəˈvɛnəs/ noun a condition in which arteries and veins in the brain are not properly formed, leading to strokes or epilepsy. Abbreviation AVM
atherogenic /æθərəˈdʒɛnɪk/ adjective referring to something which may produce atheroma
atheroma /ˌæθərəˈrəʊmə/ noun thickening of the walls of an artery by deposits of a fatty substance such as cholesterol
atheromatous /æθərəˈmeɪtəs/ adjective referring to atheroma
atherosclerosis /ˌæθərəˈskrəʊləsɪs/ noun a condition in which deposits of fats and minerals form on the walls of an artery, especially the aorta or one of the coronary or cerebral arteries, and prevent blood from flowing easily
atherosclerotic /ˌæθərəˈsklərətɪk/ adjective referring to atherosclerosis
athetosis /ˌæθətəˈtəʊsɪs/ noun repeated slow movements of the limbs, caused by a brain disorder such as cerebral palsy
athlete’s foot /əˈθlɛtɪz ˈfuːt/ noun an infectious skin disorder between the toes, caused by a fungus. Also called tinea pedis
atlas /əˈtælɪəs/ noun the top vertebra in the spine, which supports the skull and pivots on the axis or second vertebra
atom /əˈtɒm/ noun the smallest part into which an element can be divided and still keep its properties. It consists of a dense, positively charged nucleus surrounded by a system of electrons
atomiser /əˈtɒmɪzaɪs/ noun an instrument which sprays liquid in the form of very small drops like mist. Also called nebuliser
atony /əˈtɒni/ noun a lack of tone or tension in the muscles
atopan /əˈtɒpən/ noun an allergen which causes an atopy
atopic eczema /əˌtɒpɪk ˈɛksəmə/, atopic dermatitis /əˌtɒpɪk ˈderəmətɪtəs/ noun a type of eczema often caused by a hereditary allergy
atopy /əˈtɒpi/ noun a hereditary allergic reaction
ATP abbreviation adenosine triphosphate
atracurium /əˈtrækərjuəm/ noun a drug used as a relaxant
atresia /əˈtrɛziə/ noun an unusual closing or absence of a tube in the body
atretic /əˈtretɪk/ adjective referring to atresia
atria /ˈætriə/ plural of atrium
atrial fibillation /ˈætriəl ˈfɪbərəˈlɪʃən/ noun a rapid uncoordinated fluttering of the atria of the heart, which causes an irregular heartbeat
atrioventricular /ˌætriəˈvɛntrɪkjʊlər/ adjective referring to the atria and ventricles
atrioventricular bundle /ˌætriəˈvɛntrɪkjʊlər ˈbændəʊ/ noun a bundle of modified cardiac muscle which conducts impulses from the atrioventricular node to the septum and then divides to connect with the ventricles. Also called AV bundle, bundle of His
atrioventricular node /ˌætriəˈvɛntrɪkjʊlər ˈnəʊd/ noun a mass of conducting tissue in the right atrium of the heart, which continues as the atrioventricular bundle and passes impulses from the atria to the ventricles. Also called AV node
at-risk /ətˈrɪsk/ adjective exposed to danger or harm of some kind ◆ at-risk children
atrium /ˈætɹɪəm/ noun one of the two upper chambers in the heart. See illustration at HEART in Supplement
atrophic cirrhosis /əˌtɹɒfɪk ˈsɜːrəsɪs/ noun advanced portal cirrhosis in which the liver has become considerably smaller and clumps of new cells are formed on the surface of the liver where fibrous tissue has replaced damaged liver cells. Also called hobnail liver
atrophy /əˌtɹɔfɪ/ noun the wasting of an organ or part of the body ◆ web (of an organ or part of the body) to waste away
atropine /ə'trɒpɪn/ noun an alkaloid substance derived from the poisonous plant belladonna and used, among other things, to enlarge the pupil of the eye, to reduce salivary and bronchial secretions during anaesthesia and as a muscarinic antagonist.

ATS abbreviation antitetanus serum

attack /ə'tæk/ noun a sudden occurrence of an illness ○ He had an attack of fever. ○ She had two attacks of laryngitis during the winter.

attention deficit disorder /ə'tenʃən 'dɛfɪsɪt 'dɪzɔr/ noun a condition in which a person is unable to concentrate, does things without considering their actions properly and has little confidence. It occurs mainly in children. Abbreviation ADD

attention deficit hyperactivity disorder /ə'tenʃən 'dɛfɪsɪt 'heɪprəˈæktɪvətɪ 'dɪzɔr/ noun a condition in which a child has an inability to attend in a normal way to something or other.

attention deficit syndrome /ə'tenʃən 'dɛfɪsɪt 'sɪndrəm/ noun same as attention deficit disorder

attenuation /ə'tenjuəˈneɪʃən/ noun a reduction in the effect or strength of something such as a virus, either because of environmental conditions or as a result of a laboratory procedure

auditory /ɔdɪˈtɔrɪ/ adjective relating to hearing

audit /ɔˈdɪt/ noun a check on figures, scientific data or procedures ○ a medical audit regarding the outpatient appointment system

audit commission /ɔˈdɪt kəˈmɪʃən/ noun a government body which examines the accounts of public bodies such as hospital trusts to ensure that public money is being spent wisely

audit cycle /ɔˈdɪt ˈsɪk(ə)l/ noun the cycle in which medical topics are selected for review, observation and comparison with agreed standards and changes are decided on

autism /əˈtɪzm/ noun a condition developing in childhood, characterised by difficulty in social interaction, language and communication problems, learning difficulties and obsessive repetitive behaviour (NOTE: Autism is more common in boys than in girls.)

autistic /əˈtɪstɪk/ adjective affected by, or relating to, autism
autistic spectrum disorders /ˈɔːtistɪk ˈspekrəm ˈdɪsəˈzɔːr/ plural noun autism in all its different forms and degrees of severity. Abbreviation ASD
auto- /ˈɔːtəʊ/ prefix self
autobtibody /ˈɔːtəʊˌantɪbɒdi/ noun an antibody formed to attack antigens in the body’s own cells
autoclave /ˈɔːtəʊklɛɪv/ noun equipment for sterilising surgical instruments using heat under high pressure. ■ verb to sterilise equipment using heat under high pressure. ■ Autoclaving is the best method of sterilisation.
autogenous /ˈɔːtəʊdʒənəs/, autogenic /ˈɔːtəʊdʒənik/ adjective produced either in the person’s body, or using tissue from the person’s own body. ○ an autogenous vein graft
autograft /ˈɔːtəʊɡrɑːft/ noun a transplant made using parts of the person’s own body
autoimmune /ˌɔːtəʊˈɪmjuːn/ adjective referring to an immune reaction in a person against antigens in their own cells
autoimmune disease /ˌɔːtəʊˈɪmjuːn dɪˈzəɪz/ noun a disease in which the person’s own cells are attacked by autoantibodies. ○ Rheumatoid arthritis is thought to be an autoimmune disease.
autoimmunisation /ˌɔːtəʊˈɪmjuːnəsɪˈzeɪʃən, -əmʃəˈzeɪʃən/ noun the process leading to an immune reaction in a person against antigens produced in their own body
autoimmunity /ˌɔːtəʊˈɪmjuːnɪti/ noun a condition in which a person’s own cells are attacked by autoantibodies
autoinfection /ˌɔːtəʊˈɪnfekʃən/ noun an infection by a microorganism already in the body, or infection of one part of the body by another part
autointoxication /ˌɔːtəʊəntəkˈsɛksəˈʃən, -ˈtəʊəntəkˈsɛksəˈʃən/ noun the poisoning of the body by toxins produced in the body itself
autologous /ˌɔːtəʊˈləʊɡəs/ adjective referring to a graft or other material coming from the same source
autolysis /ˌɔːtəʊˈlaɪzəs/ noun a situation in which cells destroy themselves with their own enzymes
autolysis /ˌɔːtəʊˈlaɪzəs/ noun a state in which a person acts without consciously knowing that he or she is acting
autonomic /ˌɔːtəʊˈnɒmɪk/ adjective governing itself independently
autonomic nervous system /ˌɔːtəʊˈnəʊmɪk ˈnɜːrvəs ˈsɪstəm/ noun the nervous system formed of ganglia linked to the spinal column. It regulates the automatic functioning of the main organs such as the heart and lungs and works when a person is asleep or even unconscious.
parasympathetic nervous system, sympathetic nervous system
autonomy /ˌɔːtəʊˈnɒməni/ noun the state of being free to act as one wishes
autoplasty /ˌɔːtəʊpˈleɪstɪ/ noun the repair of someone’s body using tissue taken from another part of their body
autopsy /ˌɔːtəʊˈpɒsɪ/ noun the examination of a dead body by a pathologist to find out the cause of death. ○ The autopsy showed that he had been poisoned. Also called post mortem
autosomal /ˌɔːtəʊˈsɒməl/ noun a chromosome that is not a sex chromosome
autotransfusion /ˌɔːtəʊtərəˈfɜːnʃən/ noun an infusion into a person of their own blood
avascular /əˈvæskjuˈleɪʃən/ adjective with no blood vessels, or with a deficient blood supply
AV bundle /ˈeɪ və bʌnd/ noun same as atrioventricular bundle
aversion therapy /əˈvɜːʃən ˈθɛərəpi/ noun a treatment by which someone is cured of a type of behaviour by making him or her develop a great dislike for it
avitaminosis /əˈvɪtərəˌnɔsɪs, -ˈvɪtərməˈnɔsɪs/ noun a disorder caused by a lack of vitamins
AVM abbreviation arteriovenous malformation
AV node /ˈeɪ və nɔʊd/ noun same as atrioventricular node
AVPU /ˈeɪ və pju/ abbreviation alertness, verbal, pain, unconscious
avulsion /əˈvʌlsʃən/ noun an act of pulling away tissue or a body part by force
avulsion fracture /əˈvʌlsʃən ˈfrekʃən/ noun a fracture in which a tendon pulls away part of the bone to which it is attached
axial /ˈeɪksəl/ adjective referring to an axis
axial skeleton /ˈeɪksəl ˈskeɪlən/ noun the bones that make up the vertebral column and the skull. Compare appendicular skeleton
auxiliary /ˈeɪksələri/ adjective referring to the arm pit
axis /ˈeɪksəs/ noun 1. an imaginary line through the centre of the body 2. a central vessel which divides into other vessels 3. the second vertebra on which the atlas sits. (Note: The plural is axes.)
axon /ˈeɪksən/ noun a nerve fibre which sends impulses from one neuron to another, linking with the dendrites of the other neuron. See illustration at NEURONE in Supplement
azathioprine /ˌæzəθəˈprɪn/ noun a drug which suppresses the immune response, used after transplant surgery to prevent rejection
-azepam /əˈzepəm/ suffix used in names of benzodiazepines ○ diazepam

azidothymidine /ˌɛzɪdəθəˈmɪdɪn/ noun a drug used in the treatment of AIDS. Abbreviation AZT. Also called zidovudine.

azo- /əˈzaʊoʊ/ prefix containing a nitrogen group

azoospermia /ˌɛzəʊsˈpɜrmɪə/ noun the absence of sperm

azoturia /ˌɛzəˈtjuəriə/ noun the presence of urea or other nitrogen compounds in the urine, caused by kidney disease

AZT abbreviation azidothymidine

azygous /əˈzɪgəs/ adjective single, not one of a pair

azygous vein /ˌɛzɪgəs veɪn/ noun a vein which brings blood back into the vena cava from the abdomen
Babinski reflex /bəˈbɪnski/ˈrɪflɛks/, Babinski’s reflex /bəˈbɪnskiˈrɪflɛks/ noun an unusual curling upwards of the big toe when a finger is lightly run across the sole of the foot, while the others turn down and spread out, a sign of hemiplegia and pyramidal tract disease. Compare plantar reflex [Described 1886. After Joseph François Felix Babinski (1857–1932), French-born son of Polish refugees. A pupil of Charcot, he was head of the Neurological clinic at Hôpital de la Pitié, 1890–1927.]

Babinski test /bəˈbɪnski tɛst/ noun a test for a Babinski reflex

baby /ˈbeɪbi/ noun a very young child who is not yet old enough to talk or walk. Babies start to walk when they are about 12 months old. (NOTE: If you do not know the sex of a baby you can refer to the child as it: The baby was sucking its thumb)

baby blues /ˈbeɪbi bluːz/ plural noun same as postnatal depression (informal)

bacillaemia /bəˈsɪliəmɪə/ noun an infection of the blood by bacilli

bacillary /bəˈsɪlərɪ/ adjective referring to bacilli

bacille Calmette-Guérin /bəˈsil kerəm ɡeˈerɛn/ bacillus Gram-negative rod of BCG (After A. Calmette (1863–1933) and C. Guérin (1872–1961), French bacteriologists.)

bacilluria /bəˈsɪlɪərɪərɪə/ noun the presence of bacilli in the urine

bacillus /bəˈsɪləs/ noun a bacterium shaped like a rod (NOTE: The plural is bacilli.)

back /bæk/ noun 1. the part of the body from the neck downwards to the waist, which is made up of the spine and the bones attached to it (NOTE: For other terms referring to the back, see dorsal and words beginning with -dorsi-, dorso-.) 2. the other side from the front. She has a swelling on the back of her hand. dorsum

backache /bækək/ noun pain in the back, often without a specific cause

backbone /ˈbækbəʊn/ noun a series of bones, the vertebral, linked together to form a flexible column running from the pelvis to the skull. Also called rachis, spine

background carboxyhaemoglobin level /ˈbækˌkraʊdi ˈheɪməˌɡləʊbɪn ləv(ə)r/ noun the level of carboxyhaemoglobin in the blood of a person who is not exposed to high levels of carbon monoxide

back pain /ˈbæk peɪn/ noun pain in the back, especially long-lasting or severe pain

backsaid /ˈbæk sɛd/ noun someone’s buttocks (informal)

back strain /ˈbæk strɛn/ noun a condition in which the muscles or ligaments in the back have been strained

bacteraemia /ˌbækˈtɛrəmɪə/ noun the fact of having bacteria in the blood. Bacteraemia is not necessarily a serious condition. Compare septicaemia

bacterium /ˌbæktəˈrɪəm/ plural of bacterium

bacterial /bækˈtɪrɪəl/ adjective relating to bacteria or caused by bacteria. Children with sickle-cell anaemia are susceptible to bacterial infection.

bacterial plaque /bækˈtɪrɪəl, pлеɪk/ noun a hard smooth bacterial deposit on teeth

bactericidal /bækˌtɪrɪˈsidl/ adjective referring to a substance which destroys bacteria

bactericide /bækˈtɪrɪsɪd/ noun a substance which destroys bacteria

bacteriological /bækˌtɪrɪˈɒlədʒɪk(ə)l/ adjective referring to bacteriology

bacteriologist /bækˌtɪrɪˈɒlədʒɪst/ noun a doctor who specialises in the study of bacteria

bacteriology /bækˌtɪrɪˈɒlədʒi/ noun the scientific study of bacteria

bacteriolysin /bækˌtɪrɪˈɒlɪsɪn/ noun a protein, usually an immunoglobulin, which destroys bacterial cells

bacteriolysis /bækˌtɪrɪˈɒlɪsɪs/ noun the destruction of bacterial cells

bacteriolytic /bækˌtɪrɪˈɒlɪtɪk/ adjective referring to a substance which can destroy bacteria

bacteriophage /bækˌtɪrɪˈəfeɪdʒ/ noun a virus which affects bacteria
bacteriostatic /ˈbækˌtɪrɪəstəˈstætɪk/ adjective referring to a substance which does not kill bacteria but stops them from multiplying
bacterium /ˈbækˌtɪrɪəm/ noun a microscopic organism. Some types are permanently present in the gut and can break down food tissue, but many can cause disease. (NOTE: The plural is bacteria.)
COMMENT: Bacteria can be shaped like rods (bacilli), like balls (cocci) or have a spiral form (spirrochaetes). Bacteria, especially bacilli and spirochaetes, can move and reproduce very rapidly.
bacteriuria /ˈbækˌtɪriərɪə/ noun a condition in which bacteria are present in the urine
Bactrim /ˈbæktrɪəm/ a trade name for co-trimoxazole
Baghdad boil /ˈbæqˌdæd ˈboʊl/ Baghdad sore /ˈbæqˌdæd ˈsɔr/ a skin disease of tropical countries caused by the parasite Leishmania. Also called Oriental sore
BAHA abbreviation bone anchored hearing aid
baker’s itch /ˈbeɪkərˈz ɪtʃ/ baker’s dermatitis /ˈbeɪkər dəˈmətətɪs/ an irritation of the skin caused by handling yeast
BAL abbreviation British anti-lewisite
balanced diet /ˈbælənd ˈdaɪət/ a diet which provides all the nutrients needed in the correct proportions
balanitis /ˈbælənətɪs/ noun inflammation of the glans of the penis
balanoposthitis /ˌbælənəˌpoʊstɪtɪs/ noun inflammation of the foreskin and the end of the penis
balantidiasis /ˌbæləntɪdɪəˈdɪəsɪs/ noun an infestation of the large intestine by a parasite Balantidium coli, which causes ulceration of the wall of the intestine, leading to diarrhoea and finally death.
balanus /ˌbælənəs/ noun the round end of the penis. ð glans
bald /bɔld/ adjective with no hair, especially on the head
baldness /ˈbɔldnəs/ noun the state of not having any hair
COMMENT: Baldness in men is hereditary; it can also occur in both men and women as a reaction to an illness or to a drug.
Balkan frame /ˈbɔlkən ˈfrem/ Balkan beam /ˈbɔlkən ˈbiːm/ a frame fitted above a bed to which a leg in plaster can be attached. ð Pearson bed
ball and cage valve /ˈbɔl/ an ‘keɪdʒ ˈvælv/ noun an artificial heart valve, formed of a silicon ball which moves inside a metal cage to open and shut the valve
ball and socket joint /ˈbɔl/ and ‘sɔkit dʒɔnt/ noun a joint where the round end of a long bone is attached to a cup-shaped hollow in another bone in such a way that the long bone can move in almost any direction. Compare ginglymus
balloon /ˈbɔluːn/ noun a bag of light material inflated with air or a gas, used to unblock arteries
balloon angioplasty /ˈbɔluːn ənˈgiːplɔstɪ/ noun same as percutaneous angioplasty
balotteration /ˈbɔluːtərətʃən/ noun a method of examining the body by tapping or moving a part, especially during pregnancy
balneotherapy /ˌbælnəˈθerəpi/ noun the treatment of diseases by bathing in hot water or water containing beneficial natural chemicals
balsam /ˈbɔlsəm/ noun a mixture of resin and oil, used to rub on sore joints or to put in hot water and use as an inhalant. ð friar’s balsam
ban /bæn/ verb to say that something is not permitted ð Smoking is banned throughout the building. ð Use of this drug has been banned.
bandage /ˈbændidʒ/ noun a piece of cloth which is wrapped around a wound or an injured limb ð His head was covered with bandages. ð verb to wrap a piece of cloth around a wound ð She bandaged his leg. ð His arm is bandaged up.
Bandi’s ring /ˈbændɪdʒi rɪŋ/ same as retraction ring [After Ludwig Bandi (1842–90), German obstetrician.]
Bankart’s operation /bæŋkɔrtz əˌpərəˈtʃən/ noun an operation to repair a recurrent dislocation of the shoulder [First performed 1923. After Arthur Sydney Blundell Bankart (1879–1951), first orthopaedic surgeon at the Middlesex Hospital, London, UK]
Banti’s syndrome /ˈbæntɪz ˈsɪndrəm/ Banti’s disease /ˈbæntɪz ˈdɪzəz/ noun same as splenic anaemia [Described 1882. After Guido Banti (1852–1925), Florentine pathologist and physician.]
Barbados leg /ˈbɑrdəbəs ˈleɡ/ noun a form of elephantiasis, a large swelling of the leg due to a Filaria worm
barber’s itch /ˈbɑrˈbɛrˌɪtʃ/ barber’s rash /ˈbɑrˈbɛrˌrɑʃ/ noun same as sycozis barbae
barbiturate /ˈbɑrˈbɪtʃərət/ noun a sedative drug
barbotage /ˌbɑrˈbɑtədʒ/ noun a method of spilling medicine by which cerebral spinal fluid is withdrawn and then injected back
barium /ˈbærɪəm/ noun a chemical element, forming poisonous compounds, used as a contrast medium when taking X-ray photographs of soft tissue (NOTE: The chemical symbol is Ba.)
barium enema / 'biərɪəm 'ɛnɛmə/ noun a liquid solution containing barium sulphate which is put into the rectum to increase the contrast of an X-ray of the lower intestine.

barium meal / 'biərɪəm 'miːl/, barium solution / 'biərɪəm ˈsəluʃən/ noun a liquid solution containing barium sulphate which someone drinks to increase the contrast of an X-ray of the alimentary tract.

Barlow's disease / 'berləʊz 'dɪzi/ noun a form of hyperthyroidism. [Described 1840. After Carl Adolph Barlow (1799–1854), general practitioner in Mersburg, Germany.]

basement membrane / 'beɪsmɛnt_mem/ noun a membrane at the base of the epidermis.

basilar / 'beɪzɪlər/ adjective referring to a base.

basilic vein / 'beɪslɪk/ noun a large vein running along the inside of the arm.

basophil / 'beɪsfəlɪk/ noun a type of white blood cell which has granules in its cytoplasm and contains histamine and heparin. basophilic / 'beɪsfəlɪk/ granulocyte / 'grænjuˈəʊlaɪt/ noun same as basophil.

Batten's disease / 'beɪtənz 'dɪzi/ noun a hereditary disease which affects the enzymes of the brain, causing cells in the brain and eye to die.

battered baby syndrome / 'berədɪd 'beɪbɪ/ noun a condition in which a baby or small child is frequently beaten, usually by one or both of its parents, sustaining injuries such as multiple fractures.

battered placenta / 'baɪtəd 'pleɪsəntə/ noun a placenta where the umbilical cord is attached at the edge and not at the centre.

Beck inventory of depression / 'bek /!nˈventɔrɪ ʌv depresʃən/ noun 1. the bottom part of the base of the spine. 2. the main ingredient of an ointment. 3. a substance which reacts with an acid to form a salt. 4. verb to use something as a base.

BdA abbreviation British Dental Association.

bearing down / 'bɛərɪŋ dʌn/ noun a stage in childbirth when the woman starts to push out the baby from the uterus.

bearing-down pain / 'bɛərɪŋ dʌn 'peɪn/ noun pain felt in the uterus during the second stage of labour. (NOTE: Bearing-down pain is also associated with uterine prolapse.)

Beck inventory of depression / 'bek /!nˈventɔrɪ ʌv depresʃən/ noun one of the rating scales for depression, in which a series of 21
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beclomethasone

questions refers to attitudes frequently shown by people suffering from depression

**beclomethasone** /bɛkˈmoʊθəˈsəʊn/ noun a steroid drug usually used in an inhaler to treat asthma or hay fever

**beau** /bəʊ/ noun an SI unit of measurement of radiation. Abbreviation Bq (NOTE: Now used in place of the curie.)

**bed bath** /bed bɑθ/ noun an act of washing the whole body of someone who is unable to get up to wash. Also called blanket bath

**bed blocking** /bed ˈblækit/ noun the fact of people being kept in hospital because other forms of care are not available, which means that other people cannot be treated

**bedbug** /bedbʌg/ noun a small insect which lives in dirty bedclothes and sucks blood

**bed occupancy** /bed ˈɒkəpənsi/ noun the percentage of beds in a hospital which are occupied

**bedpan** /bedpæn/ noun a dish into which someone can urinate or defecate without getting out of bed

**bed rest** /bedrest/ noun a period of time spent in bed in order to rest and recover from an illness

**bedridden** /bedrɪˈdɔn/ adjective referring to someone who has been too ill to get out of bed over a long period of time

**bedside manner** /ˈbedsid maːnər/ noun the way in which a doctor behaves towards a patient, especially a patient who is in bed. A good bedside manner is the ability to make patients feel comfortable and reassured

**bedsores** /ˈbedsɔːrəz/ noun an inflamed patch of skin on a bony part of the body, which develops into an ulcer, caused by pressure of the part on the mattress after lying for some time in one position. Special beds such as air beds, ripple beds and water beds are used to try to prevent the formation of bedsores. Also called pressure sore, decubitus ulcer

**bedstate** /ˈbedstɛt/ noun a record of the current level of occupancy of beds in a hospital or care unit, updated as admissions and discharges occur

**bedwetting** /ˈbedwɛtɪŋ/ noun same as nocturnal enuresis (NOTE. This term is used mainly about children.)

**Beer’s knife** /ˈbɪəz nɑɪf/ noun a knife with a triangular blade, used in eye operations [After George Joseph Beer (1763–1821), German ophthalmologist.]

**behaviour** /ˈbɪˈheɪvər/ noun a way of acting. O His behaviour was very aggressive.

**behavioural** /ˈbɪˈheɪvərəl/ adjective relating to behaviour

**behaviourism** /bɪˈheɪvɪərɪzəm/ noun a psychological theory proposing that only someone’s behaviour should be studied to discover their psychological problems

**behaviourist** /bɪˈheɪvɪərɪst/ noun a psychologist who follows behaviourism

**behaviour therapy** /bɪˈheɪvɪər əˈθerəpi/ noun a form of psychiatric treatment in which someone learns how to improve their condition

**Behçet’s syndrome** /bɛhˈʃetz səˈnɔrni/ noun a chronic condition of the immune system with no known cause, experienced as a series of attacks of inflammation of small blood vessels accompanied by mouth ulcers and sometimes genital ulcers, skin lesions and inflamed eyes [Described 1937. After Halulu Behçet (1869–1948), Turkish dermatologist.]

**behind** /bɪˈheɪnd/ noun same as buttock (informal)

**bejel** /ˈbɛjɛl/ noun a non-venerial form of syphilis which is endemic among children in some areas of the Middle East and elsewhere and is caused by a spirochaete strain of bacteria

**belch** /bɛl/ noun the action of allowing air in the stomach to come up through the mouth. Verb to allow air in the stomach to come up through the mouth

**belching** /bɛlˈʃɪŋ/ noun the action of allowing air in the stomach to come up through the mouth. Also called eructation

**belladonna** /ˈbɛlədənə/ noun 1. A poisonous plant with berries containing atropine. Also called**

**belle indifférence** /bɛl ɛn ɪˈdɪfɛrs/ noun an excessively calm state in a person, in a situation which would usually produce a show of emotion

**Bellocq’s cannula** /bɛlˈlɒkəs ˈkænjuːla/, Bellocq’s sound /bɛlˈlɒks ˈsɔʊnd/ noun an instrument used to control a nosebleed [After Jean Jacques Bellocq (1732–1807), French surgeon.]

**Bell’s mania** /bɛl ɛməˈnɪə/ noun a form of acute mania with delirium [After Luther Vose Bell (1806–62), American physiologist.]

**Bell’s palsy** /bɛlˈpælsɪ/ noun paralysis of the facial nerve on one side of the face, preventing one eye being closed. Also called facial paralysis [Described 1821. After Sir Charles Bell (1774–1842), Scottish surgeon. He ran anatomy schools, first in Edinburgh and then in London, Professor of Anatomy at the Royal Academy.]

**belly** /ˈbelɪ/ noun 1. same as abdomen 2. The fatter central part of a muscle

**Bence Jones protein** /bɛns ˈdʒoʊnz ˈprɔtɨn/ noun a protein found in the urine of people who have myelomatosis, lymphoma, leukaemia and some other cancers [Described 1848. After Henry Bence Jones (1814–73), physician at St George’s Hospital, London, UK]
bends /ˈbɛndz/ plural noun □ the bends & caisson disease

Benedict’s solution /ˈbɛndɪktz ˌsəˌluʃən/ noun a solution used to carry out Benedict’s test

Benedict’s test /ˈbɛndɪktz test/ noun a test to see if sugar is present in the urine [Described 1915. After Stanley Rossiter Benedict (1864–1936), physiological chemist at Cornell University, New York, USA.]

benign /bɛˈnɪgn/ adjective generally harmless

benign growth /bɛˈnɪgn ˈgrɑːθ/ noun same as benign tumour

benign pancreatic disease /bɛˈnɪgn, pærəˈskeɪt̬i dɪˈzɪz/ noun chronic pancreatitis

benign prostatic hypertrophy /bɛˈnɪgn prəˈstætɪk rɛˈpɑːtəl/ noun a nonmalignant enlargement of the prostate. Abbreviation BPH

benign tumour /bɛˈnɪgn ˈtjuːmər/ noun a tumour which will not grow again or spread to other parts of the body if it is removed surgically, but which can be fatal if not treated. Also called benign growth. Opposite malignant tumour

Benjamin’s fracture /benɪˈdʒɪmz ˈfræktər/ noun a fracture of the first metacarpal, the bone between the thumb and the wrist [Described 1886. After Edward Halloran Bennett (1837–1907), Irish anatomist, later Professor of Surgery at Trinity College, Dublin, Ireland.]

benzocaine /bɛnˈsaʊkeɪn/ noun a drug with anaesthetic properties used in some throat lozenges and skin creams

benzodiazepine /ˌbɛnzəˌdaɪəˈzɛpɪn/ noun a drug which acts on receptors in the central nervous system to relieve symptoms of anxiety and insomnia, although prolonged use is to be avoided. [NOTE: Benzodiazepines have names ending in -azepam: diazepam.]

benzoin /bɛnˈziːn/ noun a resin used to make Iran’s balsam

benzyl benzoate /bɛnˈzɪl ˈbɛntzoʊeɪt/ noun a colourless oily liquid which occurs naturally in balsams, used in medicines and perfumes

bereavement /ˌberəˈvɛrnɪnt/ noun the loss of someone, especially a close relative or friend, through death

beriberi /bɛrɪˈberi/ noun a disease of the nervous system caused by lack of vitamin B₁

berylliosis /ˈberəlɪˌlɪəsɪs/ noun poisoning caused by breathing in particles of the poisonous chemical compound beryllium oxide

Besnier’s prurigo /bɛnˈsɪərz ˈprʊrəˌɡɪər/ noun an itchy skin rash on the backs of the knees and the insides of the elbows [After Ernest Besnier (1831–1909), French dermatologist.]

beta /ˈbiːtə/ noun the second letter of the Greek alphabet

beta-adrenergic receptor /ˌbiːtə ˌædərˈɛnrɪɡɪk ˈrekrəptər/ noun one of two types of nerve endings that respond to adrenaline by speeding up the heart rate or dilating the bronchi

beta blocker /ˈbiːtə ˈblɪkər/ noun a drug which reduces the activity of the heart. (NOTE: Beta blockers have names ending in -olol: atenolol, propranolol hydrochloride.)

beta cell /ˈbiːtə sel/ noun a type of cell found in the islets of Langerhans, in the pancreas, which produces insulin. Also called B cell

Betadine /ˈbiːtədɛn/ noun a trade name for a form of iodine

betamethasone /ˌbetəˈmeθəˈsəʊn/ noun a very strong corticosteroid drug

betaxolol /ˈbetəˌækˈsələl/ noun a beta blocker drug used in the treatment of high blood pressure and glaucoma

benthaleneol /ˈbeθəˌtenəˈkɔːl/ noun an agonist drug used to increase muscle tone after surgery

Betonavette /ˈbetəˌnævətɛ/ noun a trade name for an ointment containing betamethasone

bi- /bəi/ prefix two or twice

bias /ˈbaɪəs/ noun a systematic error in the design or conduct of a study which could explain the results

bicarbonate of soda /bɛˈkɑːrəˌbaɪntətət ˌəv ˈsɔˈdə/ noun same as sodium bicarbonate

bicellular /ˈbaɪˈsələljuə/ adjective having two cells

biceps /ˈbɪskpɛs/ adjective any muscle formed of two parts joined to form one tendon, especially the muscles in the front of the upper arm (biceps brachii) and the back of the thigh (biceps femoris).

bicipital /bɪˈsɪpɪtəl/ adjective referring to a biceps muscle

biconcave /ˌbaɪkənˈkæv/ adjective referring to a lens which is concave on both sides

biconvex /ˌbaɪkənˈvɛks/ adjective referring to a lens which is convex on both sides

bicornuate /ˌbaɪkəˈkɒnjuət/ adjective divided into two parts (NOTE: The word is sometimes applied to a malformation of the uterus.)

bicuspid /ˌbaɪˈkʌspɪd/ adjective with two points □ noun a premolar tooth

bicuspid valve /ˌbaɪˈkʌspɪd ˈvælɪv/ noun same as mitral valve. See illustration at HEART in Supplement

b.i.d. adverb (used on prescriptions) twice daily. Full form bis in die

bidet /ˈbɪdɛt/ noun an object for washing the genital and anal areas. It looks like a low toilet.

bifid /ˈbaɪfɪd/ adjective in two parts

bifocal /ˈbaɪfəkəl/ adjective referring to lenses made with two sections which have different focal lengths, one for looking at things which are near, the other for looking at things which are far away.
bilharzia /'bɪlərəsɪə/ plural noun surgical operations in which the lower part of the stomach is removed and the part which is left is linked to the duodenum (Billroth I) or jejunum (Billroth II) [Described 1881. After Christian Albert Theodore Billroth (1829–94), Prussian surgeon.]

bimanual /'baɪmənjuəl/ adjective done with two hands, or needing both hands to be done

binary /'bɜrniər/ adjective made of two parts

binary fission /'baɪnərɪ 'fɪʃ(ə)n/ noun the process of splitting into two parts in some types of cell division

binaleral /'baɪnərəl/ adjective using, or relating to, both ears

binocular /'baɪnəkʌlər/ adjective referring to the two eyes

binovular /'baɪnəvjuələr/ adjective referring to twins who develop from two different ova

bio-/ /'baɪəʊ/ prefix referring to living organisms

bioassay /'baɪoʊs'æsi/ noun a test for children [Originally described 1905 but later modified at Stanford University, California, USA. After Alfred Binet (1857–1911), French psychologist and physiologist.]

binocular /'baɪnəkʌlər/ adjective referring to the two eyes

biochemistry /'baɪəʊkemɪstrɪ/ noun the chemistry of living tissues

bicarbonate /'baɪəkərɪbənt/ noun a substance which kills living organisms

biodegradable /'baɪədɪɡrədiəbl/ adjective easily decomposed by organisms such as bacteria or by the effect of sunlight, the sea, etc.

biofeedback /'baɪəfɪdbæk/ noun the control of the autonomic nervous system by some one’s conscious thought, as he or she sees the results of tests or scans

biogehazard /'baɪəhæzəd/ noun a danger to human beings or their environment, especially one from a poisonous or infectious agent

biological /'baɪələdʒɪk(ə)l/ adjective referring to biology

biological parent /'baɪələdʒɪk(ə)l ˈpɛərənt/ noun a parent who was physically involved in producing a child

bilirubin /ˈbɪlɪrʌbɪn/ noun a green pigment in bile, produced by oxidation of bilirubin

bilirubinaemia /ˌbɪlɪrʌbɪˈneɪmiə/ noun an excess of bilirubin in the blood

bilirubinuria /ˌbɪlɪrʌbɪnʊˈriə/ noun the presence of bile in the urine. Also called choluria

biliverdin /ˌbɪlɪvərˈdɛrn/ noun a green pigment in bile, produced by oxidation of bilirubin

biliverdinaemia /ˌbɪlɪvərˈdɛrnəmiə/ noun an excess of biliverdin in the blood

biliverdinuria /ˌbɪlɪvərˈdɛrnəˈriə/ noun the presence of biliverdin in the urine.
bipolar neurone /baɪpɒlər noərn/ noun a nerve cell with two processes, a dendrite and an axon, found in the retina. See illustration at neurone in Supplement. Compare multipolar neurone, unipolar neurone
birth /baɪθ/ noun the act of being born
birth canal /ˈbaɪθ kæn/ noun the uterus, vagina and vulva
birth control /ˈbaɪθ kɔntrəl/ noun same as contraception

biopsy /bʌɪˈpɒsɪ/ noun the process of taking a small piece of living tissue for examination and diagnosis. The biopsy of the tissue from the growth showed that it was benign.

biorhythm /baɪəˈrɪθm/ noun a regular process of change which takes place within living organisms, e.g. sleeping, waking or the reproductive cycle (NOTE: Some people believe that biorhythms affect personality and mood.)

biostatistics /bʌɪəsˈteɪstɪks/ plural noun statistics used in medicine and the study of disease

biotechnology /baɪoʊˈtekəni/ noun 1. the use of biological processes in industrial production, e.g. in the production of drugs 2. same as genetic modification

biotin /ˈbaɪətɪn/ noun a type of vitamin B found in egg yolks, liver and yeast

BIPAP /ˈbʌɪpæp/ noun a breathing apparatus that allows air delivered through a mask to be set at one pressure for inhaling and another for exhaling, maximising breathing efficiency and minimising natural muscular effort. Full form bi-level positive airway pressure

biparietal /ˈbaɪpərəˈeɪtəl/ adjective referring to the two parietal bones

biparous /ˈbaɪpærəs/ adjective producing twins

bipennate /ˈbaɪpənət/ adjective referring to a muscle with fibres which arise from either side of the tendon

bipolar /ˈbaɪpələr/ adjective with two poles. See illustration at neurone in Supplement

bipolar disorder /ˌbaɪpələr ˈdɑrəd/ noun a psychological condition in which someone moves between mania and depression and experiences delusions. Also called manic-depressive illness, manic depression
Bitot’s spots

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bleeder /ˈblɪdər/ noun 1. a blood vessel which bleeds during surgery 2. a person who has haemophilia (informal)
bleeding /ˈblɪdɪŋ/ noun an unusual loss of blood from the body through the skin, through an orifice or internally
bleeding time /ˈblɪdɪŋ taɪm/ noun a test of the clotting ability of someone’s blood, by timing the length of time it takes for the blood to coagulate
blennorrhagia /ˈblɛnərəhədʒiə/ noun the discharge of watery mucus
blenorrhoea /ˈblɛnərəhə/ noun the discharge of watery mucus
bleomycin /ˌblɛəməsɪn/ noun an antibiotic used to treat forms of cancer such as Hodgkin’s disease
blephar- /ˈblɛfər-/ prefix same as blepharo- (used before vowels)
blepharitis /ˈblɛfərətɪs/ noun inflammation of the eyelid
blepharo-/ˈblɛfərəʊ/- prefix referring to the eyelid
blepharoconjunctivitis /ˌblɛfərəkənˈdʒʌŋktəvɪtɪs/ noun inflammation of the conjunctiva of the eyelids
blepharon /ˈblɛfərən/ noun an eyelid
blepharospasm /ˈblɛfərəsˈpæzm/ noun a sudden contraction of the eyelid, as when a tiny piece of dust gets in the eye
blepharotaxis /ˌblɛfərəʊˈtæksɪs/ noun a condition in which the upper eyelid is half closed because of paralysis of the muscle or nerve
blind loop syndrome /ˈblænd lʊp, sɪndrəʊm/ noun a condition which occurs in cases of diverticulosis or of Crohn’s disease, with steatorrhoea, abdominal pain and megaloblastic anaemia
blindness /ˈblændɪzn/ noun the fact of not being able to see
blind spot /ˈblænd sɔpt/ noun the point in the retina where the optic nerve joins it, which does not register light
blind study /ˈblænd stʌdi/ noun an investigation to test an intervention such as giving a drug, in which a person does not know if he or she has taken the active medicine or the placebo
blister /ˈblɪstər/ noun a swelling on the skin containing serum from the blood, caused by rubbing, burning or a disease such as chickenpox • verb to produce blisters
blotted /ˈblɒttəd/ adjective experiencing the uncomfortable sensation of a very full stomach
block /ˈblɒk/ noun 1. the stopping of a function 2. a large piece of something • A block of wood fell on his foot. 3. a period of time • The training is in two three-hour blocks. • verb to fill the space in something and stop other things passing

Bitot’s spots

Bitot’s spots /ˈblɪtəs ˈspɔts/ plural noun small white spots on the conjunctiva, caused by vitamin A deficiency [Described 1863. After Pierre A. Blalock (1822–88), French physician.]
blalock-Taussig operation /ˈblɛlək-təsɪɡ/ noun an operation which has two valves • adjective referring to a bivalve organ
black eye /ˈblæk ˈaɪ/ noun bruising and swelling of the tissues round an eye, usually caused by a blow
blackhead /ˈblækˌhɛd/ noun same as comedo (informal)
black heel /ˈblæk ˈhɛl/ noun a haemorrhage inside a heel, characterised by black spots
black out /ˈblæk aʊt/ verb to have sudden loss of consciousness • I suddenly blacked out and I can’t remember anything more
blackout /ˈblækkaʊt/ noun a sudden loss of consciousness (informal) • She must have had a blackout while driving. Also called fainting fit
blackwater fever /ˈblækwaɪtər ˈfiːvər/ noun a form of malaria where haemoglobin from red blood cells is released into plasma and makes the urine dark
bladder /ˈblɛdər/ noun any sac in the body, especially the sac where the urine collects before being passed out of the body • He is suffering from bladder trouble. • She is taking antibiotics for a bladder infection.
Blalock’s operation /ˈblɛləkˌərəpərərətʃən/ noun a surgical operation to connect the pulmonary artery to the subclavian artery, in order to increase blood flow to the lungs of someone who has tetralogy of Fallot
blanket bath /ˈblæŋkɪt bɑθ/ noun same as bed bath
blast /ˈblæst/ noun 1. a wave of air pressure from an explosion which can cause concussion 2. an immature form of a cell before distinctive characteristics develop
-blast /ˈblæst/ suffix referring to a very early stage in the development of a cell
blasto- /ˈblæstəʊ/ prefix referring to a germ cell
blastocoele /ˈblæstəkəʊli/ noun a cavity filled with fluid in a morula
blastocyst /ˈblæstəkɔst/ noun an early stage in the development of an embryo
Blastomyces /ˈblæstəmiˈsɪz/ noun a type of parasitic fungus which affects the skin
blasto- /ˈblæstəʊ/ prefix to a unit of time • the first stage of the development of an embryo in animals
bleb /ˈblɛb/ noun a blister. Compare bulla
The artery was blocked by a clot. He swallowed a piece of plastic which blocked his oesophagus.

blocking /blɒkɪŋ/ noun a psychiatric disorder, in which someone suddenly stops one train of thought and switches to another.

blood /blɔ:d/ noun a red liquid moved around the body by the pumping action of the heart (NOTE: For other terms referring to blood, see words beginning with haem-, haemo-, haemato-.)

blood bank /blɔ:d bæŋk/ noun a section of a hospital or a special centre where blood given by donors is stored for use in transfusions.

blood blister /blɔ:d_ˈblɪstə/ noun a swelling on the skin with blood inside, caused by nipping the flesh.

blood-borne virus /blɔ:d bɔrn ˈvɛərəs/ noun a virus carried by the blood.

blood-brain barrier /blɔ:d brem ˈbærəs/ noun the process by which some substances, which in other parts of the body will diffuse from capillaries, are held back by the endothelium of cerebral capillaries, preventing them from coming into contact with the fluids round the brain.

blood clot /blɔ:d kloʊt/ noun a soft mass of coagulated blood in a vein or an artery. Also called thrombus.

blood count /blɔ:d kɔːnt/ noun a test to count the number and types of different blood cells in a sample of blood, in order to give an indication of the condition of the person’s blood as a whole.

blood donor /blɔ:d _dɔʊnə/ noun a person who gives blood which is then used in transfusions to other people.

blood dyscrasia /blɔ:d dɪsˈkrɛsɪə/ noun any unusual blood condition such as a low cell count or platelet count.

blood gas /blɔ:d ɡɑːs/ noun oxygen and carbon dioxide that are naturally present in blood, an imbalance of which may indicate a respiratory disorder.

blood-glucose level /blɔ:d ˈɡluːkəʊz _levəl/ noun the amount of glucose present in the blood. The usual blood-glucose level is about 60–100 mg of glucose per 100 ml of blood.

blood group /blɔ:d grʊp/ noun one of the different groups into which human blood is classified. Also called blood type.

COMMENT: Blood is classified in various ways. The most common classifications are by the agglutinogens (factors A and B) in red blood cells and by the Rhesus factor. Blood can therefore have either factor (Group A and Group B) or both factors (Group AB) or neither (Group O) and each of these groups can be Rhesus negative or positive.

blood grouping /blɔ:d _ˈgrʊpɪŋ/ noun the process of classifying people according to their blood groups.

blood-letting /blɔ:d _ˈletɪŋ/ noun same as phlebotomy.

blood loss /blɔ:d _lɔs/ noun loss of blood from the body by bleeding.

blood pigment /blɔ:d _ˈpɪgment/ noun same as haemoglobin.

blood pressure /blɔ:d _ˈpreʃə/ noun the pressure, measured in millimetres of mercury, at which the blood is pumped round the body by the heart.

blood relationship /blɔ:d _rɪˈleʃənʃɪp/ noun a relationship between people who come from the same family and have the same parents, grandparents or ancestors, as opposed to a relationship by marriage.

blood sample /blɔ:d _ˈsæmpl/ noun a sample of blood, taken for testing.

bloodshot /blɔ:d_ʃɒt/ adjective referring to an eye with small specks of blood in it from a small damaged blood vessel.

blood sugar /blɔ:d _ˈʃʊgər/ noun glucose present in the blood.

blood sugar level /blɔ:d _ˈʃʊgər _levəl/ noun the amount of glucose in the blood, which is higher after meals and in people with diabetes.

blood test /blɔ:d _ˈtest/ noun a laboratory test of a blood sample to analyse its chemical composition. The patient will have to have a blood test.

blood transfusion /blɔ:d _ˈtɜːnsfənʃən/ noun a procedure in which blood given by another person or taken from the patient at an earlier stage is transferred into the patient’s vein.

blood type /blɔ:d _ˈtaɪp/ noun same as blood group.

blood typing /blɔ:d _ˈtaɪpɪŋ/ noun the analysis of blood for transfusion factors and blood group.

blood vessel /blɔ:d _vɛsəl/ noun any tube which carries blood round the body, e.g. an artery, vein or capillary (NOTE: For other terms referring to blood vessels, see words beginning with angio-).

blood volume /blɔ:d _ˈvɔːmjuː/ noun the total amount of blood in the body.

blot test /blɔt _ˈtest/ noun Rorschach test.

blue baby /blu:/ ˈbɛri/ noun a baby who has congenital cyanosis, born either with a congenital heart condition or with a collapsed lung, which prevents an adequate supply of oxygen reaching the tissues, giving the baby’s skin a slight blue colour (informal).

blue litmus /blu:/ˈlɪtməs/ noun treated paper which indicates the presence of acid by turning red.

blurred vision /blɔːrd _ˈvɪzn/ noun a condition in which someone does not see objects clearly.
Moeller Boeck (1845–1913), Professor of Dermatology at Oslo, Norway.

bone marrow transplant /ˈbɑːn mɔrəʊ ˌtrænsplænt/ noun the transplant of marrow from a donor to a recipient

bone scan /ˈbɑːn skæn/ noun a scan which tracks a radioactive substance injected into the body to find areas where a bone is breaking down or repairing itself

Bonney’s blue /bɒnɪz ˈbluː/ noun a blue dye used as a disinfectant [After William Francis Victor Bonney (1872–1953), British gynaecologist.]

bony /ˈbɔːni/ adjective relating to bones, or made of bone

bony labyrinth /ˈbɔːni ˈleɪbərnəʊ/ noun a hard part of the temporal bone surrounding the membranous labyrinth in the inner ear. Also called osseous labyrinth

boob /bʊb/ noun a woman’s breast (informal)

booster /ˈbʊstrər/ noun an injection, or a repeat injection of vaccine given some time after the first injection to maintain the immunising effect

boracic acid /ˈbɔːrəsɪk ˈɔːsɪd/ noun a soluble white powder used as a general disinfectant. Also called boric acid

borax /ˈbɔræks/ noun a white powder used as a household cleaner and disinfectant

borborygmus /ˈbɔːrbərɪgməs/ noun a rumbling noise in the abdomen, caused by gas in the intestine (NOTE: The plural is borborygmi.)

borderline /ˈbɔːrdərlɪn/ adjective not clearly belonging to either one of two categories or a borderline case 2. referring to a medical condition likely to develop in someone unless an effort is made to prevent it 3. characterised by emotional instability and self-destructive behaviour or a borderline personality

Bordetella /ˈbɔrdətələ/ noun a bacterium of the family Brucellaceae (NOTE: Bordetella pertussis causes whooping cough.)

boric acid /ˈbɔːrɪk ˈɔsɪd/ noun same as boracic acid

boron /ˈbɔːrən/ noun a chemical element which is present in borax, and essential for healthy plant growth (NOTE: The chemical symbol is B.)

bosom /ˈbɔzəm/ noun a woman’s chest or breasts

bottom /ˈbɒtəm/ noun 1. the part of the body on which you sit 2. the anus (informal)

bottom shuffling /ˈbɒtəm ˌʃʌflɪŋ/ noun the process by which a baby who cannot yet walk moves around by moving itself along on its hands and buttocks

blush /bʌʃ/ noun a rush of red colour to the skin of the face, caused by emotion 1 verb to go red in the face because of emotion

BM abbreviation Bachelor of Medicine

BMA abbreviation British Medical Association

BMI abbreviation body mass index

BMR abbreviation basal metabolic rate

BNF abbreviation British National Formulary

body fluid /ˈbɒdi ˈfliːd/ noun a liquid in the body, e.g. water, blood or semen

body image /ˈbɒdi ˈɪmɪdʒ/ noun the mental image which a person has of their own body. Also called body schema

body language /ˈbɒdi ˈlæŋgwɪdʒ/ noun the expression on your face, or the way you hold your body, interpreted by other people as unconsciously revealing your feelings

body odour /ˈbɒdi ˈɒdʒ/ noun an unpleasant smell caused by perspiration

body scan /ˈbɒdi skæn/ noun an examination of the whole of the body using ultrasound or other scanning techniques

body schema /ˈbɒdi ˈskɪmə/ noun same as body image

body substance isolation /ˈbɒdi ˈsʌbdʒəstns ɪsoʊˈleɪʃn/ noun making sure that a trauma victim is kept isolated from the possibility of infection from moist body substances

body temperature /ˈbɒdi ˈtemprətʃər/ noun the internal temperature of the human body, usually about 37°C

Boeck’s disease /ˈbɒks diˈzɪz, ˈbɒckz ˈsærkoɪdɪəs/ [Descibed 1889. After Caesar Peter Moeller Boeck (1845–1913), Professor of Dermatology at Oslo, Norway.]

Bohn’s nodules /ˈboʊzn ˈnɒdʒʊlz, ˈboʊnzm ˈnɒdʒʊlz/ noun tiny cysts found in the mouths of healthy infants

boil /bɔɪl/ noun a tender raised mass of infected tissue and skin, usually caused by infection of a hair follicle by the bacterium Staphylococcus aureus. Also called furuncle

boilus /bʌləs/ noun 1. a mass of food which has been chewed and is ready to be swallowed 2. a mass of food passing along the intestine

bonding /ˈbɒndɪŋ/ noun the process by which a psychological link is formed between a baby and its mother 0 In autistic children bonding is difficult.

bone /bɔːn/ noun 1. calcified connective tissue 2. one of the calcified pieces of connective tissue which make the skeleton 0 There are several small bones in the human ear. See illustration at SYNOVAH joint in Supplement

bone-anchored hearing aid /ˈbɔːn əˌnɛrd kɔd ˈhɑːrɪŋ ˈeɪd/ noun a hearing aid that is fitted surgically into the skull, usually behind the ear. Abbreviation BAHA

body, e.g. water, blood or semen

body schema

body scan

body language

body image

body substance isolation

body temperature

Boeck's disease

Bohn's nodules

boil

boilus

bonding

bone

bone-anchored hearing aid
brachio- /brækiəʊ-/ prefix same as brachio- (used before vowels)

brachial /'breiksiəl/ adjective referring to the arm, especially the upper arm

brachialis muscle /'breiksiəlɪs/ muscle noun a muscle that causes the elbow to bend

brachio- /'breiksiə/ prefix referring to the arm

brachiocephalic artery /'breiksiəsık,faˈlɪk ˈʌtər/ artery noun the largest branch of the arch of the aorta, which continues as the right common carotid and right subclavian arteries

brachiocephalic vein /'breiksiəsık,faˈlɪk ˈvɛın/ vein noun one of a pair of large veins on opposite sides of the neck that join to form the superior vena cava. Also called innominate vein

brachium /brəkiəm/ noun an arm, especially the upper arm between the elbow and the shoulder (NOTE: The plural is brachia.)

brachy-/brəki/ prefix short

brachycephaly /'brəkiʃɛfəli/ noun a condition in which the skull is shorter than usual

brachytherapy /brəkiˈθɛrəpɪ/ noun a radioactive treatment in which the radioactive material actually touches the tissue being treated

bradycardia /'brædiˈkɑːdʒɪə/ noun a slow rate of heart contraction, shown by a slow pulse rate of less than 70 beats per minute

bradykinesia /'brædiˈkiːnɪəsɪə/ noun a condition in which the someone walks slowly and makes slow movements because of disease

bradykinin /'brædiˈkɪnɪn/ noun a chemical produced in the blood when tissues are injured, that plays a role in inflammation. ◊ kinin

bradyponoea /brədiˈpɒnɪə/ noun unusually slow breathing

Braille /breɪl/ system noun a system of writing using raised dots on the paper to indicate letters which a blind person can read by passing their fingers over the page

brain damage /ˈbreɪn ˈdeɪmədʒ/ noun damage caused to the brain as a result of oxygen and sugar deprivation, e.g. after a haemorrhage, accident, or though disease

brain death /ˈbreɪn ˈdɛθ/ noun a condition in which the nerves in the brain stem have died, and the person can be certified as dead, although the heart may not have stopped beating

brain haemorrhage /ˈbreɪn ˈhɛmərərɪdʒ/ noun same as cerebral haemorrhage

brain scan /ˈbreɪn skæn/ noun an examination of the inside of the brain, made by passing X-rays
through the head, using a scanner, and reconstituting the images on a computer monitor

breast stem /'breɪst stem/ noun the lower narrow part of the brain which connects the brain to the spinal cord

brain tumour /'breɪn ˈtjuːmə/ noun a tumour which grows in the brain

brain /breɪn/ noun the outer covering of the wheat seed, removed when making white flour, but an important source of roughage in the diet

branchia /'bræŋkiə/ noun a breathing organ similar to the gill of a fish found in human embryos in the early stages of development (NOTE: The plural is branchiae.)

branchial /'bræŋkiəl/ adjective referring to the branchiae

branchial cyst /'bræŋkiəl ˈsɪst/ noun a cyst on the side of the neck of an embryo

branchial pouch /'bræŋkiəl ˈpɒʃ/ noun a pouch on the side of the neck of an embryo

Braun's frame /'braʊnz ˈfreɪm/, Braun's splint /'braʊnz ˈsplint/ noun a metal splint and frame to which pulleys are attached, used for holding up a fractured leg while the person is lying in bed (After Heinrich Friedrich Wilhelm Braun (1862–1934), German surgeon.)

Braxton-Hicks contractions /ˈbreɪkstɒn hɪks ˈkɒntrəkʃənz/ plural noun contractions of the uterus which occur throughout a pregnancy and become more frequent and stronger towards the end (After Dr Braxton-Hicks, 19th century British physician.)

breakbone fever /'breɪkbaʊn ˈfɪvər/ noun same as dengue

break down /'breɪk ˈdɑːn/ verb 1. to experience a sudden physical or psychological illness (informal)  □ After she lost her husband, her health broke down. 2. to start to cry and become upset (informal)  □ She broke down as she described the symptoms to the doctor. 3. to split or cause to split into smaller chemical components, as in the digestion of food

breast /breɪst/ noun one of two glands in a woman which secrete milk. Also called mamma (NOTE: For other terms referring to breasts, see words beginning with mamm-, mammo-, mast-, masto-)

breastbone /'breɪstbOUm/ noun a bone which is in the centre of the front of the thorax and to which the ribs are connected. Also called sternum

breast cancer /breɪst ˈkeɪnsər/ noun a malignant tumour in a breast

breast-fed /ˈbreɪst ˈfɛd/ adjective referring to a baby which is fed from the mother’s breasts  □ She was breast-fed for the first two months.

breast implant /breɪst ɪmplənt/ noun a sac containing silicone, implanted to improve the appearance of a breast

breast milk /breɪst ˈmɪlk/ noun the milk produced by a woman who has recently had a baby

breast palpation /breɪst ˈpælˌpæʃən/ noun a test for breast cancer where a breast is squeezed to feel if a lump is present which might indicate breast cancer

breast pump /breɪst ˈpʌmp/ noun an instrument for taking milk from a breast

breast reconstruction /breɪst ˈriːkstrʌkʃən, strækʃən/ noun the construction of a new breast for a woman who has had a breast removed because of cancer

breath /breθ/ noun air which goes in and out of the body when you breathe  □ He ran so fast he was out of breath.  □ Stop for a moment to get your breath back.  □ She took a deep breath and dived into the water.

breathe /breθ/ verb to take air in and blow air out through the nose or mouth  □ The patient has begun to breathe normally.

breath-holding attack /breθ ˈhouldɪŋ æ t/ noun a period when a young child stops breathing, usually because he or she is angry

breathing /ˈbreθɪŋ/ noun same as respiration

break /breɪk/ verb to split or divide into parts

breathing /ˈbreθɪŋ/ noun same as respiration

breathlessness /ˈbreθlɛnsi/ noun difficulty in breathing enough air

breed /breɪd/ verb to produce offspring

breed /breɪd/ noun the buttocks, especially of a baby  □ adjective describes a birth in which the baby is delivered buttocks first, not in the normal head first position, or describes a buttocks-first presentation

breed /breɪd/ noun the buttocks, especially of a baby  □ adjective describes a birth in which the baby is delivered buttocks first, not in the normal head first position, or describes a buttocks-first presentation

bridge /ˈbrɪdʒ/ noun 1. the top part of the nose where it joins the forehead 2. an artificial tooth or set of teeth which is joined to natural teeth which hold it in place 3. a part joining two or more other parts

Bright's disease /ˈbrɪts dɪˈziːz/ noun inflammation of the kidneys, characterised by albuminuria and high blood pressure. Also called glomerulonephritis (Described 1836. After Richard Bright (1789–1858), physician at Guy’s Hospital, London, UK)
British anti-lewisite /brɪtʃ/ˌantiˈljuːɪsaɪt/ noun an antidote for gases which cause blistering, also used to treat cases of poisoning such as mercury poisoning. Abbreviation BAL
British Dental Association /ˌbrɪtʃ/ dɛnt(ə)l əˌsoʊsi,əˈdɛnt/ noun in the UK, a professional association of dentists. Abbreviation BDA
British Medical Association /ˌbrɪtʃ/ˌmedɪk(ə)l əˌsoʊsi,əˈmedɪk/ noun in the UK, a professional association of doctors. Abbreviation BMA
British National Formulary /ˌbrɪtʃ/ˌneɪʃ(ə)nəl ˈfɔːrmələri/ noun a book listing key information on the prescribing, dispensing and administration of prescription drugs used in the UK. Abbreviation BNF
British Pharmacopoeia /ˌbrɪtʃ/ˌfɑːrməˈsiə/ noun a book listing drugs approved in the UK and their dosages. Abbreviation BP
brittle bone disease /ˈbɹɪtl ˈboʊn ˈdiːzɪd/ noun 1. same as osteogenesis imperfecta 2. same as osteoporosis
broad /brɔːd/ adjective wide in relation to length
Broadbent’s sign /ˈbrɔːdˌbɛntz ˈsɛn/ noun a movement of someone’s left side near the lower ribs at each beat of the heart, indicating adhesion between the diaphragm and pericardium in cases of pericarditis [After Sir William Henry Broadbent (1835–1907), British physician.]
broad-spectrum antibiotic /ˌbrɔːrdˌspɛktrəm ˌæntɪˈbɛrsɪmət/ noun an antibiotic used to control many types of microorganism
Broca’s aphasia /ˈbrokəˌæfezə/ noun a condition in which someone is unable to speak or write, as a result of damage to Broca’s area
Broca’s area /ˈbrokəˌærə/ noun an area on the left side of the brain which governs the motor aspects of speaking [Described 1861. After Pierre Henri Paul Broca (1824–80), French surgeon and anthropologist. A pioneer of neurosurgery, he also invented various instruments, described muscular dystrophy before Duchenne, and recognised rickets as a nutritional disorder before Virchow.]
Brodie’s abscess /ˌbrədɪz ˈæbses/ noun an abscess of a bone, caused by staphylococcal osteomyelitis [Described 1832. After Sir Benjamin Collins Brodie (1783–1862), British surgeon.]
bromhidrosis /ˌbrɒmˌhɪdəˈrɒsɪs/ noun a condition in which body sweat has an unpleasant smell
bromide /ˈbrɒmɪd/ noun a bromine salt (NOTE: Bromides are used as sedatives.)
bromine /ˈbrɒmən/ noun a chemical element (NOTE: The chemical symbol is Br.)
bromism /ˌbrɔrmɪzm/ noun chronic ill health caused by excessive use of bromides
bronchocriptine /ˌbrɒŋkɔˌkriptɪn/ noun a drug which functions like dopamine, used to treat excessive lactation, breast pain, some forms of infertility, growth disorder and Parkinson’s disease
bronch- /ˈbrɒŋk-/ prefix same as broncho- (used before vowels)
broncho-/ˈbrɒŋkəʊ/ plural of bronchus
bronchial /ˈbrɒŋkʃiəl/ adjective referring to the bronchi
bronchial breath sounds /ˈbrɒŋkʃiəl ˈbreθ ˈsounz/ plural noun distinctive breath sounds from the lungs which help diagnose bronchiectasis /ˌbrɒŋkʃiˈɛktəsi/ noun a disorder of the bronchi which become wide, infected and filled with pus (NOTE: Bronchiectasis can lead to pneumonia.)
broncho- /ˈbrɒŋkəʊ/ prefix referring to the bronchioles
bronchiolar /ˈbrɒŋkʃiələr/ adjective referring to the bronchioles
bronchiolitis /ˌbrɒŋkʃiəˈlaɪtɪs/ noun inflammation of the bronchioles, usually in small children
bronchitis /ˌbrɒŋkˈkɪtɪs/ noun inflammation of the mucous membrane of the bronchi
broncho- /ˌbrɒŋkəʊ/ prefix referring to the windpipe
bronchoconstrictor /ˌbrɒŋkkoʊˈstrɪktər/ noun a drug which narrows the bronchi
bronchodilator /ˌbrɒŋkˌdɪləˈtər/ noun a drug which makes the bronchi wider, used in the treatment of asthma and allergy (NOTE: Bronchodilators usually have names ending in -terol, however, the most common bronchodilator is salbutamol)
bronchography /ˌbrɒŋkˌɡɒrəfi/ noun an X-ray examination of the lungs after an opaque substance has been put into the bronchi
bronchomediastinal trunk /ˌbrɒŋkˌmɛdɪəˈstɪnl/ noun the set of lymph nodes draining part of the chest
bronchomycosis /ˌbrɒŋkˌmoʊsɪs/ noun an infection of the bronchi by a fungus
bronchophony /ˌbrɒŋkˌfoʊnɪ/ noun vibrations of the voice heard over the lungs, indicating solidification in the lungs
bronchopneumonia /ˌbrɒŋkˌpiˈnuːməniə/ noun an infectious inflammation of the bronchi-
brachial artery, which may lead to general infection of the lungs

bronchopulmonary /brónkspul'mənær/ adjective referring to the bronchi and the lungs

bronchorrhea /brónk'srəhēə/ noun the secretion of mucus by the bronchi

bronchoscope /brónk'skōps/ noun an instrument which is passed down the trachea into the lungs, which a doctor can use to inspect the inside passages of the lungs

bronchoscopy /brónk'skōsəpi/ noun an examination of a person's bronchi using a bronchoscope

bronchospasm /brónk'sspazəm/ noun a tightening of the bronchial muscles which causes the tubes to contract, as in asthma

bronchospirometry /brónk'sspərə'metri/ noun a procedure for measuring the volume of the lungs

bronchostenosis /brónk'stənəsəs/ noun an unnatural constriction of the bronchial tubes

bronchotracheal /brónk'trāk'səl/ adjective referring to the bronchi and the trachea

bronchus /brónk'səs/ noun one of the two air passages leading from the trachea into the lungs, where they split into many bronchioles. See illustration at LUNGS in Supplement (NOTE: The plural is bronchi.)

bronze diabetes /brónz'dēbətəs/ noun same as haemochromatosis

Broviac catheter /brównvik, kəfət/ noun a type of thin catheter used to insert into a vein

brow /braʊ/ noun same as eyebrow

brown fat /braʊn 'fatt/ noun dark-coloured body fat that can easily be converted to energy and helps to control body temperature

Brown-Séquard syndrome /braʊn 'sēkərd/ noun a condition in which the spinal cord has been partly severed or compressed, with the result that the lower half of the body is paralysed on one side and loses feeling in the other side [Described 1851. After Charles Edouard Brown-Séquard (1817–94), French physiologist.]

brucellosis /brʊsəl'ləsɪs/ noun a disease which can be caught from cattle or goats or from drinking infected milk, spread by a species of the bacterium Brucella. The symptoms include tiredness, arthritis, headache, sweating, irritability and swelling of the spleen. Also called abortus fever, Malta fever, mountain fever, undulant fever

bruise /bruiz/ noun a dark painful area on the skin, where blood has escaped under the skin following a blow. ○ black eye • verb to cause a bruise on part of the body ○ She bruised her knee on the corner of the table. ○ she bruises easily even a soft blow will give her a bruise

bruised /bruizd/ adjective painful after a blow or showing the marks of a bruise ○ a badly bruised leg

bruising /bruizing/ noun an area of bruises ○ The baby has bruising on the back and legs.

bruit /bruːt/ noun an unusual noise heard through a stethoscope

Brunner's glands /bruːnər ˈɡleɪndz/ plural noun glands in the duodenum and jejunum [Described 1687. After Johann Konrad Brunner (1653–1727), Swiss anatomist at Heidelberg, then at Strasbourg.]

bruxism /brʌkˈzɪzəm/ noun the action of grinding the teeth, as a habit

BSE abbreviation bovine spongiform encephalopathy

bubo /ˈbuːbəʊ/ noun a swelling of a lymph node in the groin or armpit

bubonic plague /ˈbuːbənɪk ˈpleɪɡ/ noun a usually fatal infectious disease caused by Yersinia pestis in the lymph system, transmitted to humans by fleas from rats

buccal /ˈbʌkəl/ adjective referring to the cheek or mouth

buccinator /ˈbʌkˈsɪnətər/ noun a cheek muscle which helps the jaw to move when chewing

Budd-Chiari syndrome /bʌd ˈkɛəri ˈsɪndrəm/ noun a disease of the liver, where thrombosis has occurred in the hepatic veins [Described 1845. After George Budd (1808–82), Professor of Medicine at King's College Hospital, London; Hans von Chiari (1851–1916), Viennese pathologist who was Professor of Pathological Anatomy at Strasbourg and later at Prague.]

budesonide /bjuːdəsonɪd/ noun a corticosteroid drug taken by inhalation or in tablets, used in the treatment of hay fever and nasal polyps

Buerger's disease /ˈbjuərəɡər ˈdɪzi/ noun same as thromboangiitis obliterans [Described 1908. After Leo Buerger (1879–1943), New York physician of Viennese origin.]

buffer /ˈbʌftər/ noun a substance that keeps a constant balance between acid and alkali • verb to prevent a solution from becoming acid

buffer action /ˈbʌftər, ˈækʃən/ noun the balancing process between acid and alkali

buffered /ˈbʌftəd/ adjective prevented from becoming acid ○ buffered aspirin

bug /bʌg/ noun an infectious disease (informal) ○ He caught a bug on holiday. ○ Half the staff have got a stomach bug.

bulb /ˈbʌlb/ noun a round part at the end of an organ or bone

bulbar /ˈbʌlbər/ adjective 1. referring to a bulb 2. referring to the medulla oblongata
addiction

local anaesthetic, used in epidural anaesthesia

bupivacaine

congenital glaucoma occurring in infants

swelling of the big toe, caused by tight shoes

bunion

Berlin.

conduction tissue

bundle branch block

bunion

bunion

bunion

bulimia

bulbourethral gland

bumetanide

dislocation

Exercise.

which a person eats too much and is incapable of controlling his or her eating. The eating is followed by behaviour designed to prevent weight gain, e.g. vomiting, use of laxatives or excessive exercise.

bulla

buprenorphine

NOTE

NOTE

NOTE

NOTE

byssinosis

burkitt's tumor

burkitt's lymphoma

bursitis

bursa

buttonhole surgery

bypass

byssinosis
c symbol centi-
C symbol Celsius
CABG abbreviation coronary artery bypass graft
cachet /kəˈʃeɪt/ noun a quantity of a drug wrapped in paper, to be swallowed
cachexia /ˈkeksəsiə/ noun a state of ill health characterised by wasting and general weakness
cadaver /ˈkeɪdəvər/ noun a dead body, especially one used for dissection
cadaveric /ˈkeɪdəvrɪk/ adjective referring to a person who is thin or wasting away
caeal /ˈsɪkəʊl/ adjective referring to the caecum
caecosigmoidostomy /ˈsɪkəsɪgmoɪdəstəmə/ noun an operation to open up a connection between the caecum and the sigmoid colon
caecostomy /ˈsɪkəsɒstmə/ noun a surgical operation to make an opening between the caecum and the abdominal wall to allow faeces to be passed without going through the rectum and anus
caecum /ˈsɪkəm/ noun the wider part of the large intestine in the lower right-hand side of the abdomen at the point where the small intestine joins it and which has the appendix attached to it. See illustration at DIGESTIVE SYSTEM in Supplement. Also called cecum (NOTE: The plural is caeca.)
caesarean /ˈkeɪzərɪən/ noun a surgical operation to deliver a baby by cutting through the abdominal wall into the uterus. Compare vaginal delivery
caesium /ˈsɪzɪəm/ noun a radioactive element, used in treatment by radiation (NOTE: The chemical symbol is Cs.)
caesium-137 /ˌsɪzɪəm-137/ noun a radioactive substance used in radiology
café au lait spots /ˌkæfəu lɛt sɒptz/ plural noun brown spots on the skin, which are an indication of von Recklinghausen’s disease
caffeine /ˈkæfiən/ noun an alkaloid found in coffee, tea and chocolate, which acts as a stimulant
caisson disease /ˈkɛs(ə)n dɪˈziːz/ noun a condition in which a person experiences pains in the joints and stomach, and dizziness caused by nitrogen in the blood. Also called the bends, decompression sickness
calamine /ˈkæləmən/ noun a lotion based on zinc oxide, which helps relieve skin irritation, caused e.g. by sunburn or chickenpox
calc- /ˈkælkəʊl/ prefix same as calci- (used before vowels)
calcaemia /ˈkælkəsɪmiə/ noun a condition in which the blood contains an unusually large amount of calcium
calcaneal /ˈkælkəniəl/ adjective referring to the calcaneus
calcaneus /ˈkælkəniəs/ noun the heel bone, situated underneath the talus. See illustration at FOOT in Supplement
calcareous degeneration /ˈkælkərəs dɪˈdʒenərəʃən/ noun the formation of calcium on bones or at joints in old age
calci- /ˈkælθəʊl/ prefix referring to calcium
calcification /ˈkælkəlfɪˈkeɪʃən/ noun a process of hardening caused by the formation of deposits of calcium salts
calcified /ˌkælkəlˈfɪd/ adjective made hard ○ Bone is calcified connective tissue.
calcinosis /ˌkælkənəˈsɪnəs/ noun a medical condition where deposits of calcium salts form in joints, muscles and organs
calcitonin /ˌkælkəˈtaɪnən/ noun a hormone produced by the thyroid gland, which is believed to regulate the level of calcium in the blood. Also called thyrocalcitonin
calciun /ˈkælsɪən/ noun a metallic chemical element which is a major component of bones and teeth and which is essential for various bodily processes such as blood clotting (NOTE: The chemical symbol is Ca.)
calcium antagonist /ˌkaːlsɪəm ænˌtægənəst/ noun a drug which makes the arteries wider and slows the heart rate. It is used in the treatment of angina.
calcium channel blocker /kal'siəm ,ˈkælsiiəm/ blocks, calcium blocker /kal'siəm ,ˈkælsiiəm/ a drug which affects the smooth muscle of the cardiovascular system, used in the treatment of angina and hypertension (NOTE: Calcium, e.g. a common mineral, has names ending in -dipine, nifedipine. Not to be used in heart failure as they reduce cardiac function further.)
calculus /ˈkalkJuːləs/ a hard mass like a little piece of stone, which forms inside the body. Also called stone (NOTE: The plural is calculi.)

Campylobacter /ˈkæmpləbæktər/ a bacterium which is a common cause of food poisoning in humans and of spontaneous abortion in farm animals

channel /ˈkænəl/ a tube along which something flows

canalicularis /ˌkaːnalɪkərəlɪs/ inflation of the tear duct canal

canalculus /ˌkaːnalɪkələs/ a little canal, e.g. a canal leading to the Haversian systems in compact bone, or a canal leading to the laticmal duct (NOTE: The plural is canaliciuli.)
cancrulose /ˌkænkrəliʊs/ a condition in which canals exist in an organ

cancerophobia /ˌkænkrəˈfəʊbiə/ a fear of cancer

cancer phobia /ˈkænkrərˈfəʊbiə/ same as cancerophobia

cancrum oris /ˈkæŋkrəm ərɪs/ severe ulcers in the mouth, leading to gangrene. Also called nona

candidiasis /ˌkændidəˈdʒæsiəs/, candidosis /ˌkændidəˈdʒəsiəs/ fungal infection with a species of the fungus Candida

canica /ˈkænɪkə/ a form of leptospirosis, giving high fever and jaundice

canine /ˈkænum/, canine tooth /ˈkænum ˌtʌθ/ a pointed tooth next to an incisor. See illustration at teeth in Supplement

canines /ˌkænɪnˈjuːz/ a loss of pigments, which makes the hair turn white

cannabis /ˈkænbəsɪs/ a drug made from the dried leaves or flowers of the Indian hemp plant. Recreational use of cannabis is illegal and its use to relieve the pain associated with conditions such as multiple sclerosis is controversial. Also called hashish, marijuana

cannula /ˈkænnjuːlə/ a tube with a trocar or blunt needle inside, inserted into the body to introduce fluids

canthal /ˈkæntəl/ adjective referring to the corner of the eye

cantholysis /ˌkæntəlɪˈzaɪs/ the same as cantholysis

canthoplasty /ˌkæntəˈplɔːstərɪ/ an operation to repair the canthus of the eye

Canthoblast /ˈkæntəbлаst/ in Supplemen
t

Campylobacter /ˈkæmpləbæktər/ a bacterium which is a common cause of food poisoning in humans and of spontaneous abortion in farm animals

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Canthoblast /ˈkæntəbлаst/ in Supplemen
t
canthus

tion to cut through the canthus to enlarge the groove in the eyelid
canthus /ˈkænθəs/ noun a corner of the eye
cap /kæp/ noun 1. a covering which protects something 2. an artificial hard covering for a damaged or broken tooth
CAPD abbreviation continuous ambulatory peritoneal dialysis
capeline bandage /kæpəlain,ˈbændɪdi/ noun a bandage shaped like a cap, either for the head, or to cover a stump after amputation
capillary /kəˈpɪləri/ noun a tiny blood vessel between the arterioles and the venules, which carries blood and nutrients into the tissues
capita /ˈkæptə/ plural of caput
capitate /ˌkæpɪtɪt/ , capitate bone /ˈkæpɪtɪt/ noun the largest of the eight small carpal bones in the wrist. See illustration at HAND in Supplement
capitellum /ˌkæpɪˈtɛljʊm/ noun a rounded enlarged part at the end of a bone, especially this part of the upper arm bone, the humerus, that forms the elbow joint with one of the lower bones, the radius. Also called capitulum of humerus (NOTE: The plural is capitella.)
capitulum /ˌkæpɪˈtjuːlm/ noun the rounded end of a bone which articulates with another bone, e.g. the distal end of the humerus (NOTE: The plural is capitula.)
capitulum of humerus /ˌkæpɪˈtjuːlm əv ˈhjuːmərəs/ noun same as capitellum
caplet /ˌkæplət/ noun a small oblong tablet with a covering that dissolves easily and which usually cannot be broken in two
capsular /ˈkæpsjʊlər/ adjective referring to a capsule
capsule /ˈkæpsjʊl/ noun 1. a membrane round an organ or joint 2. a small hollow digestible case filled with a drug that is taken by swallowing. ☐ She swallowed three capsules of painkiller. ☐ The doctor prescribed the drug in capsule form.
capsuleectomy /ˌkæpsjʊˈlektəmi/ noun the surgical removal of the capsule round a joint
capsulitis /ˌkæpsjʊˈleɪtɪs/ noun inflammation of a capsule
capsulotomy /ˌkæpsjʊˈlɒtəmi/ noun a surgical procedure involving cutting into the capsule around a body part, e.g. cutting into the lens of the eye during the removal of a cataract
captopril /ˈkæptəprɪl/ noun a drug which helps to prevent the arteries from being made narrower by an angiotensin. It is used to control high blood pressure.
caput /ˈkæpʊt/ noun the head (NOTE: The plural is capita.)
carbamazepine /ˌkɑːbrəˈmeɪzəpɪn/ noun a drug which reduces pain and helps to prevent convulsions. It is used in the treatment of epilepsy, pain and bipolar disorders
carbenozolone /ˌkɑːbrəˈnɔːsələʊn/ noun a liquorice agent, used to treat stomach ulcers
carbidopa /ˌkɑːbrɪˈdəʊpə/ noun an inhibitor used to enable levodopa to enter the brain in larger quantities in the treatment of Parkinson’s disease
carbimazole /ˌkɑːbrɪˈmæzəl/ noun a drug which helps to prevent the formation of thyroid hormone, used in the management of hyperthyroidism
carbohydrate /ˌkɑːbrəˈhɑːdrɪt/ noun 1. a biological compound containing carbon, hydrogen and oxygen. Carbohydrates derive from sugar and are an important source of food and energy. 2. food containing carbohydrates ☐ high carbohydrate drinks

carboxylic acid /ˌkɑːrboxəˈlɪk/ noun a substance which produces a carboxylic acid
carcinogenesis /ˈkɑːsɪnədʒənəsɪs/ noun the process of forming a carcinoma in tissue

carcinogenic /ˈkɑːsɪnədʒɪnɪk/ adjective causing a carcinoma or cancer

carcinoid /ˈkɑːsɪnɔɪd/, carcinoïd tumour /ˈkɑːsɪnɔɪd ˈtjuːmər/ an intestinal tumour, especially in the appendix, which causes diarrhoea

carcinoma /ˈkɑːsɪnəmə/ noun a cancer of the epithelium or glands

carcinomatosis /ˈkɑːsɪnəmətəsɪs/ noun a carcinoma which has spread to many sites in the body

carcinomatous /ˈkɑːsɪnəmətəs/ adjective referring to carcinoma

carcinosarcoma /ˈkɑːsɪnəsɑrkoʊmə/ noun a malignant tumour containing elements of both a carcinoma and a sarcoma

cardia /ˈkɑːrdiə/ noun an opening at the top of the stomach which joins it to the gutlet

cardiac /ˈkɑːrdiək/ adjective referring to the heart

cardiac achalasia /ˈkɑːrdiək ˈækələsɪə/ noun a condition in which the heart muscle stops beating

cardiac asthma /ˈkɑːrdiək ˈæstəma/ noun difficulty in breathing caused by heart failure

cardiac catheter /ˈkɑːrdiək ˈkæθətər/ noun a catheter passed through a vein into the heart, to take blood samples, to record pressure or to examine the interior of the heart before surgery

cardiac catheterisation /ˈkɑːrdiək ˈkæθətərɪzaʃən/ noun a procedure which involves passing a catheter into the heart

cardiac cirrhosis /ˈkɑːrdiək sɜːrəsɪs/ noun cirrhosis of the liver caused by heart disease

cardiac compression /ˈkɑːrdiək kəmˈprɛʃən/ noun the compression of the heart by fluid in the pericardium

cardiac conducting system /ˈkɑːrdiək kənˈdəktəŋ sɪstəm/ noun the nerve system in the heart which links an atrium to a ventricle, so that the two beat at the same rate

cardiac cycle /ˈkɑːrdiək ˈsɪkl/ noun the repeated beating of the heart, formed of the diastole and systole

cardiac decompensation /ˈkɑːrdiək dɪkəmpəˈzɛnʃən/ noun the removal of a haematoma or constriction of the heart

cardiac failure /ˈkɑːrdiək ˈfɛələr/ noun same as heart failure

cardiac glycoside /ˈkɑːrdiək ˈɡlɑːkəsɪd/ noun a drug used in the treatment of tachycardia and atrial fibrillation, e.g. digoxin

cardiac index /ˈkɑːrdiək ˈɪndɛks/ noun the cardiac output per square metre of body surface, usually between 3.1 and 3.8 l/min/m² (litres per minute per square metre)

cardiac infarction /ˈkɑːrdiək ɪnˈfærkʃən/ noun same as myocardial infarction

cardiac monitor /ˈkɑːrdiək ˈmɔnɪtər/ noun same as electrocardiograph

cardiac murmur /ˈkɑːrdiək ˈmɜːmər/ noun same as heart murmur

cardiac muscle /ˈkɑːrdiək ˈmʌs(ə)rəl/ noun a muscle in the heart which makes the heart beat

cardiac neurosis /ˈkɑːrdiək njuːrəˈsɪs/ noun same as disordered action of the heart

cardiac notch /ˈkɑːrdiək ˈnɒtʃ/ noun 1. a point in the left lung, where the right inside wall is bent. See illustration at lung in Supplement 2, a notch at the point where the oesophagus joins the greater curvature of the stomach

cardiac orifice /ˈkɑːrdiək ˈɔːrɪfɪs/ noun an opening where the oesophagus joins the stomach

cardiac output /ˈkɑːrdiək ˈaʊtˈpʊt/ noun the volume of blood expelled by each ventricle in a specific time, usually between 4.8 and 5.3 l/min (litres per minute)

cardiac pacemaker /ˈkɑːrdiək ˈpeɪseɪməkər/ noun an electronic device implanted on a patient’s heart, or which a patient wears attached to the chest, which stimulates and regulates the heartbeat

cardiac reflex /ˈkɑːrdiək ˈrɪflɛks/ noun the reflex which controls the heartbeat automatically

cardiac surgery /ˈkɑːrdiək ˈsɜːrgəri/ noun surgery to the heart

cardiac tamponade /ˈkɑːrdiək ˈtæmpənəd/ noun pressure on the heart when the pericardial cavity fills with blood. Also called heart tamponade

cardiac vein /ˈkɑːrdiək viːn/ noun one of the veins which lead from the myocardium to the right atrium

cardinal /ˈkɑːrdɪnəl/ noun adjective most important

cardinal ligaments /ˈkɑːrdɪnəl ˈlɪgəmənts/ plural noun ligaments forming a band of connective tissue that extends from the uterine cervix and vagina to the pelvic walls. Also called Mackenrodt’s ligaments

cardio- /ˈkɑːrdiəʊ/ prefix referring to the heart

caridogenic /ˈkɑːrdiədʒənɪk/ adjective resulting from activity or disease of the heart

cardiogram /ˈkɑːrdiəɡrəm/ noun a graph showing the heartbeat, produced by a cardiograph

cardiograph /ˈkɑːrdiəɡrɑːf/ noun an instrument which records the heartbeat

cardiography /ˈkɑːrdiəˈɡræfɪ/ noun the action of recording the heartbeat
cardiologist / kɔrdɪˈɒlədʒɪst/ noun a doctor who specialises in the study of the heart

cardiology / kɔrdɪˈɒlədʒi/ noun the study of the heart, its diseases and functions

cardiomegaly / kɔrdɪˈɒmɪɡəlɪ/ noun an enlarged heart

cardiomyopathy / kɔrdɪˈɒmərəpiθi/ noun a disease of the heart muscle

cardiomyoplasty / kɔrdɪˈɒməplæstɪ/ noun an operation to improve the functioning of the heart, by using the latissimus dorsi as a stimulant

cardiomyotomy / kɔrdɪˈɒmətəmɪ/ noun an operation to treat cardiac achalasia by splitting the ring of muscles where the oesophagus joins the stomach. Also called Heider’s operation

cardiopathy / kɔrdɪˈɒpθi/ noun any kind of heart disease

cardiophone / kɔrdɪˈɒfən/ noun a microphone attached to a patient to record sounds, usually used to record the heart of an unborn baby

cardioplegia / kɔrdɪˈɒplɪdʒiə/ noun the stopping of a patient’s heart, by chilling it or using drugs, so that heart surgery can be performed

cardiopulmonary / kɔrdɪˈɒpʊləmənəri/ adjective relating to both the heart and the lungs

cardiopulmonary bypass / kɔrdɪˈɒpʊləmənəriˈbæspəs/ noun a method for artificially circulating the patient’s blood during open-heart surgery. The heart and lungs are cut off from the circulation and replaced by a pump

cardiopulmonary resuscitation / kɔrdɪˈɒpʊləmənəriˈrɛskəteɪʃən/ noun an emergency technique to make a person’s heart start beating again. It involves clearing the airways and then alternately pressing on the chest and breathing into the mouth. Abbreviation CPR

cardiopulmonary system / kɔrdɪˈɒpʊləmənəriˈsɪstəm/ noun the heart and lungs considered together as a functional unit

cardioscope / kɔrdɪˈɒskəp/ noun an instrument formed of a tube with a light at the end, used to inspect the inside of the heart

cardioplaspy / kɔrdɪˈɒpləspəs/ noun same as cardiac achalasia

cardiothoracic / kɔrdɪˈɒθɔrəs/ adjective referring to the heart and the chest region of a cardiothoracic surgeon

cardiography / kɔrdɪˈɒgrəfi/ noun the recording of the heartbeat of a fetus

cardiotomy / kɔrdɪˈɒtəmɪ/ noun an operation that involves cutting the wall of the heart

cardiomyopathy syndrome / kɔrdɪˈɒtəmɪˈsᵢndrəm/ noun fluid in the membranes round the heart after cardiomyotomy

cardiotoxic / kɔrdɪˈɒtəsɪk/ adjective which is toxic to the heart

cardiographic / kɔrdɪˈɒgrəfɪk/ adjective referring to the heart and the blood circulation system

cardiogenic / kɔrdɪˈɒnɪk/ adjective referring to a substance which causes caries

carotenemia / kɔrtəˈnɪmɪə/ noun any disease which affects the circulatory system, e.g. hypertension

cardioplegia / kɔrdɪˈɒpθi/ noun the system of organs and blood vessels by means of which the blood circulates round the body and which includes the heart, arteries and veins

cardiopulmonary resuscitation / kɔrdɪˈɒpʊləmənəriˈrɛskəteɪʃən/ noun a procedure to correct an irregular heartbeat by applying an electrical impulse to the chest wall. ðéfɪˈbrɪtlɪˈkeɪʃən

carditis / kɔrdɪˈtɪtɪs/ noun inflammation of the connective tissue of the heart

care pathway / kɛr ˈpeɪθweɪ/ noun the entire process of diagnosis, treatment and care that a patient goes through

care plan / kɛr ˈplæn/ noun a plan drawn up by the nursing staff for the treatment of an individual patient

caries / kɛrəˈriːz/ noun decay in a tooth or bone

carinia / kəˈriːnɪə/ noun a structure shaped like the bottom of a boat, e.g. the cartilage at the point where the trachea branches into the bronchi

carotid / kɔrˈtɪd/ noun a major blood vessel in the neck which supply blood to the head

carotid artery thrombosis / kɔrtɪd ˈθɹəmbəsɪs/ noun the formation of a blood clot in the carotid artery

carpal- / kærˈpɔl-/ prefix same as carpo- (used before vowels)
carpal / kærˈpɔl/ adjective referring to the wrist

carpal bones / kærˈpɔl bəʊnz/ plural noun the eight bones which make up the carpus or wrist. See illustration at hand in Supplement

carpal tunnel release / kærˈpɔl ˈtʌnl rəl/ noun an operation to relieve the compression of the median nerve
carpal tunnel syndrome /ˌkɑːrˈpɔːl tuˈnl/ noun a condition, usually affecting women, in which the fingers tingle and hurt at night. It is caused by compression of the median nerve.

carphology /ˈkɑːrfoʊl/ noun the action of pulling at the bedclothes, a sign of delirium in typhoid and other fevers. Also called floccitation.

carpometacarpal joint /ˌkærpəˈmeɪtəkərˈpɔːl/ noun one of the joints between the carpals and metacarpals. Also called CM joint.

carpopedal spasm /ˌkærpəˈpɔːdəl/ spˈæzm noun a spasm in the hands and feet caused by lack of calcium.

carpus /ˈkɑːrpus/ noun the bones by which the lower arm is connected to the hand. Also called wrist. See illustration at hand in Supplement (NOTE: The plural is carpi.)

carrier /ˈkɛriər/ noun 1. a person who carries bacteria of a disease in his or her body and who can transmit the disease to others without showing any signs of being infected with it. 2. Ten percent of the population are believed to be unwitting carriers of the bacteria. 3. a healthy person who carries a chromosome variation that gives rise to a hereditary disease such as haemophilia or Duchenne muscular dystrophy.

cartilage /ˈkɑːrtɪlj/ noun thick connective tissue which lines and cushions the joints and which forms part of the structure of an organ. Cartilage in small children is the first stage in the formation of bones.

cartilaginous /ˌkɑːrtɪˈleɪdʒnəs/ adjective made of cartilage.

Catalyse /ˈkætlɪs/ verb to act as a catalyst and help make a chemical reaction take place (NOTE: The US spelling is catalyze.)

catalyst /ˈkætlɪst/ noun a substance which produces or helps a chemical reaction without itself changing or an enzyme which acts as a catalyst in the digestive process.

catalytic /ˈkætlɪtɪk/ adjective referring to catalysis.

catabolism /ˌkætəˈbolɪzəm/ noun the process of breaking down complex chemicals into simple chemicals.

catalase /ˈkætaləs/ noun an enzyme present in the blood and liver which catalyses the breakdown of hydrogen peroxide into water and oxygen.

catalepsy /ˌkætəˈlepsɪ/ noun a condition often associated with schizophrenia, where a person becomes incapable of sensation, the body is rigid and he or she does not move for long periods.

catalase /ˈkætaləs/ verb to act as a catalyst and help make a chemical reaction take place (NOTE: The US spelling is catalyze.)

catalyst /ˈkætlɪst/ noun a substance which produces or helps a chemical reaction without itself changing or an enzyme which acts as a catalyst in the digestive process.

catalytic /ˈkætlɪtɪk/ adjective referring to catalysis.

catamenia /ˌkætməˈniə/ noun menstruation (technical).

catalepsy /ˌkætəˈlepsɪ/ noun a condition in which a person’s muscles become suddenly rigid and he or she falls without losing consciousness, possibly caused by a shock.

cataract /ˌkætəˈrækt/ noun a condition in which the lens of the eye gradually becomes hard and opaque.

cataractous /ˌkætəˈræktəs/ adjective referring to cataract.

Cataract /ˈkɑːtərækt/ noun inflammation of the mucous membranes in the nose and throat, creating an excessive amount of mucus.
catatonia /ˌkætəˈtɒniə/ noun a condition in which a psychiatric patient is either motionless or shows violent reactions to stimulation

catatonic /ˌkætəˈtɒnɪk/ adjective referring to behaviour in which a person is either motionless or extremely violent

catchment area /ˈkætʃmənt ˈɛəriə/ noun an area around a hospital which is served by that hospital

catecholamines /ˈkætəˌkɒləməniz/ plural noun the hormones adrenaline and noradrenaline which are released by the adrenal glands

catgut /ˈkætɡʌt/ noun a thread made from part of the intestines of sheep, now usually artificially hardened, used to sew up cuts made during surgery

catharsis /ˈkæθərəsɪs/ noun purgation of the bowels

cathartic /ˈkæθətɪk/ adjective laxative or purgative

catheter /ˈkæθɪtər/ noun a tube passed into the body along one of the passages in the body

catheterisation /ˌkæθɪˈtɛrizəʃən/, catheterization noun the act of putting a catheter into a patient’s body

CAT scan /ˈkæt skæn, CT scan /ˈsɪti skæn/ noun same as CT scan

cat-scratch disease /ˌkæt skrætʃ dɪˈzɪzi/ noun an illness in which the patient has a fever and swollen lymph glands, thought to be caused by a bacterium transmitted to humans by the scratch of a cat. It may also result from scratching with other sharp points.

cauda equina /ˈkɔːdə ɪˈkwɪnəs/ noun a group of nerves which go from the spinal cord to the lumbar region and the coccyx

caudal /ˈkɔːdəl/ adjective (in humans) referring to the cauda equina

caudal anaesthetic /ˌkɔːdəl əˈnæestθɪk/ noun an anaesthetic, injected into the base of the spine to remove feeling in the lower part of the body. It is often used in childbirth.

caudal analgesia /ˌkɔːdəl əˈnæl dʒiˈziə/ noun a method of pain relief that involves injecting an anaesthetic into the base of the spine to remove feeling in the lower part of the body

caul /ˈkɔːl/ noun 1, a membrane which sometimes covers a baby’s head at birth 2, same as omentum

causalgia /ˈkɔːzəlˈdʒiə/ noun burning pain in a limb, caused by a damaged nerve

causal organism /ˌkɔːzəl ɔˈɡəʊnəzəm/ noun an organism that causes a particular disease

causitive /ˈkɔːstɪkv/ noun a chemical substance that destroys tissues that it touches, adjective corrosive and destructive

cauterisation /ˌkɔːtərəˈziʃən/, cauterization noun the act of cauterising. The growth was removed by cauterisation.

cauterise /ˈkɔːtərəz/ verb to use burning, radiation or laser beams to remove tissue or to stop bleeding

cautery /ˈkɔːtəri/ noun a surgical instrument used to cauterise a wound

cavernous /ˈkævərənas/ adjective hollow

cavitating /ˌkæviˈteɪʃən/ noun the forming of a cavity

cavity /ˈkævəti/ noun a hole or space inside the body

CC abbreviation cubic centimetre

CCU abbreviation coronary care unit

CD4 /ˈsiː dɪ ˈfɔʊ/ noun a compound consisting of a protein combined with a carbohydrate which is found in some cells and helps to protect the body against infection. A CD4 count is a test used to monitor how many CD4 cells have been destroyed in people with HIV.

CDH abbreviation congenital dislocation of the hip

cefalor /ˌsɛfəlɔːr/ noun an antibacterial drug used to treat septicemia

cefotaxime /ˌsɛfəˈtæksɪm/ noun a synthetic cephalosporin used to treat bacterial infection by pseudomonads

cele /sɛl/ suffix referring to a swelling

cell /sɛl/ noun a tiny unit of matter which is the base of all plant and animal tissue (NOTE: For other terms referring to cells, see words beginning with cyto-)

cellular /ˈsɛljuələr/ adjective 1, referring to cells, or formed of cells 2, made of many similar parts connected together

cellulite /ˈsɛljuəlaɪt/ noun lumpy deposits of subcutaneous fat, especially in the thighs and buttocks

cellulitis /ˈsɛljuəlɪtɪs/ noun a usually bacterial inflammation of connective tissue or of the subcutaneous tissue

cellulose /ˈsɛljuəlɔʊs/ noun a carbohydrate which makes up a large percentage of plant matter

Celsius /ˈsɛlɛsiəs/ noun a metric scale of temperature on which 0° is the point at which water freezes and 100° is the point at which water boils under average atmospheric conditions. Also called centigrade. Fahrenheit (NOTE: It is usually written as a C after the degree sign: 52°C (say: fifty-two degrees Celsius).) [Described 1742. After Anders Celsius (1701–44), Swedish astronomer and scientist.]

Celsius temperature /ˈsɛlɛsiəs ˌteɪmpərətʃər/ noun temperature as measured on the Celsius scale

CEMACH /ˈsɪmək/ noun a UK research project investigating the causes of infant deaths and still-
centrum /ˈsentrəm/ noun the central part of an organ (NOTE: The plural is centra.)
cerebral infarction

centrigrade /ˈsentrɪgrəd/ adjective referring to the centre

central line /ˈsentrəl laɪn/ noun a catheter inserted through the neck, used to monitor central venous pressure in conditions such as shock where fluid balance is severely upset

central nervous system /ˈsentrəl ˈnɜːvəs ˈsɪstəm/ noun the brain and spinal cord which link together all the nerves

central venous pressure /ˈsentrəl ˈvɛnəs ˈpreʃər/ noun blood pressure in the right atrium of the heart, which can be measured by means of a catheter

centripetal /ˈsɛntrɪpətəl/ adjective moving towards the centre

centrifuge /ˈsɛntrɪfjuːdʒ/ noun a device to separate the components of a liquid by rapid spinning

centriole /ˈsɛntrɪʊl/ noun a small structure found in the cytoplasm of a cell, which involved in forming the spindle during cell division

centromere /ˈsɛntrəmər/ noun a constricted part of a chromosome, seen as a cell divides

centrosome /ˈsɛntrəsəm/ noun the structure in the cytoplasm of a cell, near the nucleus, and containing the centrioles

central /ˈsentrəl/ adjective referring to the centre

cephalalgia /ˈsɛfələldʒiə/ noun same as headache

cerebral infarction /ˈsɛrəbrəl ˈɪnfərəkʃən/ noun the death of brain tissue as a result of reduction in the blood supply to the brain

cephalexin /ˈsɛfɛkˈsiːn/ noun an antibiotic used to treat infections of the urinary system or respiratory tract

cephalometres /ˈsɛfələmətriːz/ noun an X-ray photograph of the bones of the skull

cephalopelvic disproportion /ˌsɛfəloʊˈpelvɪk ˈdɪsprəˈpɛʃən/ noun a condition in which the pelvic opening of the mother is not large enough for the head of the fetus

cephalosporin /ˈsɛfələsˈpɔːrɪn/ noun a drug used in the treatment of bacterial infection

centrioles /ˈsɛntrɪˌɔɪli/ noun 1, an adhesive used in dentistry to attach a crown to the base of a tooth 2, same as cementum

cement /ˈsɛmənt/ noun a layer of thick hard material which covers the roots of teeth

census /ˈsɛnəs/ noun a systematic count or survey

centimetre /ˈsentɪmɛtər/ noun a unit of measurement of length equal to one hundredth of a metre. Symbol cm

centigrade /ˈsentɪɡrəd/ noun same as Celsius

centile chart /ˈsɛntɪlɛ tʃɑrt/ noun a chart showing the number of babies who fall into each percentage category, as regards, e.g., birth weight

cephalometry /ˈsɛfələmətri/ noun the process of measuring the size and shape of the brain

cerebral dominance /ˈsɛrəbrəl ˈdəmənəns/ noun the usual condition where the centres for various functions are located in one cerebral hemisphere

celes /ˈsɛləs/ adjective referring to the head

cerebral cortex /ˈsɛrəbrəl ˈkɔrɛkt/ noun the outer covering of grey matter which covers the cerebrum

cerebro /ˈsɛrəbrəʊ/ prefix same as cerebral- (used before vowels)

cephaloscopy /ˌsɛfələsˈskɒpi/ noun moving away from the centre

centrifugation /ˌsɛntrɪˈfjuːɡəʃən/ noun the process of separating the components of a liquid in a centrifuge

cephalohæmato ma /ˌsɛfələhæməˈteɪmə/ noun a swelling found mainly on the head of babies delivered with forceps

centrifuging /ˌsɛntrɪˈfjuːɡɪŋ/ noun a small structure found in the cytoplasm of a cell, which involved in forming the spindle during cell division

cephalometre /ˌsɛfələˈmɛtrə/ noun a condition in which the pelvic opening of the mother is not large enough for the head of the fetus

cephalocele /ˌsɛfələˈsɔkl/ noun a swelling caused by part of the brain passing through a weak point in the bones of the skull

centrigrad/ /ˈsentrɪgrəd/ adjective referring to the centre
cerebral ischaemia /ˌsɛrəbrəl ɪˈskɪəmiə/ noun failure in the blood supply to the brain

cerebral palsy /ˌsɛrəbrəl ˈpɔləsi/ noun a disorder mainly due to brain damage occurring before birth, or due to poor coordination of muscular processes, including the cranial nerves, hearing and sight, and sometimes mental impairment (NOTE: Premature babies are at higher risk.)

cerebral peduncle /ˌsɛrəbrəl ˈpɛdəŋkəl/ noun a mass of nerve fibres connecting the cerebral hemispheres to the midbrain. See illustration at brain in Supplement

cerebral thrombosis /ˌsɛrəbrəl θroʊmˈbɔsıs/ noun same as cerebrovascular accident

cerebro-/ˌsɛrəbrəʊ/ prefix referring to the cerebral

cerebrospinal /ˌsɛrəbrəʊˈspɪnəl/ adjective
referring to the brain and the spinal cord

cerebrospinal fluid /ˌsɛrəbrəʊˈspɪnəl/ noun fluid which surrounds the brain and the spinal cord. Abbreviation CSF

COMMENT: CSF is found in the space between the arachnoid mater and pia mater of the brain, within the ventricles of the brain and in the central canal of the spinal cord. It consists mainly of water, with some sugar and sodium chloride. Its function is to cushion the brain and spinal cord and it is continually formed and absorbed to maintain the correct pressure.

cerebrovascular /ˌsɛrəbrəʊˈvæsəkjʊəl/ adjective referring to the blood vessels in the brain

cerebrovascular accident /ˌsɛrəbrəʊˌvæsəkˈʃʊəl/ noun a sudden blocking of or bleeding from a blood vessel in the brain resulting in temporary or permanent paralysis or death. Also called stroke

cerebrum /ˈsɛrəbrəm/ noun the largest part of the brain, formed of two sections, the cerebral hemispheres, which run along the length of the head. The cerebrum controls the main mental processes, including the memory. Also called telencephalon

cerumen /ˈsɛrəmən/ noun wax which forms inside the ear. Also called earwax

ceruminous gland /ˌsɛrəˈmjuːnəs ˌgland/ noun a gland which secretes earwax. See illustration at ear in Supplement

cervico- /səˈvɪkəʊ/ prefix same as cervical- (used before vowels)

cervical /səˈvɪkəl, ˈsəvəkəl/ adjective referring to the neck

cervical canal /səˈvɪkəl ˈkænəl/ noun a tube running through the cervix, from the point where the uterus joins the vagina to the entrance of the uterine cavity. Also called cervicocoele canal

cervical cancer /ˈsɛrəvɪkəl ˈkænsər/ noun a cancer of the cervix of the uterus

cervical collar /ˈsɛrəvɪkəl ˈkɔlər/ noun a special strong orthopaedic collar to support the head of a person with neck injuries or an injury such as cervical spondylosis

cervical erosion /ˈsɛrəvɪkəl ərəˈʒən/ noun a condition in which the epithelium of the mucous membrane lining the cervix uteri extends outside the cervix

cervical ganglion /ˈsɛrəvɪkəl ˈɡæŋglɪən/ noun one of the bundles of nerves in the neck

cervical incompetence /ˈsɛrəvɪkəl ɪnˈkɒmpɛntns/ noun a dysfunction of the cervix of the uterus which is often the cause of spontaneous abortions and premature births and can be remedied by Shirodkar’s operation

cervical intraepithelial neoplasia /ˈsɛrəvɪkəl ɪntrəˈɛpɪθɪlɪəl ˈnəʊpləsi/ noun changes in the cells of the cervix which may lead to cervical cancer. Abbreviation CIN

cervical nerve /ˈsɛrəvɪkəl ˈnɜrv/ noun spinal nerve in the neck

cervical node /ˈsɛrəvɪkəl ˈnəʊd/ noun lymph node in the neck

cervical plexus /ˈsɛrəvɪkəl ˈplɛkəs/ noun a group of nerves in front of the vertebrae in the neck, which lead to nerves supplying the skin and muscles of the neck, and also the phrenic nerve which controls the diaphragm

cervical rib /ˈsɛrəvɪkəl ˈrɪb/ noun an extra rib sometimes found attached to the vertebrae above the other ribs and which may cause thoracic outlet syndrome

cervical smear /ˈsɛrəvɪkəl ˈsmɛr/ noun a test for cervical cancer, where cells taken from the mucus in the cervix of the uterus are examined

cervical spondylosis /ˈsɛrəvɪkəl ˈspɒndɪləs/ noun a degenerative change in the neck bones

cervical vertebrae /ˈsɛrəvɪkəl ˈvɜrtəbrə/ plural noun the seven bones which form the neck

cervicectomy /ˈsɛrɪvɪkɪsɛktəmi/ noun the surgical removal of the cervix uteri

cervicitis /ˈsɛrɪvɪsɪtɪs/ noun inflammation of the cervix uteri

cervico-/ˌsɛrɪvɪkəʊ/ prefix referring to the neck

cervicocoele canal /ˌsɛrɪvɪkəʊˈkɔlər ˈkænəl/ noun same as cervical canal

cervix /ˈsɛrɪvɪks/ noun 1. any narrow neck of an organ 2. the neck of the uterus, the narrow lower
part of the uterus leading into the vagina. Also called cervix uteri

CESDI abbreviation Confidential Enquiry into Stillbirths and Deaths in Infancy. © CEMACH

cesium / sizzəm/ noun US same as caesium

cetrimide / setri'mid/ noun a mixture of ammonium compounds, used in disinfectants and antiseptics

CFT abbreviation complement fixation test

chafe / cef/ verb to rub something, especially to rub against the skin © The rough cloth of the collar chafed the girl’s neck.

Chagas’ disease / tʃagəs dɪˈziːz/ noun a type of sleeping sickness found in South America, transmitted by insect bites which pass trypanosomes into the bloodstream. Children are mainly affected and if untreated the disease can cause fatal heart block in early adult life. [Described 1909. After Carlos Chagas (1879–1934), Brazilian scientist and physician.]

CHAI abbreviation Commission for Healthcare Audit and Improvement

chalasia / tʃəˈleɪziə/ noun an excessive relaxation of the oesophageal muscles, which causes regurgitation

chalazion / kəˈleɪzɪən/ noun same as meibomian cyst

chalone / kɛləʊn/ , ‘kælən/ noun a hormone which stops a secretion, as opposed to those hormones which stimulate secretion

chancro / tʃæŋkroʊ/ noun a sore on the lip, penis or eyelid which is the first symptom of syphilis

chancroid / tʃæŋkroʊd/ noun a venereal sore with a soft base, situated in the groin or on the genitals and caused by the bacterium Haemophilus ducreyi. Also called soft chancre

characterise / tʃærɪˈsaɪz/ , characterize verb to be a typical or special quality or feature of something or someone © The disease is characterised by the development of lesions throughout the body.

charcoal / tʃærˈkɔʊl/ noun a highly absorbent substance, formed when wood is burnt in the absence of oxygen, used to relieve diarrhoea or intestinal gas and in cases of poisoning

Charcot’s joint / tʃɑːkət/ noun a joint which becomes deformed because the patient cannot feel pain in it when the nerves have been damaged by syphilis, diabetes or leprosy [Described 1866. After Jean-Martin Charcot (1825–93), French neurologist.]

Charcot’s triad / tʃɑːkət/ noun three symptoms of multiple sclerosis: rapid eye movement, tremor and scanning speech

Charnley clamps / tʃɑːrli/ ‘klɛmps/ plural noun metal clamps fixed to a rod through a bone to hold it tight

chart / tʃɑːrt/ noun a record of information shown as a series of lines or points on graph paper © a temperature chart

charting / tʃɑːtɪŋ/ noun the preparation and updating of a hospital patient’s chart by nurses and doctors

CHC abbreviation 1. child health clinic 2. community health council

CHD abbreviation coronary heart disease

check-up / tʃɛk ʌp/ noun a general examination by a doctor or dentist © She went for a check-up. © He had a heart check-up last week.

cheek / tʃɛk/ noun 1. one of two fleshy parts of the face on each side of the nose 2. either side of the buttocks (informal)

cheekbone / tʃɛkbɔʊn/ noun an arch of bone in the face beneath the cheek which also forms the lower part of the eye socket

chel- / kəl/ prefix same as chelio- (used before vowels)

chelitis / kəˈlɪtɪs/ noun inflammation of the lips

chelio- / kəlɪəʊ/ prefix referring to the lips

chelioschisis / kəlɪəʊˈsɪsɪs/ noun a double cleft upper lip

cheliosis / kəlɪəʊˈsɪsɪs/ noun swelling and cracks on the lips and corners of the mouth caused by lack of vitamin B

cheiloro-/kɪəlɔːroʊ/ prefix referring to the hand

cheiropompholyx / kɪəˈrɒpɒmfeɪlɪks/ noun a disorder of the skin in which tiny blisters appear on the palms of the hand

chelating agent / kɪəˈleɪtɪŋ əˈdʒɛnt/ noun a chemical compound which can combine with some metals, used as a treatment for metal poisoning

chemical symbol / kəmˈsɪbl/ noun letters which represent a chemical substance © Na is the symbol for sodium.

chemistry / kəmˈstɪstri/ noun the study of substances, elements and compounds and their reactions with each other

chemo / kəˈməʊ/ , kɪəˈməʊ/ prefix chemotherapy (informal)

chemo- / kəməʊ, kɪəməʊ/ prefix referring to chemistry

chemoreceptor / kɪəˈməʊrəsˈseptər/ noun a cell which responds to the presence of a chemical compound by activating a nerve, e.g. a taste bud reacting to food or cells in the carotid body reacting to lowered oxygen and raised carbon dioxide in the blood

chemosis / kɪəˈmɒsɪs/ noun swelling of the conjunctiva

chemotaxis / kɪəˈməʊtəkˈsɪsɪs/ noun the movement of a cell when it is attracted to or repelled by a chemical substance
Chemotherapeutic agent

Chemotherapeutic agent /kɪθməˈθɛrətɪk/ noun a chemical substance used to treat a disease

Chemotherapy /ˌkɪθməˈθɛrəpi/ noun the use of drugs such as antibiotics, painkillers or antiseptic lotions to fight a disease, especially using toxic chemicals to destroy rapidly developing cancer cells

Chest /tʃest/ noun 1. the upper front part of the body between the neck and stomach. Also called thorax 2. same as thorax (NOTE: For other terms referring to the chest, see pectoral and words beginning with steth-, thorac-, thoraco-)

Chest pain /tʃest peɪn/ noun pain in the chest which may be caused by heart disease

Cheesy /ˈtʃeɪzɪ/ adjective having phlegm in the lungs, or having a tendency to chest complaints

Cheyne–Stokes respiration /ˌtʃeɪn ˈstʌks resɪˈpɪʃən/ noun irregular breathing, usually found in people who are unconscious, with short breaths gradually increasing to deep breaths, then reducing again, until breathing appears to stop

Chiastic /ˈkaɪəstɪk/ adjective referring to the hand

Children /tʃɪldrən/ plural of child

Chiropodist /ˈkərɪpədɪst/ noun a person who specialises in treatment of minor disorders of the feet

Chiropody /ˈkərɪpədɪ/ noun the study and treatment of minor diseases and disorders of the feet

Chiropactic /ˌkərɪprəˈtɪk/ noun the treatment and prevention of disorders of the neuromusculoskeletal system by making adjustments primarily to the bones of the spine

Chiropractor /ˌkərɪprəˈtɪkər/ noun a person who treats musculoskeletal disorders by making adjustments primarily to the bones of the spine

Chiropractor /ˌkərɪprəˈtɪk/ noun same as chiropractic (informal)

Chinese medicine /ˌtʃiˈmeɪnɪz/ noun a system of diagnosis, treatment and prevention of illness developed in China over many centuries. It uses herbs, minerals and animal products, exercise, massage and acupuncture.

Chinese restaurant syndrome /ˌtʃiˈmeɪnɪz rɪˈstrɒnt ˈsɜːndrəm/ noun an allergic condition which gives people severe headaches after eating food flavoured with monosodium glutamate (informal)

Chiro-/kəˈrɪroʊ/ prefix referring to the hand

Chitin /kɪˈtɪn/ noun a yellow crystalline powder, used as a sterilising agent. For other terms referring to the hand, see chiro-

Chlorine /ˈklaʊrɪn/ noun a powerful antibacterial agent which sometimes causes the collapse of blood cell production, so is used only for treating life-threatening diseases such as meningitis

Chlorodiazepoxide /ˌklaʊrəˈdɪzəpɒksaɪd/ noun a yellow crystalline powder, used as a tranquilliser and treatment for alcoholism

Chlorhexidine /ˈklaʊrɪhɛksɪdɪn/ noun a disinfectant mouthwash

Chlorination /ˌklaʊrəˈnɪʃn/ noun sterilisation by adding chlorine
cholecalciferol /ˌkəlɪkəlˈsɪfrəl/ noun a form of vitamin D found naturally in fish-liver oils and egg yolks
cholecytectomy /ˌkələsˈsɪtkektəmi/ noun the surgical removal of the gall bladder
cholecytitis /ˌkələsˈsɪtɪtɪs/ noun inflammation of the gall bladder
cholecytostomy /ˌkələsɪstəˈməʊ/ noun a surgical operation to join the gall bladder to the duodenum to allow bile to pass into the intestine when the main bile duct is blocked
cholecytography /ˌkələsɪstəˈɡrɑːfi/ noun an X-ray examination of the gall bladder
cholecytokinin /ˌkələsɪstəˈkɪnɪn/ noun a hormone released by cells at the top of the small intestine. It stimulates the gall bladder, making it contract and release bile.
cholecytostomy /ˌkələsɪstəˈtəmɪ/ noun a surgical operation to make a cut in the gall bladder, usually to remove gallstones
choledoch- /ˌkələdɔːk/ prefix referring to the common bile duct
choledocholithiasis /ˌkələdɔːkˌlaɪˈθɪəsɪs/ noun same as choledolithiasis
choledocholithotomy /ˌkələdɔːkˌlaɪˈθɪətəmɪ/ noun a surgical operation to remove a gallstone by cutting into the bile duct
choledochostomy /ˌkələdɔːkˌstəˈmɪ/ noun a surgical operation to make an opening in a bile duct
choledochotomy /ˌkələdɔːkˌtəˈmɪ/ noun a surgical operation to make a cut in the common bile duct to remove gallstones
cholelithiasis /ˌkələlɪθˈɪəsɪs/ noun a condition in which gallstones form in the gall bladder or bile ducts. Also called choledocholithiasis
cholelithotomy /ˌkələˈlɪθətəmɪ/ noun the surgical removal of gallstones by cutting into the gall bladder
cholera /ˈkɒlərə/ noun a serious bacterial disease spread through food or water which has been infected by *Vibrio cholerae*. A *cholera epidemic broke out after the flood.
choleresis /ˌkɒləˈrɛsɪs/ noun the production of bile by the liver
choleric /ˌkɒləˈrɛtɪk/ adjective referring to a substance which increases the production and flow of bile
cholestatic /ˌkɒləˈstɛstɪs/ noun a condition in which all bile does not pass into the intestine but some remains in the liver and causes jaundice
cholesteatoma /ˌkəlstəˈtəmə/ noun a cyst containing some cholesterol found in fats and oils, also produced by the liver and forming an essential part of all cells.
cholesterolaemia /kəˈlestərəˈliːmɪə/ noun a high level of cholesterol in the blood
cholesterosis /kəˈlestərəsɪs/ noun inflammation of the gall bladder with deposits of cholesterol
cholic acid /ˈkɒlɪk ˈæsɪd/ noun one of the bile acids
choline /ˈkɒlɪn/ noun a compound involved in fat metabolism and the precursor for acetycholine
cholinergic /ˈkɒlɪnərɪdʒɪk/ adjective referring to a neurone or receptor which responds to acetylcholine
cholinesterase /ˌkɒlɪnɪˈɛstərəs/ noun an enzyme which breaks down a choline ester
choluria /ˈkɒljuəriə/ noun same as biluria
chondr- /ˈkɒndr-/ prefix referring to cartilage
chondritis /ˈkɒndrɪtɪs/ noun inflammation of a cartilage
chondroblast /ˈkɒndrəbλæst/ noun a cell from which cartilage develops in an embryo
chondrocalcinosis /ˈkɒndrəkɔlˈsɪnəsɪs/ noun a condition in which deposits of calcium phosphate are found in articular cartilage
chondrocyte /ˈkɒndrəsɪt/ noun a mature cartilage cell
chondrodysplasia /ˌkɒndrəˈdɪspləsiə/ noun a hereditary disorder of cartilage which is linked to dwarfism
chondrodytophy /ˌkɒndrəˈdɪstrəfi/ noun any disorder of cartilage
chondroma /ˈkɒndrəmə/ noun a tumour formed of cartilaginous tissue
chondromalacia /ˌkɒndrəˈmæləsɪə/ noun degeneration of the cartilage of a joint
chondrosarcoma /ˌkɒndrəsərˈkəʊmə/ noun a malignant, rapidly growing tumour involving cartilage cells
chorda /ˈkɔrdə/ noun a cord or tendon (NOTE: The plural is chordae.)
chordee /ˈkɔrdi/ noun a painful condition where the erect penis is curved, a complication of gonorrhoea
chorditis /ˈkɔrdɪtɪs/ noun inflammation of the vocal cords
chordotomy /ˈkɔrdətəmə/ noun a surgical operation to cut a cord such as a nerve pathway in the spinal cord in order to relieve intractable pain
chorea /ˈkɔrɪə/ noun a sudden severe twitching, usually of the face and shoulders, which is a symptom of disease of the nervous system
chorion /ˈkɔriən/ noun a membrane covering the fertilised ovum
chorionic /ˌkɔrɪənɪk/ adjective referring to the chorion
chorionic gonadotrophin /ˌkɔrɪəniˌɡɒnədəˈtɹɒfɪn/ noun human chorionic gonadotrophin
chorionic villi /ˌkɔrɪəniˌvɪlɪ/ plural noun tiny finger-like folds in the chorion
chorionic villus sampling /ˌkɔrɪəniˌvɪləs ˈsæmplɪŋ/ noun an antenatal screening test carried out by examining cells from the chorionic villi of the outer membrane surrounding an embryo, which have the same DNA as the fetus
choroid /ˌkɔrəʊid/ noun the middle layer of tissue which forms the eyeball, between the sclera and the retina. See illustration at eye in Supplement
choroiditis /ˌkɔrɪədɪˈtɪs/ noun inflammation of the choroid in the eyeball
choroidocyclitis /ˌkɔrɪədəˈsʌklɪtɪs/ noun inflammation of the choroids and ciliary body
Christmas disease /ˈkrɪsməs dɪˈziːz/ noun same as haemophilia B [After Mr Christmas, the person in whom the disease was first studied in detail.]
Christmas factor /ˈkrɪsməs ˈfæktər/ noun same as Factor IX
chrom- /ˈkrɔm-/ prefix same as chromo- (used before vowels)
-chromasia /ˈkrɒməsɪəsɪə/ suffix referring to colour
chromatid /ˈkrɔmətɪd/ noun one of two parallel filaments making up a chromosome
chromatin /ˈkrɒmətɪn/ noun a network which forms the nucleus of a cell and can be stained with basic dyes
chromatography /ˌkrɒməˈtɒɡrəfi/ noun a method of separating chemicals through a porous medium, used in analysing compounds and mixtures
chromatophore /ˌkrɒməˈtəʊfər/ noun any pigment-bearing cell in the eyes, hair and skin
chomestic acid /ˈkrɒməmɪk ˈæsɪd/ noun an unstable acid existing only in solution or in the form of a salt, sometimes used in the removal of warts
chomiscised catgut /ˈkrɒmɪsəsɪzd ˈkætgʌt/ noun catgut which is hardened with chromium to make it slower to dissolve in the body
chromium /ˈkrɒməmjuəm/ noun a metallic trace element (NOTE: The chemical symbol is Cr.)
chromo- /ˈkrɒməʊ-/ prefix referring to colour
chromosomal /ˌkrɒməsəˈræməl/ adjective referring to chromosomes
chromosome /ˌkrɒməsəʊm/ noun a rod-shaped structure in the nucleus of a cell, formed of DNA, which carries the genes
chromosome mapping /ˌkrɒməsəʊmˌmæpɪŋ/ noun a procedure by which the position of genes on a chromosome is established.
chronic /ˈkroʊnɪk/ adjective 1. referring to a disease or condition which lasts for a long time ○ He has a chronic chest complaint. Opposite acute 2. referring to serious pain (informal)

chronic abscess /ˈkrɒnɪk əˈbesəs/ noun an abscess which develops slowly over a period of time

chronic appendicitis /ˈkrɒnɪk əˈpendɪkətɪs/ noun an appendicitis which has become chronic and is always slightly inflamed. ○ grumbling appendix

chronic catarrhal rhinitis /ˈkrɒnɪk kæˈtɑːrəl rɪˈnɪtɪs/ noun a persistent form of inflammation of the nose where excess mucus is secreted through the mucous membrane

chronic fatigue syndrome /ˈkrɒnɪk ˈfeɪtɪdʒ ˌsɪndrəʊm/ noun a condition in which a person experiences loss of lung function and shows little or no response to steroid or bronchodilator drug treatments, e.g. emphysema and chronic bronchitis. Abbreviation COPD

chronic granulomatous disease /ˈkrɒnɪk ɡrænjuˈloʊmətəs ˈdiːziː/ noun a type of inflammation where macrophages are converted into epithelial-like cells as a result of infection, as in tuberculosis or sarcoidosis

chronic obstructive airways disease /ˈkrɒnɪk əbˈstræktɪv ˈeɪwəzɪz ˈdiːziː/ noun abbreviation COAD. Now called chronic obstructive pulmonary disease

chronic obstructive pulmonary disease /ˈkrɒnɪk əbˈstræktɪv ˈpəlməʊnərɪ ˈdiːziː/ noun any of a group of progressive respiratory disorders where someone experiences loss of lung function and shows little or no response to steroid or bronchodilator drug treatments, e.g. emphysema and chronic bronchitis. Abbreviation COPD

chronic pancreatitis /ˈkrɒnɪk ˈpæŋkrətɪs/ noun a persistent inflammation occurring after repeated attacks of acute pancreatitis, where the gland becomes calcified

chronic periarteritis /ˈkrɒnɪk ˈpɛriərətɪs/ noun inflammation of tissues round the shoulder joint. Also called scapulohumeral arthritis

chronic pericarditis /ˈkrɒnɪk ˌpɜːrɪkɑːrdɪtɪs/ noun a condition in which the pericardium becomes thickened and prevents the heart from functioning normally. Also called constrictive pericarditis

Chronic Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970 /ˈkrɒnɪk ˈsɪk ən dɪs,ˈɛlbərəl ˈpɜːrɪs(ə)nz ˈæk/ noun an Act of Parliament in the UK which provides benefits such as alterations to their homes for people with long-term conditions

chronic toxicity /ˈkrɒnɪk ˈtoksoʊsɪtɪ/ noun exposure to harmful levels of a toxic substance over a period of time

chrysotherapia /ˌkrɪsəθəˈræpiə/ noun treatment which involves gold injections

Chvostek’s sign /ˈkʰvəsˈtɛks sain/ noun an indication of tetany, where a spasm is produced if the facial muscles are tapped

chyle /ˈkail/ noun a fluid in the lymph vessels in the intestine, which contains fat, especially after a meal

chylomicon /ˈkai.əlˈmɪkən/ noun a particle of chyle present in the blood

chyluria /ˌkai.əlˈjʊəriə/ noun the presence of chyle in the urine

chyme /kaɪm/ noun a semi-liquid mass of food and gastric juices, which passes from the stomach to the intestine

chymotrypsin /ˌkai.məˈtrɪpsin/ noun an enzyme which digests protein

Ci abbreviation curie

cicatriz /ˈsɪkətrɪz/ noun same as scar

ciclovir /ˌsɪkəˌvlər/ noun used in the names of antiviral drugs

-cide /ˈsaɪd/ suffix referring to killing

cilia /ˈsɪliə/ plural of cillum

ciliary /ˈsɪliərɪ/ adjective referring to cilia

ciliary body /ˈsɪliərɪ ˈbɒdɪ/ noun the part of the eye which connects the iris to the choroid. See illustration at EYE in Supplement

ciliary ganglion /ˈsɪliərɪ ˈɡæŋɡlɪən/ noun a parasympathetic ganglion in the orbit of the eye, supplying the intrinsic eye muscles

ciliary muscle /ˈsɪliərɪ ˈmʌs(ə)l/ noun a muscle which makes the lens of the eye change its shape to focus on objects at different distances. See illustration at EYE in Supplement

ciliary processes /ˈsɪliərɪ ˈprəʊsɛsɪz/ plural noun the ridges behind the iris to which the lens of the eye is attached

ciliated epithelium /ˈsɪliətɪd ˈepɪˈθɪliəm/ noun a simple epithelium where the cells have tiny hairs or cilia

cilium /ˈsɪliəm/ noun 1. an eyelash 2. one of many tiny hair-like processes which line cells in passages in the body and by moving backwards and forwards drive particles or fluid along the passage (NOTE: The plural is cilia.)

cillin /ˈsɪlɪn/ noun used in the names of penicillin drugs ○ amoxicillin

cimetidine /ˌsɪməˈtɪdɪn/ noun a drug which reduces the production of stomach acid, used in peptic ulcer treatment

cimex /sɪmˈeks/ noun a bedbug or related insect which feeds on birds, humans and other mammals (NOTE: The plural is cimices.)

CIN abbreviation cervical intraepithelial neoplasia

-cin /ˈsɪn/ suffix referring to aminoglycosides ○ gentamicin

cinematics /ˈsɪnməˈtɪks/ noun the science of movement, especially of body movements

cineplasty /ˌsɪnəˈplæstɪ/ noun an amputation where the muscles of the stump of the amputated limb are used to operate an artificial limb
cineradiography /ˌsɪnərədɪˈɒgrəfi/ noun the practice of taking a series of X-ray photographs for diagnosis, or to show how something moves or develops in the body

cinesiology /ˌsɪnəsiˈɒlədʒi/ noun the study of muscle movements, particularly in relation to treatment

cinnarizine /ˌsɪnərəˈzaɪn/ noun an antihypertensive used to treat Ménière's disease

ciprofloxacin /ˌsaɪprəˈfɔksəsən/ noun a powerful antibiotic used in eye drops to treat corneal ulcers and surface infections of the eye, and in the treatment of anthrax in humans

circadian /ˈsɜːkədiən/ adjective referring to a pattern which is repeated approximately every 24 hours

circle of Willis /ˌsɜːkəl əv ˈwɪlɪs/ noun a circle of branching arteries at the base of the brain formed by the basilar artery, the anterior and posterior cerebral arteries, the anterior and posterior communicating arteries and the internal carotid arteries [Described 1664. After Thomas Willis (1621–75), English physician and anatomist.]

circulatory system /ˌsɜːkələrəri ˈsɪstəm/ noun a system of arteries and veins, together with the heart, which makes the blood circulate around the body

circum-, -cirkum prefix around

circumcision /ˌsɜːkəmˈsɪʃən/ noun the surgical removal of the foreskin of the penis

circumduction /ˌsɜːkəmdəkˈdʌntʃən/ noun the action of moving a limb so that the end of it makes a circular motion

circumflex /ˌsɜːkəmfɛks/ adjective bent or curved

circumoral /ˌsɜːkəməˈrɔːl/ adjective referring to rashes surrounding the lips

circumvallate papillae /ˌsɜːkəmˌvɔlət/ plural noun large papillae at the base of the tongue, which have taste buds

cirrhosis /ˌsɜːrəˈrɔsɪs/ noun a progressive disease of the liver, often associated with alcoholism, in which healthy cells are replaced by scar tissue

cirrhotic /ˌsɜːrəˈrɔtɪk/ adjective referring to cirrhosis

The patient had a cirrhotic liver.

cirs- /ˌsɜːrəs/ prefix referring to dilation

cis-, -cis- /ˈsɪs-/ adjective referring to a vascular vein which is dilated

cisplatin /ˌsɪspəˈlətən/ noun a chemical substance which may help fight cancer by binding to DNA. It is used in the treatment of ovarian and testicular cancer.

cistern /ˈsɪstərn/ plural noun a space containing fluid

citric acid /ˈsɪtrɪk ˌæsid/ noun an acid found in fruit such as oranges, lemons and grapefruit

citric acid cycle /ˌsɪtrɪk ˈæsid_kəlˈsɪk/ noun an important series of events concerning amino acid metabolism, which takes place in the mitochondria in the cell. Also called Krebs cycle

cittriline /ˌsɪtrɪlɪn/ noun an amino acid

CJD abbreviation Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease

cL abbreviation centilitre

clamp /klæmp/ noun a surgical instrument to hold something tightly, e.g. a blood vessel during an operation

verb to hold something tightly

clap /klæp/ noun same as gonorrhoea (sting)

classification /ˌklɑsɪfɪˈkeɪʃən/ noun the work of putting references or components into order so as to be able to refer to them again and identify them easily

O the ABO classification of blood

clanded /ˈklɔnd/ noun the fact of landing or being lame

claustrophobia /ˌklaʊstrəˈfəʊbiə/ noun a fear of enclosed spaces or crowded rooms. Compare agoraphobia

claustrophobic /ˌklaʊstrəˈfəʊbɪk/ adjective afraid of being in enclosed spaces or crowded rooms. Compare agoraphobic

clavicle /ˈklævɪkəl/ noun same as collarbone

clavicular /ˈklævɪklər/ adjective referring to the clavicle

clavus /ˈklɛvəs/ noun 1. a corn on the foot

2. severe pain in the head, like a nail being driven in

claw foot /ˈklɔːfʊt/ noun a deformed foot with the toes curved towards the instep and with a very high arch. Also called pes cavus

claw hand /ˈklɔːhænd/ noun a deformed hand with the fingers, especially the ring finger and little finger, bent towards the palm, caused by paralysis of the muscles

clean /ˈklɛn/ adjective 1. free from dirt, waste products or unwanted substances

sterile or free from infection

O a clean dressing

O a clean wound

3. not using recreational drugs

cleavage /ˈklɛviːdʒ/ noun the repeated division of cells in an embryo

cleavage lines /ˈklɛviːdʒ ˈleɪnz/ plural noun same as Langer's lines

cleft /ˈklɛft/ noun a small opening or hollow place in a surface or body part

verb to refer to a surface or body part which has separated into two or more sections

cleft foot /ˈklɛft ˌfʊt/ noun same as talipes

cleft lip /ˈklɛft ˈlɪp/ noun a congenital condition in which the upper lip fails to form in the usual way during fetal development. Also called hare-lip

cleft palate /ˈklɛft ˈpælət/ noun a congenital condition in which the palate does not fuse during fetal development, causing a gap between the mouth and nasal cavity in severe cases

cleido-/kklədəʊ- prefix referring to the clavicle
particular branch of clinical care

clotting factors

clinical patholgoy /ˈklaɪnɪk(ə)l/ pəˈθætləɡi/ noun the study of disease as applied to the treatment of patients

clinical psychologist /ˈklaɪnɪk(ə)l psɪkəˈɒlədʒɪst/ noun a psychologist who studies and treats sick patients in hospital

clinical trial /ˈklaɪnɪk(ə)l ˈtræl/ noun a trial carried out in a medical laboratory on a person or on tissue from a person

clinician /ˈklinɪʃən/ noun a doctor, usually not a surgeon, who has considerable experience in treating patients

clindamycin /ˈklaɪndəˈmeɪsɪn/ noun a powerful antibiotic used to treat severe infections and acne

clinical /ˈklaɪnɪk(ə)l/ adjective 1. referring to the study and treatment of patients by doctors, as opposed to a surgical operation, a laboratory test or experiment 2. referring to instruction given to students at the bedside of patients as opposed to class instruction with no patient present 3. referring to a clinic

clinical audit /ˈklaɪnɪk(ə)l əˈdɔːt/ noun an evaluation of the standard of clinical care

clinical care /ˈklaɪnɪk(ə)l ˈkeər/ noun the care and treatment of patients in hospital wards or in doctors’ surgeries

clinical effectiveness /ˈklaɪnɪk(ə)l ˈɛfɪktɪvɪs/ noun the ability of a procedure or treatment to achieve the desired result

clinical governance /ˈklaɪnɪk(ə)l ˈɡɑːvənsi/ noun the responsibility given to doctors to coordinate audit, research, education, use of guidelines and risk management to develop a strategy to raise the quality of medical care

Clinical Management Plan /ˈklaɪnɪk(ə)l ˈmænɪdʒmənt ˈplæn/ noun a comprehensive statement of a patient’s condition that details what medicines and treatments may be used in ongoing care, forming part of the patient’s records

clinical medicine /ˈklaɪnɪk(ə)l ˈmɛd(ɪ)kJ(ə)ni/ noun the study and treatment of patients in a hospital ward or in the doctor’s surgery, as opposed to in the operating theatre or laboratory

clinical nurse manager /ˈklaɪnɪk(ə)l ˈnɜːrzi/ noun the administrative manager of the clinical nursing staff of a hospital

clinical nurse specialist /ˈklaɪnɪk(ə)l ˈnɜːrsl/ noun a nurse who specialises in a particular branch of clinical care

Clostridium /ˈkloʊstrɪdɪəm/ noun a type of bacteria

clot /ˈklɒt/ noun a soft mass of coagulated blood in a vein or an artery 2. The doctor diagnosed a blood clot in the brain. 3. Blood clots occur in thrombosis. 2. verb to change from a liquid to a semi-solid state, or to cause a liquid to do this 2. His blood does not clot easily. (NOTE: clotting – clotted)

clostrimazole /ˈkloʊstrɪməzoʊl/ noun a drug used to treat yeast and fungal infections

clothing /ˈkləʊtʃɪŋ/ noun the action of coagulating

clothing factors /ˈkloʊtʃɪŋ ˈfæktəs/ plural noun substances in plasma, called Factor I, Factor II,
and so on, which act one after the other to make the blood coagulate when a blood vessel is damaged.

COMMENT: Deficiency in one or more of the clotting factors results in haemophilia.

clotting /ˈklɒtɪŋ/ noun a thickening of the ends of the fingers and toes, a sign of many different diseases

Clutton’s joint /ˈklʌtənz / ˈdʒaʊnt/ noun a swollen knee joint occurring in congenital syphilis [Described 1866. After Henry Hugh Clutton (1850–1909), surgeon at St Thomas’s Hospital, London, UK]

cm abbreviation centimetre

CMHN abbreviation community mental health nurse

CM joint /siːˈdʒem ˈdʒaʊnt/ noun same as carpal metacarpal joint

cmo abbreviation Chief Medical Officer

CMV abbreviation cytomegalovirus

C/N abbreviation charge nurse

CNS abbreviation central nervous system

coagulant /ˈkoʊəˌgæjələnt/ noun a substance which can make blood clot

coagulase /ˈkoʊəˌgæjələz/ noun an enzyme produced by a staphylococcal bacteria which makes blood plasma clot

coagulate /ˈkoʊəˌgæjələt/ verb to change from liquid to semi-solid, or cause a liquid to do this

coagulation /ˈkoʊəˌgæjələʃən/ noun the action of clotting

coagulum /ˈkoʊəˌgæjələm/ noun same as blood clot (NOTE: The plural is coagula.)

coalesce /ˈkɔəˈles/ verb to combine, or to cause things to combine, into a single body or group

coalescence /ˈkɔələsəns/ noun the process by which wound edges come together when healing

coarctation /ˈkoʊərktəʃən/ noun the process of narrowing

coat /ˈkoʊt/ noun a layer of material covering an organ or a cavity [verb to cover something with something else

coated tongue /ˈkoʊtɪd ˈtʌŋ/ noun same as furry tongue

cobalt /ˈkɔbələt/ noun a metallic element (NOTE: The chemical symbol is Co.)

cocaine /ˈkɔkiən/ noun a narcotic drug not generally used in medicine because its use leads to addiction, but sometimes used as a surface anaesthetic

cochlæ addition

COG abbreviation Cochleae

cocci /ˈkoʊki/ plural of coccus

coccus /ˈkɒksəs/ noun a bacterium shaped like a ball (NOTE: The plural is cocci.)

ccocyg- /ˈkɒksəg/ prefix referring to the coccyx

ccocydynia /ˈkɒksəɡdɪnə/ noun a sharp pain in the coccyx, usually caused by a blow. Also called ccocygydynia

ccocygeal vertebrae /ˌkɒskɪdʒiəl ˈvɜrtəbrɪəl/ plural noun the fused bones in the coccyx

ccocyges /ˈkɒksəɡdʒɪz/ plural of ccocyx

ccocygydynia /ˈkɒksɪɡdɪnə/ noun same as ccocydynia

ccocyx /ˈkɒskɪks/ noun the lowest bone in the backbone (NOTE: The plural is ccocytes.)

cochlea /ˈkoʊklɪə/ noun a spiral tube inside the inner ear, which is the essential organ of hearing. See illustration at EAR in Supplement (NOTE: The plural is cochleae.)

cochlear /ˈkoʊklɪər/ adjective referring to the cochlea

cochlear implant /ˌkɒklɪər ˈɪmpləmənt/ noun a type of hearing aid for profound hearing loss

Cochrane database /ˈkɒkrən ˈdɜrəbri/ noun a database of regular reviews carried out on research

code /kɔd/ noun 1. a system of numbers, letters or symbols used to represent language or information 2. same as genetic code [verb 1. to convert instructions or data into another form (of a codon or gene) to provide the genetic information which causes a specific amino acid to be produced (NOTE: Genes are sections of DNA that code for a specific protein sequence.)

codine /ˈkɔdɪn/ codeine phosphate /ˈkɔdɪn ˈfɑrsɪfət/ noun a common painkilling drug that can also be used to suppress coughing and in the treatment of diarrhoea

code of conduct /ˈkɔd əv ˈkrendəktəl/ noun a set of general rules showing how a group of people such as doctors or nurses should work

cod liver oil /ˈkɔd lɪvər ˈoʊl/ noun a fish oil which is rich in calories and vitamins A and D

-coe - suffix referring to a hollow (NOTE: The US spelling is usually -cely-)

coele- /ˈkoʊli/ prefix same as coeloi- (used before vowels) (NOTE: The US spelling is usually -celi-)

coelac /ˈsɪliək/ adjective referring to the abdomen

coelac acid /ˈsɪliək ˈæksɪd/ noun the main artery in the abdomen leading from the abdominal aorta and dividing into the left gastric, hepatic and splenic arteries. Also called coelac trunk

coelac disease /ˈsɪliək ˈdʒɪzɪz/ noun same as gluten-induced enteropathy
coeliac ganglion /sɪˈliək ˈɡæŋɡlɪən/ noun a ganglion on each side of the origins of the diaphragm, connected with the coeliac plexus
coeiac trunk /sɪˈliək ˈtrʌŋk/ noun same as coeliac artery
coeilo- /sɪˈlɪəʊ-/ prefix referring to a hollow, usually the abdomen
coeiloscopy /sɪˈlɪəʊskəpi/ noun an examination of the peritoneal cavity by inflating the abdomen with sterile air and passing an endoscope through the abdominal wall (NOTE: The plural is coeloscopies)
coffee ground vomit /ˈkɒfi ɡraʊnd ,ˈvɒmɪt/ noun vomit containing dark pieces of blood, indicating that the person is bleeding from the stomach or upper intestine
cognition /ˈkɒgnɪʃ(ə)n/ noun the mental action or process of gaining knowledge by using your mind or your senses, or knowledge gained in this way
cognitive /ˈkɒgnɪtɪv/ adjective referring to the mental processes of perception, memory, judgment and reasoning a cognitive impairment
cognitive disorder /ˈkɒgnɪtɪv dɪˈsɛrtd/ noun impairment of any of the mental processes of perception, memory, judgment and reasoning
cognitive therapy /ˈkɒgnɪtɪv ˈθerəpi/ noun a treatment of psychiatric disorders such as anxiety or depression which encourages people to deal with their negative ways of thinking
cohort /ˈkɑʊrət/ noun a group of people sharing a particular characteristic such as age or gender who are studied in a scientific or medical investigation
cohort study /ˈkɑʊrət ˈstʌdi/ noun an investigation in which a group of people are classified according to their exposure to various risks and studied over a period of time to see if they develop a specific disease, in order to evaluate the links between risk and disease
coll /kəl/ noun a device fitted into a woman’s uterus as a contraceptive
cold /kɔld/ adjective not warm or hot a cold an illness, with inflammation of the nasal passages, in which someone sneezes and coughs and has a blocked and running nose or she had a heavy cold. Also called common cold, coryza
cold burn /kɔld bɜːn/ noun an injury to the skin caused by exposure to extreme cold or by touching a very cold surface
cold cautery /kɔld ˈkɔːtəri/ noun the removal of a skin growth using carbon dioxide snow
cold pack /kɔld pæk/ noun a cloth or a pad filled with gel or clay which is chilled and put on the body to reduce or increase the temperature
cold sore /kɔld sɔːr/ noun a painful blister, usually on the lips or nose, caused by herpes simplex type I
collectomy /ˌkəlɪˈɛktəmi/ noun a surgical operation to remove the whole or part of the colon (NOTE: The plural is collectomies)
colic /ˈkɒlɪk/ noun 1. pain in any part of the intestinal tract. Also called enteralgia, tormenta 2. crying and irritability in babies, especially from stomach pains
colliform bacterium /ˌkɒlɪfɪm bɪkərˈɪm/ noun a bacterium which is similar to Escherichia coli
collistin /ˌkɒlɪstrɪn/ noun an antibiotic which is effective against a wide range of organisms and is used to treat gastrointestinal infections
colitis /ˌkɒlɪtɪs/ noun inflammation of the colon. Also called colitis
collaborative care /kəˌlæbəˈretɪv ˈkeə/ noun treatment that involves collaboration between different medical departments or agencies, or involves active collaboration between the patient and the providers of treatment
collagen /ˌkɒləˈdʒen/ noun a thick protein fibre forming bundles, which make up the connective tissue, bone and cartilage
collapse /kəˈleɪps/ noun 1. a condition in which someone is extremely exhausted or semi-conscious. Or she was found in a state of collapse. 2. a condition in which an organ becomes flat or loses air or lung collapse. ■ verb 1. to fall down in a semi-conscious state. Or after running to catch his train he collapsed. 2. to become flat, or lose air
collapsed lung /kəˈleɪpst ˈlʌŋ/ noun same as pneumothorax
collarbone /kəˈlɑrboʊn/ noun one of two long thin bones which join the shoulder blades to the breastbone. Also called clavicle. (NOTE: Collarbone fracture is one of the most frequent fractures in the body)
collateral /kəˈlætərəl/ adjective secondary or less important
Colles’ fracture /ˈkɒləs(ə) ˈfræktʃ(ə)n/ noun a fracture of the lower end of the radius with displacement of the wrist backwards, usually when someone has stretched out a hand to try to break a fall. [After Abraham Colles (1773–1842), Irish surgeon.]
colliculus /ˌkɒlɪkjuːləs/ noun one of four small projections (superior colliculi and inferior colliculi) in the midbrain. See illustration at brain in supplement. (NOTE: The plural is colliculi)
collodion /kəˈlɒdɪən/ noun a liquid used for painting on a clean wound, where it dries to form a flexible covering
colloid /ˈkɒlɔɪd/ noun 1. a mass of tiny particles of one substance dispersed in another substance 2. the particles which are suspended in a colloid solution 3. a thick jelly-like substance which stores hormones, produced in the thyroid gland
collyrium

definition

Adjective relating to or resembling a colloid or colloid acne

Collyrium /ˌkɒlɪˈriəm/ noun a solution used to bathe the eyes (NOTE: The plural is collyria.)

Colo-/ /kəʊloʊ/ prefix referring to the colon

Coloboma /ˌkɒləbəʊ/ noun a condition in which part of the eye, especially part of the iris, is missing

Colonic /ˌkɒlənɪk/ adjective referring to the colon

Colonic irrigation /ˌkəʊlənɪk ɪˈɡɛrəʃən/ noun the washing out of the contents of the large intestine using a tube inserted in the anus

Coloscopy /ˌkəʊləskəʊpi/ noun a surgical instrument for examining the interior of the colon

Coloscopy /ˌkəʊləskəʊpi/ noun an examination of the inside of the colon, using a coloscope passed through the rectum (NOTE: The plural is coloscopies.)

Colony /ˌkɒlənɪ/ noun a group or culture of microorganisms

Colostomy /ˌkəʊləstəmi/ noun a surgical operation to make an opening between the colon and the abdominal wall to allow faeces to be passed out without going through the rectum (NOTE: The plural is colostomies.)

Colostomy bag /ˌkəʊləstəmi ˈbeɪɡ/ noun a bag attached to the opening made by a colostomy, to collect faeces as they are passed out of the body

Colostram /ˌkəʊləstrəm/ noun a fluid rich in antibodies and low in fat, secreted by the mother’s breasts at the birth of a baby, before the true milk starts to flow

Colour blindness /ˈkʌlər ˈbləʊdənz/ noun a condition of being unable to tell the difference between specific colours

Colour index /ˈkʌlər ˈɪndɛks/ noun the ratio between the amount of haemoglobin and the number of red blood cells in a specific amount of blood

Colo- /ˌkɒləʊ/ prefix same as colo- (used before vowels)

Colpo-/ /ˌkɒləpsoʊ/ prefix referring to the vagina

Colpocystitis /ˌkɒləpsoʊˈsɪstɪtɪs/ noun inflammation of both the vagina and the urinary bladder

Colpohysterectomy /ˌkɒləpəʊˈhɪstərɛktəmi/ noun a surgical operation in which the womb is removed through the vagina (NOTE: The plural is colpohysterectomies.)

Colpopexy /ˌkɒləpəˈpeksɪ/ noun a surgical operation to fix a prolapsed vagina to the abdominal wall (NOTE: The plural is colpopexies.)

Colpoplasty /ˌkɒləpəˈplæstɪ/ noun a surgical operation to repair a damaged vagina (NOTE: The plural is colpoplasties.)

Colporrhaphy /ˌkɒləˈpɜːrəfi/ noun a surgical operation to stitch a prolapsed vagina (NOTE: The plural is colporrhaphies.)

Colposcope /ˌkɒləsˈskɒp/ noun a surgical instrument used to examine the inside of the vagina. Also called vaginoscope

Colposcopy /ˌkəʊləsˈskɒpi/ noun an examination of the inside of the vagina (NOTE: The plural is colposcopy)

Colposuspension /ˌkəʊləsˈspənʃən/ noun a surgical operation to strengthen the pelvic floor muscles to prevent incontinence

Colpotomy /ˌkəʊlətəmi/ noun a surgical operation to make a cut in the vagina (NOTE: The plural is colpotomies.)

Column /ˌkɒlən/ noun a vertical column

Coma /ˈkɒmə/ noun a state of unconsciousness from which a person cannot be awakened by external stimuli

Comatose /ˈkɒmətəs/ adjective unconscious or in a coma

Combined therapy /ˈkʌmbənd ˈθɛrəpi/ noun the use of two or more treatments at the same time

Comedo /ˈkɒmɪdəʊ/ noun a small point of dark, hard matter in a sebaceous follicle, often found associated with acne on the skin of adolescents (NOTE: The plural is comedones.)

Comforter /ˌkʌmnfətər/ noun 1, someone who helps to make another person less anxious or unhappy 2, a baby’s dummy

Commando operation /ˌkɒməndəʊ ˈɒpərəʃən/ noun, commando procedure /ˌkɒməndəʊ ˈprəˌʃən/ noun 1, a surgical procedure 2, a state of unconsciousness from which a person cannot be awakened by external stimuli

Commando procedure /ˌkɒməndəʊ ˈpʁeˌs/ noun an operation used before vowels

Commando procedure /ˌkɒməndəʊ ˈpʁeˌs/ noun an operation

Comminuted /ˌkɒmɪnjuʃtɪd/ adjective referring to a fracture where the bone is broken in several places

Comminuted fracture /ˌkɒmɪnjuʃtɪd ˈfræktʃər/ noun a fracture where the bone is broken in several places

Commission for Health Improvement /ˌkəmɪʃn fɔr ˈhelθ ɪmprɪˈpruːmənt/ in the UK, the independent inspection body for the National Health Service, with the role of helping to raise standards of patient care. It aims to identify where improvement is required and share good practice. Abbreviation CHeI

Commisurate /ˌkɒmɪˈsjuːət/ noun a structure which joins two similar tissues, e.g. a group of nerves which crosses from one part of the central
nurse who treats people in a local community

community midwife /ka,mi'ju:nəti/ noun a midwife who works in a community as part of a primary health care team

community nurse /ka,mi'ju:nəti 'nə:ız/ noun a nurse who treats people in a local community

community paediatrician /ka,mi'ju:nəti 'pi:diətrɪk/ noun a paediatrician serving a local community

community pharmacist /ka,mi'ju:nəti 'færməstɪk, retəl færməstɪk/ noun a person who makes medicines and sells them in a chemist’s shop

community psychiatric nurse /ka,mi'ju:nəti saik'ti'ətrɪk/ noun. Also called community mental health nurse. Abbreviation CPN

community trust /ka,mi'ju:nəti 'trəst/ noun an independent non-profit-making body set up to represent an area of public concern

compact bone /'kɒmpækt /noun a type of bone tissue which forms the hard outer layer of a bone. See illustration at bone structure in Supplement

compartment /'kɒmpəmənt/ noun one of the areas into which an enclosed space is divided

compatibility /'kɒmpətɪbɪlɪti/ noun the ability of two drugs not to interfere with each other when administered together

compatible /'kɒmpətəb(ə)l/ adjective able to function together without being rejected O The surgeons are trying to find a compatible donor or a donor with a compatible blood group.

compensate /'kɒmpənseɪt/ verb 1. to give someone an amount of money or something else to pay for loss or damage 2. (of an organ) to make good the failure of an organ by making another organ, or the undamaged parts of the same organ, function at a higher level O The heart has to beat more strongly to compensate for the narrowing of the arteries. 3. to emphasise a particular ability or personality characteristic in order to make the lack of another one seem less bad

compensation /'kɒmpənseɪʃn/ noun 1. something which makes something else seem less bad or less serious 2. an amount of money or something else given to pay for loss or damage O The drugs caused him to develop breathing problems, so he thinks he’s entitled to medical compensation. 3. the act of giving money to pay for loss or damage O compensation for loss of a limb 4. a situation where the body helps to correct a problem in a particular organ by making another organ, or the undamaged parts of the same organ, function at a higher level 5. behaviour that emphasises a particular ability or personality characteristic in order to make the lack of another one seem less bad

compete /'kɒmpɪt(ə)s/ noun the ability to do something well, measured against a standard, especially ability which you get through experience or training O encouraging the development of professional competence in the delivery of care to patients

competency /'kɒmpɪt(ə)ns/ noun a guideline, usually one of several, for the medical treat-
Nursing

complaint noun /kəmˈpreɪʃən/ noun 1. an expression of dissatisfaction about something or someone. The hospital administrator wouldn’t listen to the complaints of the consultants. 2. an illness or a chest complaint a nervous complaint

complement noun /ˈkɒmplɪmənt/ a substance which forms part of blood plasma and is essential to the work of antibodies and antigens. Verb /ˈkɒmplɪment/ to complete something by providing useful or pleasing qualities which it does not itself have

complementary a, adjectival complement /ˈkɒmplɪmənt(ə)rɪ/ adjective 1. combining with or adding to something else. Ultrasound and CT provide complementary information. 2. used in or using complementary medicine or complementary therapies referring to genes which are necessary to each other and produce their effect only when they are present together

complementary medicine /ˌkɒmplɪmənt(ə)rɪ/ˈmɛdɪsɪn noun the forms of alternative medicine which are now accepted by practitioners of conventional Western medicine, e.g. acupuncture and osteopathy

complete abortion /kəmˈpliːt/əbˈʃərj/ noun an abortion where the whole contents of the uterus are expelled

complete blood count /ˈkɒmpliːt/blʌd kɔunt noun a test to find the exact numbers of each type of blood cell in a sample of blood. Abbreviation CBC

complicated fracture /ˌkɒmplɪˈkeɪtɪd/ˈfræktʃər noun a fracture with an associated injury of tissue, as when a bone has punctured an artery

complication /ˌkɒmplɪˈkeɪʃən/ noun 1. a condition in which two or more conditions exist in someone, whether or not they are connected. He was admitted to hospital suffering from pneumonia with complications. 2. a situation in which someone develops a second condition which changes the course of treatment for the first. She appeared to be improving, but complications set in and she died in a few hours.

compos mentis /ˌkɒmpəs ˈmentɪs/ adjective not affected by a mental disorder. (Note: The phrase is from Latin and means ‘of sound mind’.)

compound fracture /ˌkɒmpənd/ˈfræktʃər noun a fracture where the skin surface is damaged or where the broken bone penetrates the surface of the skin. Also called open fracture

compress noun /ˈkɒmpres/ a pad of cloth soaked in hot or cold liquid and applied to the skin to relieve pain or swelling, or to force pus out of an infected wound. Verb /ˈkɒmpres/ to squeeze or press something

compressed air sickness /kəmˈprezd/ˈɛəˌsɪkəns noun same as caisson disease

compression /kəmˈpreʃən/ noun 1. the act of squeezing or pressing. The first-aid applied compression to the chest of the casualty. 2. a serious condition in which the brain is compressed by blood or cerebrospinal fluid accumulating in it or by a fractured skull

compression stocking /kəmˈpreʃən/stɒkɪŋ noun a strong elastic stocking worn to support a weak joint in the knee or to hold varicose veins tightly

compulsion /kəmpʌlʃən/ noun 1. an act of forcing someone to do something, or the fact of being forced to do something. You are under no compulsion to treat a violent patient. 2. a strong psychological force which makes someone do something, often unwillingly. She felt a sudden compulsion to wash her hands again.

compulsive noun /ˈkɒmpləsiv/ adjective referring to a feeling which cannot be stopped. She has a compulsive desire to steal.

compulsive–obsessive disorder /kəmpləsɪv əbˈsesɪv diˈzɛs/ noun same as obsessive–compulsive disorder

compulsory admission /kəmpləsəri əˈmɪʃən noun the process of admitting someone who is mentally ill to hospital for treatment whether or not they consent

computed tomography /kəmˈpjuːtɪd ˈtɒməˌgrəfi/ noun same as computerised axial tomography. Abbreviation CT

computerised axial tomography /kəmˌpjuːtərəˈɪzd eɪˈzeksiəl təˈmɔːrəɡrəfi/ noun a system of examining the body in which a narrow X-ray beam, guided by a computer, photographs a thin section of the body or of an organ from several angles, using the computer to build up an image of the section. Abbreviation CAT. Also called computerized tomography

conazole /ˈkɒnəʊzəl/ noun used in the names of antifungal drugs. Also called fluconazole

concave /ˈkɒnkwəv/ adjective curving towards the inside. A concave lens

concept noun /ˈkɒnsɛpt/ a thought or idea, or something which someone might be able to imagine.

conception noun /ˈkɒnsɛpʃən/ the point at which a woman becomes pregnant and the development of a baby starts

conceptual framework /ˌkɒnˈseptʃuəl/ˈfrɔːmkeɪmənt noun the theoretical basis on which something is formed

conceptus /kənˈseptəs/ noun an embryo or fetus together with all the tissues that surround it during pregnancy. (Note: The plural is conceptuses.)

conchae /ˈkɒŋki/ plural noun a part of the body shaped like a shell. (Note: The plural is conchae.)

concordance /kənˌkɔːrəns/ noun 1. a state in which two or more things are in the correct or
expected relationship to each other. For example, the atrioventricular concordance is the relationship between the atria and the ventricles in the heart. Concussion is a blow to the head. A concussion is a state of someone or something where the blow is so severe that an unconsciousness occurs. The classic example of a conditioned response is Pavlov's experiment with dogs in which the dogs produced saliva ready to eat their food, when a bell rang, because on previous occasions they had been fed when the bell was rung.

condyloma /ˈkɒndɪləʊmə/ noun a growth usually found on the vulva (NOTE: The plural is condylomata or condylomata.)

condyma /ˈkɒndɪmə/ noun a rounded end of a bone which articulates with another

condylar process /ˈkɒndɪlər prəʊsəs/ noun a projecting part at each end of the lower jaw which forms the head of the jaw, joining the jaw to the skull.
congenital syphilis /ˈkɒnˌdʒɪsəlɪs/ noun syphilis which is passed on from a mother to her unborn child

congenital toxoplasmosis /ˈkɒnˌdʒɪtəl ˈtɒksəpləzɪs/ noun a condition in which a baby has been infected with toxoplasmosis by its mother while still in the uterus.

congestion /ˈkɒnˌdʒɛʒən/ noun an accumulation of blood in an organ.

consensus management /ˈkɒnˌsɛnsəs ˈmænɪdʒmənt/ noun a form of management which aims to get everyone to agree on what actions should be taken.

consent /ˈkɒnˈsɛnt/ noun agreement to allow someone to do something. The parents gave their consent for their son's heart to be used in the transplant operation.

conservative treatment /ˈkɒnˌsɜːrvətɪv ˈtrɛɪtment/ noun medical or surgical treatment which is limited to conventional measures rather than more extreme or risky procedures.

constipation /ˈkɒnsˌtɪpeɪʃən/ noun difficulty in passing faeces.

constrictor /ˈkɒnˌstrɪktər/ noun a muscle which squeezes an organ or which makes an organ constricted.

contact dermatitis /ˈkɒntækt ˈdɑːməˈteɪtɪs/ noun inflammation of the skin caused by touching, e.g., by touching some types of plastic film or contact lenses.

conscious /ˈkɒnʃəs/ adjective 1. awake and aware of what is happening. He became conscious in the recovery room two hours after the operation. 2. deliberate and intended.

consciousness /ˈkɒnʃəsnəs/ noun the state of being mentally alert and knowing what is happening.

consolation /ˌkɒnsəltən/ noun a measure of comfort to someone who is upset.

consanguinity /ˈkɒnsəŋgwɪnətɪ/ noun a blood relationship between people.

conjoined twins /ˈkɒnˌdʒʌnd ˈtwɪnz/ noun twins who are joined together at birth. Also called Siamese twins.

conjugate /ˈkɒnˌdʒʊɡət/ conjugate diameter /ˈkɒnˌdʒʊɡət ˈdæɪəmətər/ noun a measurement of space in a woman's pelvis, used to calculate if it is large enough for a child to be delivered.

conjunctiva /ˈkɒnˌdʒʌŋktɪvə/ noun the mucous membrane that lines the inside of the eyelids.

constrictive pericarditis /ˈkɒnˈstrɪktɪv ˈpɜːrɪkɑːrdɪtɪs/ noun same as chronic pericarditis.

contingent /ˈkɒntɪnənt/ noun 1. a doctor who is a senior specialist in a particular branch of medicine and who is consulted by GPs. She was referred to a consultant at the orthopaedic hospital. 2. a senior specialist doctor in a hospital.

contact tracing /ˈkɒntækt ˈtreɪsɪŋ/ noun the process of tracing people with whom someone with an infectious disease has been in contact.

contaminant /ˌkɒntɪˈmænənt/ noun 1. action taken to restrict the spread of something undesirable or dangerous such as a disease. The eradication of a global disease such as smallpox by removing it region by region.
contaminating  /ˌkɒntɪˌmeɪntɪŋ/ verb 1. to make something impure by touching it or by adding something to it. ○ Supplies of drinking water were contaminated by refuse from the factories. ○ The whole group of tourists fell ill after eating contaminated food. 2. to spread infection to someone or something

contingence /ˌkɒntɪnɪnns/ noun 1. the ability to control the discharge of urine and faeces 2. self-restraint

contingent /ˌkɒntɪnənt/ adjective able to exercise control over the discharge of urine and faeces

continuing education /ˌkɒntɪnjuːɪŋ ɪˌdʒuːɪʃən/ noun regular courses or training designed to bring professional people up to date with the latest developments in their particular field

continuous ambulatory peritoneal dialysis /ˌkɒntɪnjuəˈreɪtɪəl əˌmbɜːlətɒrɪl ˈpɜːrɪtəˌnɪəl dɑːˈleɪzɪs/ noun a method of dialysis of people while they are walking about. Abbreviation CAPD

continuous positive airways pressure /ˌkɒntɪnjuəˈriːəs ˈɛərweɪz ˈpiːʃər/ noun a method used in intensive care which forces air into the lungs of someone with lung collapse. Abbreviation CPAP

contraception /ˌkɒntrəˈsepʃən/ noun the prevention of pregnancy, e.g. by using devices such as a condom or an IUD, or drugs in the form of contraceptive pills or injections at regular intervals. Also called birth control

contraceptive /ˌkɒntrəˈseptɪv/ adjective preventing conception ○ a contraceptive device or drug ○ noun a drug or device which prevents pregnancy

contraceptive sheath /ˌkɒntrəˈseptɪv ʃiːθ/ noun same as condom

contraceptive sponge /ˌkɒntrəˈseptɪv ˈspɒŋ/ noun a piece of synthetic sponge impregnated with spermicide, which is inserted into the vagina before intercourse

contractibility /ˌkɒntræktəˈbɪlətɪ/ noun the capacity to contract

contraction /ˌkɒntrækʃən/ noun 1. the act of making something smaller or of becoming smaller ○ the contraction of dental services 2. a tightening movement which makes a muscle shorter, which makes the pupil of the eye smaller or which makes the skin wrinkle

contracture /ˌkɒntræktʃər/ noun a permanent tightening of a muscle caused by fibrosis

contraindication /ˌkɒntrəˈɪndɪkeɪʃən/ noun something which suggests that someone should not be treated with a specific drug or not continue with a specific treatment because circumstances make that treatment unsuitable

contralateral /ˌkɒntrəˈleɪtərəl/ adjective located on or affecting the opposite side of the body. Opposite ipsilateral

contrast medium /ˌkɒntrəˈmeɪd/ noun a radio-opaque dye, or sometimes gas, put into an organ or part of the body so that it will show clearly in an X-ray photograph ○ In an MRI scan no contrast medium is required; in a CAT scan iodine-based contrast media are often required.

contracept /ˌkɒntrəˈsept/ noun an injury to one point of an organ such as the brain, caused by a blow received on an opposite point of the organ

controlled /ˌkɒntrəˈleɪd/ adverb 1. to have the ability or authority to direct someone or something ○ Sometimes we need help to control people who think they have waited too long. 2. to limit or restrain something ○ administered drugs to control the pain ○ noun 1. the ability or authority to control something ○ After her stroke she had no control over her left arm. ○ The administrators are in control of the admissions policy. 2. a person or group whose test data are used as a comparison in a study 3. a comparison in a study

controlled drug /ˌkɒntrəˈleɪd ˈdrʌɡ/ noun a drug which is not freely available, which is restricted by law and classified as A, B, or C and of which possession may be an offence. Also called controlled substance

controlled substance /ˌkɒntrəˈleɪd ˈsʌbstrɑːntz/ noun same as controlled drug

controlled trial /ˌkɒntrəˈleɪd ˈtrel/ noun a trial in which members of one group are treated with a test substance and those of another group are treated with a placebo as a control

controls assurance /ˌkɒntrəˈlaʊəns/ noun a designed to provide evidence that NHS organisations are doing their best to manage themselves both in order to meet their objectives and to protect patients, staff and the public against risks of all kinds

contused wound /ˌkɒntjuːzd ˈwʊnd/ noun a wound caused by a blow where the skin is bruised as well as torn and bleeding

contusion /ˌkɒntjuːʒən/ noun same as bruise

convalescence /ˌkənˈvæləsəns/ noun a period of time when someone is convalescing

convergent strabismus /ˌkɒntrəˈɡənt strəˈbɜːzməs, ˈkɒntrəˈɡənt ˈskwɪnt/ noun a condition in which one or both of a person’s eyes look towards the nose. Also called cross eye

conversion /ˌkənˈvɜːʃən/ noun the process of changing one thing into another ○ the conversion of nutrients into tissue

convex /ˈkɒnvɛks/ adjective curving towards the outside ○ a convex lens
convoluted /kənˈvɒlətɪd/ adjective folded and twisted
convolution /ˌkɒnvəˈljuːʃ(ə)n/ noun a twisted shape of the convolutions of the surface of the cerebrum
corvulsion /ˈkɒvəlʃən/ noun the rapid involuntary contracting and relaxing of the muscles in several parts of the body The child had convulsions.

NOTE: Often used in the plural.

Cooley’s anaemia /koʊˈluːzi əˈnɛmə/ noun same as thalassaemia (Described 1927. After Thomas Benton Cooley (1871–1945), Professor of Paediatrics at Wayne College of Medicine, Detroit, USA.)

Coombs’ test /ˌkʊmz ˈtest/ noun a test for antibodies in red blood cells, used as a test for erythroblastosis fetalis and other haemolytic syndromes (Described 1945. After Robin Royton Amos Coombs (1921–2006), Quick Professor of Biology, and Fellow of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, UK)

coordination /ˌkɔrəˈneɪʃ(ə)n/ noun 1. the combining of two or more things as an effective unit, or the way things combine effectively; requires coordination between nursing staff and doctors 2. the ability to use two or more parts of the body at the same time to carry out a movement or task. The patient showed lack of coordination between eyes and hands.

COPD abbreviation chronic obstructive pulmonary disease

coping mechanism /ˈkɔpɪŋ ˈmɛkənizəm/ noun a method of dealing with situations which cause psychological stress

copper /ˈkɔpər/ noun a metallic trace element (NOTE: The chemical symbol is Cu.)

copr - /kɔpr/ prefix faeces

coproolith /ˌkɔpəˈrɪliθ/ noun a lump of hard faeces in the bowel

cor /kɔr/ noun the heart
coraco-acromial /ˌkɔrəˈkəʊəˌkrəʊməˈl/ adjective referring to the coracoid process and the acromion

Coracoid process /ˈkɔrəkəʊd prəˈzoʊs/ noun a projecting part on the shoulder blade
cord /kɔrd/ noun a long flexible structure in the body like a thread

cordectomy /ˈkɔrdektəmee/ noun a surgical operation to remove a vocal cord (NOTE: The plural is cordectomies)

cordotomy /ˈkɔrdətəmee/ noun another spelling of chordotomy

corium /ˈkɔrɪəm/ noun same as dermis

corn /kɔrn/ noun a hard painful lump of skin usually on a foot, where something such as a tight shoe has rubbed or pressed on the skin. Also called heloma

cornea /ˈkɔrnɪə/ noun a transparent part of the front of the eyeball. See illustration at EYE in Supplement (NOTE: The plural is corneas. For other terms referring to the cornea, see words beginning with kerat- kerato-)

corneal /ˈkɔrnəl/ adjective relating to a cornea

corneal graft /ˌkɔrnəl ˈgræft/ noun 1. a surgical operation to graft corneal tissue from a donor or from a dead person to replace diseased tissue. Also called corneal transplant keratoplasty 2. a piece of corneal tissue used in a graft

corneal reflex /ˌkɔrnəl ˈrɪflɛks/ noun a reflex from touching or hitting the cornea which makes the eyelid close

corneal transplant /ˌkɔrnəl ˌtrænzplənt/ noun same as corneal graft

cornification /ˌkɔrnɪˈfɪkəʃ(ə)n/ noun same as keratinisation

corona /ˈkɔrənə/ noun a structure in the body which is shaped like a horn

corona /ˈkɔrənə/ noun a structure in the body which is shaped like a crown

coronal /ˌkɔrənəl/ kəˈrənəl/ adjective referring to a corona

coronal plane /ˌkɔrənəl ˈpleɪn/ noun a plane at right angles to the median plane, dividing the body into dorsal and ventral halves. See illustration at ANATOMICAL TERMS in Supplement

coronal suture /ˌkɔrənəl ˈsuːʃər/ noun a horizontal joint across the top of the skull between the parietal and frontal bones

coronary /ˌkɔrəˈneərri/ noun same as coronary thrombosis (informal) adjective referring to any structure shaped like a crown, but especially to the arteries which supply blood to the heart muscles

coronary artery /ˌkɔrəˈneəri əˈtɑrri/ noun one of the two arteries which supply blood to the heart muscles

coronary artery bypass graft /ˌkɔrəˈneəri əˈtɑrri ˈbaɪpɑs ˈgræft/ coronary artery bypass /ˌkɔrəˈneəri əˈtɑrri ˈbaɪpɑs/ noun a surgical operation to treat angina by grafting pieces of vein around the diseased part of a coronary artery

coronary care unit /ˌkɔrəˈneəri ˈkɛə ˈkeərni/ noun the section of a hospital caring for people who have heart disorders or who have had heart surgery. Abbreviation CCU

coronary heart disease /ˌkɔrəˈneəri ˈhaɪt dɑrt/ noun any disease affecting the coronary arteries, which can lead to strain on the heart or a heart attack. Abbreviation CHD

coronary sinus /ˌkɔrəˈneərri ˈsənəs/ noun a vein which takes most of the venous blood from the heart muscles to the right atrium

coronary thrombosis /ˌkɔrəˈneəri ˈθroʊm ˌbiːsəs/ noun a blood clot which blocks the cor-
necessary arteries, leading to a heart attack. Also called coronary.

Coronavirus /ˌkoʊrəˈvɜːsər/ noun a type of virus which has been identified in people who have the common cold

coronary /ˈkɔrənərē/ noun a public official, either a doctor or a lawyer, who investigates sudden or violent deaths

coronoid process /ˌkɔrəˈnɔɪd ˈprɛsəs/ noun a projecting piece of bone on the ulna

corpus /ˈkɔrpəs/ noun the body of a dead person

corpus cavernosum /ˌkɔrpəs ˈkævəroʊsəm/ noun a part of the erectile tissue in the penis and clitoris. See illustration at UROGENITAL SYSTEM (MALE) in Supplement (NOTE: The plural is corpora cavernosa.)

corpuscal /ˌkɔrpəsˈkæl/ noun 1. a small round mass 2. a cell in blood or lymph

corpus luteum /ˌkɔrpəsˈluːtəm/ noun a body which forms in each ovary after a Graafian follicle has ruptured. The corpus luteum secretes the hormone progesterone to prepare the uterus for implantation of the fertilised ovum. (NOTE: The plural is corpora lutea.)

corpus spongiosum /ˌkɔrpəs ˈspɒŋʒəsəm/ noun the part of the penis round the urethra, forming the glans. See illustration at UROGENITAL SYSTEM (MALE).

correct /kərˈɛkt/ adjective intended to correct an irregularity or problem or correct a mistake or error; a drug which changes the harmful effect of another drug

corrigane’s pulse /ˌkɔrɪɡeɪnз Π/ noun a condition occurring in the arterial pulse in the neck in which there is a visible rise in pressure followed by a sudden collapse, caused by aortic regurgitation. Also called water-hammer pulse

corrector muscle /ˌkɔrɪktər ˈmʌsməl/ noun one of the muscles which produce vertical wrinkles on the forehead when someone frowns

cortex /ˈkɔrtiks/ noun the outer layer of an organ, as opposed to the soft inner medulla. (NOTE: The plural is cortices or cortices.)

corti /ˈkɔrti/ /ˈkɔrti/ organ of Corti

cortical mastoidectomy /ˌkɔrtikəl ˌmæstɔıˈdɛktəmɪ/ noun same as atticotomy

cortices plural of cortex

corticospinal /ˌkɔrtɪkɔsˈplæn(ə)l/ adjective referring to both the cerebral cortex and the spinal cord

corticosteroid /ˌkɔrtɪkəsˈtɛrəʊɪd/ noun 1. any steroid hormone produced by the cortex of the adrenal glands 2. a drug which reduces inflammation, used in asthma, gastrointestinal disease and in adrenocortical insufficiency

corticotropic /ˌkɔrtɪkətɹʌpˈtrɒtɪk/ adjective referring to the adrenal gland and its hormones

cortisol /ˈkɔrtnəsl/ noun same as hydrocortisone

cortisone /ˈkɔrtɪzaʊn/ noun a hormone secreted in small quantities by the adrenal cortex. The doctor gave her a cortisone injection in the ankle.

corynebacterium /ˌkɔrɪnəˈbæktərɪəm/ noun a genus of bacteria which includes the bacterium which causes diphtheria

coryza /ˈkɔrɪza/ noun an illness, with inflammation of the nasal passages, in which someone sneezes and coughs and has a blocked and running nose (technical). Also called cold, common cold

cosmetic surgery /ˈkɒstɪk ˈsɜːrəʤi/ noun a surgical operation to improve a person’s appearance

cost- /ˈkɒst/ prefix same as costo- (used before vowels)

costal /ˈkɒst(ə)l/ adjective referring to the ribs

costive /ˈkɒstɪv/ noun a drug which causes constipation

costo- /ˈkɒstəʊ/ prefix referring to the ribs

cot death /ˈkɒt ˈdeθ/ noun sudden infant death syndrome

cotrimoxazole /ˌkɒt ˈtrɪməksəzoʊ/ noun a drug used to combat bacteria in the urinary tract

cotyledon /ˌkɒtəˈlɛdən/ noun one of the divisions of a placenta

cotyledonary cavity /ˌkɒtɪlɛdən ˈkeɪvəti/ noun same as acetalbum

coughing /ˈkɔfɪŋ/ noun a surgical operation to displace the opaque lens of an eye as a treatment for cataracts

cough /kɒf/ noun a reflex action, caused by irritation in the throat, when the glottis is opened and air is sent out of the lungs suddenly — an infection that causes coughing. She has a bad cough and cannot make the speech. To send air out of the lungs suddenly because the throat is irritated. The smoke made him cough. She has a cold and keeps on coughing and sneezing.

cough medicine /ˌkɒf ˌmɛdəˈsɪn/ cough

cough mixture /ˌkɒf ˌmɪkʃər/ noun a liquid taken to soothe the irritation which causes a cough

counselling /ˈkɔnˌsɛlɪŋ/ noun a method of treating especially psychiatric disorders in which
counterextension 68

a specialist talks with a person about his or her condition and how to deal with it

counterextension 68 /ˈkɔntrɛkˈstenʃən/ noun an orthopaedic treatment in which the upper part of a limb is kept fixed and traction is applied to the lower part of it

counterirritant 68 /ˈkɔntərˌɪrɪtənt/ noun a substance which alleviates the pain in an internal organ by irritating an area of skin whose sensory nerves are close to those of the organ in the spinal cord

coupling 68 /ˈkʌplɪŋ/ noun 1. an act of joining together or linking two people, things or processes 2. something which joins two things, especially a device for connecting two pieces of pipe, hose or tube

couvade 68 /ˈkuvəd/ noun an act of copying the actions of having a baby while a woman is actually giving birth, done by the father in some Native South American societies

Cowper's glands 68 /ˈkəʊpəz ɡlændz/ plural noun two glands at the base of the penis which secrete into the urethra. Also called bulbourethral glands [Described 1700. After William Cowper (1666–1709), English surgeon.]

cowpox 68 /ˈkəʊpəʊks/ noun an infectious viral disease of cattle which can be transmitted to humans. It was used as a constituent of the first vaccines for smallpox.

cox- 68 /kɔks/ prefix the hip joint

coxa 68 /ˈkɔksə/ noun the hip joint (NOTE: The plural is coxae.)

coxalgia 68 /ˈkɔksəlˌdʒiə/ noun pain in the hip joint

coxa vara 68 /ˈkɔksə ˈværə/ noun an unusual development of the hip bone, making the legs bow

Coxsackie virus 68 /ˈkɔksəkˌsēˌvərəs/ noun one of a group of enteroviruses which enter the cells of the intestines and can cause diseases such as aseptic meningitis and Bornholm disease [After Coxsackie, New York, where the virus was first identified.]

CPAP abbreviation continuous positive airways pressure

CPN abbreviation community psychiatric nurse

CPR abbreviation cardiopulmonary resuscitation

crab 68 /kræb, ˈkræb lɔʊs/ noun a louse, Phthirius pubis, which infests the pubic region and other parts of the body with coarse hair. Also called pubic louse

crack 68 /k्रæk/ noun a thin break ○ There’s a crack in one of the bones in the skull. □ verb to make a thin break in something, or become split ○ She cracked a bone in her leg.

cradle 68 /ˈkreɪdl/ noun a metal frame put up over a person in bed to keep the weight of the bedclothes off the body. □ verb to carry a child with one arm under the thigh and the other under the upper back

cradle cap 68 /ˈkredəlˌkæp/ noun a yellow deposit on the scalp of babies, caused by seborrhoea

cramp 68 /ˈkræmpl/ noun a painful involuntary spasm in the muscles, in which the muscle may stay contracted for some time

cran- 68 /ˈkɾeɪnə/ prefix the skull

cranial 68 /ˈkɾeɪniəl/ adjective referring to the skull

cranio-/ˈkɾeɪniəʊ/ prefix the skull

cranio- 68 /ˈkɾeɪniəʊ/ prefix the skull

cranio-/ˈkɾeɪniəʊ/ prefix the skull

cranio-/ˈkɾeɪniəʊ/ prefix the skull

craniodermography 68 /ˌkɾeɪniəˈdɛrməɡrəfi/ noun a surgical operation on the skull, especially one cutting away part of the skull (NOTE: The plural is cranio-dermographies.)

cranium 68 /ˈkɾeɪniəm/ noun same as skull (NOTE: The plural is craniums or cranium.)

CRB check 68 /ˈkrɛb ˈtʃek/ noun a check with the Criminal Records Bureau to establish whether a candidate has any convictions that disallows him or her from working with children or other vulnerable members of society. Also called disclosure check

creatine 68 /ˈkriətɪn/ noun a compound of nitrogen found in the muscles, produced by protein metabolism and excreted as creatinine

creatinine 68 /ˈkriəˌtɪnə/ noun a substance which is the form in which creatine is excreted

creatinuria 68 /ˈkriəˌtɪnəˈjʊəriə/ noun excess creatine in the urine

creatorrhoea 68 /kriəˈtərəˌhiːə/ noun the presence of undigested muscle fibre in the faeces, occurring in some pancreatic diseases

Credé's method 68 /ˈkredəz ˌmeθəd/ noun 1. a method of extracting a placenta by massaging the uterus through the abdomen 2. the putting of silver nitrate solution into the eyes of a baby born to a mother who has gonorrhoea, in order to prevent gonococcal conjunctivitis [Described 1860. After Karl Sigmund Franz Credé (1819–92), German gynaecologist.]
creeping eruption /kriːpɪŋ ɪŋˈtəpə/ noun
an itching skin complaint, caused by larvae of various parasites which creep under the skin
crepitus /krepˈtəs/ noun a harsh cracking sound heard through a stethoscope. Also called rate
creptomania /krepˈtəmənə/ noun an unusual soft crackling sound heard through a stethoscope in a person with inflammation of the lungs
crest /krest/ noun a long raised part on a bone
crest of ilium /krest əvˈɪliəm/ noun same as iliac crest
Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease /ˈkruːtsfɛld dʒeɪkɒb/ a neurodegenerative disease characterised by a slow-acting prion which eventually affects the brain. It may be linked to BSE in cows. Abbreviation CJD. # variant CJD [Described 1920 by H.G. Creutzfeldt (1885–1964); 1921 by A.M. Jakob (1884–1931), German psychiatrist]
cribiform /ˈkrɪbɪrɪfɔrm/ adjective having small holes like a sieve
cribiform plate /ˈkrɪbɪrɪfɔrm plɛt/ noun the top part of the ethmoid bone which forms the roof of the nasal cavity and part of the roof of the eye sockets
cricoid /ˈkrɪkoɪd/ adjective relating to the lowest part of the cartilage of the larynx
cricoid cartilage /ˈkrɪkoɪd kɑrtɪˈlɑdʒ/ noun ring-shaped cartilage in the lower part of the larynx. See illustration at larynx in Supplement
cri-du-chat syndrome /ˈkriː duˈʃæt/ noun a congenital condition, caused by loss of part of chromosome 5, which is characterised in babies by a cry suggestive of that of a cat
Crigger-Najjar syndrome /ˈkrɪɡər ˌnɛʤər/ noun a genetically controlled condition in which bilirubin cannot be formed, leading to jaundice or even brain damage
crista /ˈkriːstə/ noun 1. a ridge, e.g. the border of a bone 2. a fold in the inner membrane of a mitochrondron (NOTE: The plural is cristae.)
crista galli /ˈkriːstə ˈɡæli/ noun a projection from the ethmoid bone
criterion /ˈkraɪətriən/ noun an accepted standard used in making a decision or judgment about something (NOTE: The plural is criteria.)
critical care /ˈkrɪtɪkl kɛə/ noun specialist nursing and medical treatment given to patients who are critically ill
critical list /ˈkrɪtɪkl lɪst/ noun the list of patients in a hospital whose condition is medically life-threatening
CRNA abbreviation certified registered nurse anaesthetist
Crohn's disease /ˈkroʊən ˈdʒiːz/ noun a persistent inflammatory disease, usually of the lower intestinal tract, characterised by thickening and scarring of the intestinal wall and obstruction [Described 1932. After Burrill Bernard Crohn (1884–1983), New York physician.]
COMMENT: No certain cause has been found for Crohn's disease, where only one section of the intestine becomes inflamed and can be blocked.
cromolyn sodium /ˌkroʊməˌlɪn ˈsəʊdəm/ noun a drug that helps to prevent the release of histamine and other substances which cause many of the symptoms of asthma and hay fever
cross-dresser /ˈkroʊs ˈdresər/ noun someone who wears clothes usually worn by people of the opposite sex, e.g. a transvestite
cross-dressing /ˈkroʊs ˈdresɪŋ/ noun the practice of wearing clothes usually worn by people of the opposite sex, e.g. by transvestites
cross-infection /ˈkroʊs ɪnˈfɛkʃən/ noun an infection passed from one patient to another in hospital, either directly or from nurses, visitors or equipment
crossmatch /ˈkroʊs ˈmatʃ/ verb (in transplant surgery) to match a donor to a recipient as closely as possible to avoid tissue rejection. # blood group
crossmatching /ˈkroʊs ˈmætʃɪŋ/ noun the process of matching a transplant donor to a recipient as closely as possible to avoid tissue rejection
cross-resistance /ˈkroʊs riˈzɪstəns/ noun the development by a disease agent of resistance to a number of similar drugs or chemicals of the same class
crotamiton /ˈkroʊtəmətən/ noun a chemical that kills mites, used to treat scabies
crotch /ˈkroʊtʃ/ noun the point where the legs meet the body, where the genitals are. Also called crotch
croup /ˈkruːp/ noun acute infection of the upper respiratory passages which blocks the larynx, affecting children
crown /kraʊn/ noun the top part of a tooth above the level of the gum.
noun to put an artificial crown on a tooth
crowning /ˈkraʊnɪŋ/ noun 1. the act of putting an artificial crown on a tooth 2. a stage in childbirth in which the top of the baby’s head becomes visible
cruciate /ˈkrʌsɪt/ adjective shaped like a cross
 cruciate ligament /ˈkrʌsɪt lɪgəmənt/ noun any ligament shaped like a cross, especially either of two ligaments behind the knee which prevent the knee from bending forwards
crude death rate /ˈkrʌd dʒiːθ ˈreɪt/ noun the number of deaths in a year, divided by the total population
cura plural of crus
noun

The plural is cryptorchidism

infection.

Cryptococcosis

a feature of cryptococcosis

cryotherapy

cryosurgery used in cryosurgery with a tip that is kept very cold

cryoprecipitate such as from blood plasma, which separates out on freezing and thawing

cryoprecipitate can be stored at extremely low temperatures

cryobank

cryoprobe /ˈkraɪəˌprɒb/ noun an instrument used in cryosurgery with a tip that is kept very cold to destroy tissue

cryosurgery /ˈkraɪəˌsɜːrj/ noun surgery which uses extremely cold instruments to destroy tissue

cryotherapy /ˈkraɪəˌθerəpi/ noun treatment using extreme cold, as in removing a wart with dry ice

crypt /ˈkrɒpt/ noun a small cavity in the body

cryptogram

cryptococcal meningitis /ˈkraɪɒtkəkəl məˈnɪŋwɪtɪs/ a form of meningitis that is a feature of cryptococcosis

cryptococcosis /ˈkraɪɒtkəkəsɪs/ noun an infection mainly affecting the brain or nervous system, caused by the fungus Cryptococcus neoformans. It occurs most often in people with HIV infection.
cryptomenorrhoea /ˌkrɒptəˌmənəˈriːə/ noun the retention of menstrual flow, usually caused by an obstruction

cryptorchidism /ˌkrɒptrəˈkɪzdʒɪzm/ cryptorchism /ˌkrɒptəˌkɪzm/ noun a condition in which the testicles do not move down into the scrotum

cryptosporidium /ˌkrɒptəˈspɔːrɪdiəm/ plural of cryptosporidium

cryptosporidiosis /ˌkrɒptəˈspɔːridiəsɪs/ noun an infectious condition of humans and domestic animals, spread by an intestinal parasite Cryptosporidium parvum. Its symptoms are fever, diarrhea and stomach cramps.
cryptosporidium /ˌkrɒptəˈspɔːridiəm/ noun a parasite which contaminates drinking water supplies, causing intestinal infection (NOTE: The plural is cryptosporidia.)

crypts of Lieberkühn /ˈkrɪppts av ˌlɪbərkəˈnuːn/ plural noun tubular glands found in the mucous membrane of the small and large intestine, especially those between the bases of the villi in the small intestine. Also called Lieberkühn's glands (Described 1745. After Johann Nathan Lieberkühn (1711–56), Berlin anatomist and physician.)

CSF abbreviation cerebrospinal fluid

CT abbreviation computed tomography

CT scan /ˈskeɪn/ noun a computer picture of a slice of the body or an organ produced by a CT scanner. Also called CAT scan

cubit /ˈkjʊbɪt/ adjective referring to the ulna

cuboid /ˈkjʊbɔɪd/ noun one of the tarsal bones in the foot.

cuboid bone /ˈkjʊbɔɪd bɔːn/ noun one of the tarsal bones in the foot. See illustration at foot in Supplement

cuff /kʌf/ noun an inflatable ring put round the arm and inflated when blood pressure is being measured

cuirass respirator /ˈkwaɪəs ˈresɪpərɪtər/ noun a type of artificial respirator which surrounds only the chest

culdoscope /ˈkʌldəsəskəʊp/ noun an instrument used to inspect the interior of a woman’s pelvis, introduced through the vagina

culdoscopy /ˈkʌldəˈskɒpɪ/ noun an examination of the interior of a woman’s pelvis using a culdoscope

culture /ˈkʌltʃər/ noun 1. the shared values and behaviour of a group 2. microorganisms or tissues grown in a culture medium in a laboratory 3. verb to grow microorganisms or tissues in a culture medium

cumulative /ˈkjuːmjʊlətɪv/ adjective growing by adding

cuneiform /ˈkjuːnɪfɔːrm/ noun one of the three tarsal bones in the foot. See illustration at foot in Supplement

cupola /ˈkjʊpələ/ noun a dome-shaped structure

curate /ˈkjuːrət/ noun a drug derived from South American plants, antagonist to acetylcholine and used surgically to paralyse muscles dur-
ing operations without causing unconsciousness (NOTE: Curare is the poison used to make poison arrows.)

curette /ˈkjuːrɛt/ noun a surgical instrument like a long thin spoon, used for scraping the inside of an organ

Cushing’s syndrome /ˌkaʊʃɪŋz/ noun symptoms of Cushing’s disease caused by the tropical parasite

Curling’s ulcer /ˈkɜːrlɪŋz/ noun a former unit of measurement of radioactivity, replaced by the becquerel. Symbol Ci

Curling’s ulcer /ˈkɜːrlɪŋz/ noun an ulcer of the duodenum following severe injury to the body

Cushingoid /ˈkjuːʃɪŋɔɪd/ adjective showing symptoms of Cushing’s disease

Cushing’s disease /ˈkjuːʃɪŋz ˈdiːziːz/ noun a condition in which the adrenal cortex produces too many corticosteroids. [Described 1932. After Harvey Williams Cushing (1869–1939), surgeon, Boston, USA.]

cusp /ˈkʌsp/ noun 1. the pointed tip of a tooth 2. a flap of membrane forming a valve in the heart

cuspid /ˈkʌspɪd/ noun same as canine

cut /kʌt/ noun 1. a reduction in the number or amount of something 2. a place where the skin has been penetrated by a sharp instrument. She had a bad cut on her left leg. The nurse will put a bandage on your cut. To make an opening in something using a knife, scissors or other sharp thing. The surgeon cut the diseased tissue away with a scalpel. She cut her finger on the broken glass. 3. to reduce the number or amount of something Accidents have been cut by 10%. (NOTE: cutting – cut)

cut- /kjuːt-/ prefix referring to the skin

cutaneous /ˈkjuːtənəs/ adjective referring to the skin

cutaneous leishmaniasis /ˈkjuːtənəs leɪʃməˈnæsɪs/ noun a form of skin disease caused by the tropical parasite Leishmania. Also called Delhi boil

cutdown /ˈkʌtədəʊn/ noun the procedure of cutting a vein to insert a cannula or administer an intravenous drug

cuticle /ˈkjuːtɪkl/ noun same as epidermis

cyclitis /ˈsaɪklɪtɪs/ noun inflammation of the ciliary body in the eye

cyclo- /ˈsaɪkləʊ-/ prefix cycles

cyclophosphamide /ˌsaɪkləʊfəˈfæsməd/ noun a drug that suppresses immunity, used in the treatment of leukaemia, lymphoma, Hodgkin’s disease and tumours

cyclopentolate /ˌsaɪkləpəntəˈlɑːt/ noun a drug used to paralyse the ciliary muscle

cyclophoria /ˌsaɪkləpɔrɪə/ noun a form of bipolar disorder in which the person experiences alternating depression and excitement

cyclophotography /ˌsaɪkləˈfəʊtərəɡrəfi/ noun a series of events which occur regularly

cyclic /ˈsaɪklɪk/ adjective referring to cycles

cyclical /ˈsaɪklɪkl/ adjective referring to cycles

cyclolysis /ˌsaɪkləlɪs/ noun a form of bipolar disorder in which the person experiences alternating depression and excitement

cyclophotography /ˌsaɪkləˈfəʊtərəɡrəfi/ noun an operation to make a cut in the ciliary body (NOTE: The plural is cyclophotographies.)

NOTE

curettement /ˈkjuːrɪtəm/ noun the procedure of scraping the inside of a hollow organ, often the uterus, to remove a growth or tissue for examination. Also called curettage

cut-down /ˈkʌtdəʊn/ noun a surgical instrument called

cutaneous

cut-down

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cut-down
-cyclovir /sai[ks]louv[a]/ suffix used in the names of antiviral drugs
cyesis /sair'isis/ noun same as pregnancy (technical)
cyist/noun an unusual growth in the body shaped like a pouch, containing liquid or semi-liquid substances
cyst/-syst/ prefix the bladder
cystadenoma /'sist'sd'nəmə/ noun an adenoma in which fluid-filled cysts form (NOTE: The plural is cystadenomas or cystadenomata.)
cystalgia /'sist'ældʒə/ noun pain in the urinary bladder
cysectomy /'sistektəmɪ/ noun a surgical operation to remove all or part of the urinary bladder (NOTE: The plural is cysectomies.)
cyctic /'sistɪk/ adjective 1. referring to cysts 2. referring to a bladder
cycticercosis /'sistɪt'ssəu'skərəsɪs/ noun a disease caused by infestation of tapeworm larvae from pork
cyctic fibrosis /'sistɪk fə'brazəsɪs/ noun a hereditary disease in which there is malfunction of the exocrine glands such as the pancreas, in particular those which secrete mucus, causing respiratory difficulties, male infertility and mal-absorption of food from the gastrointestinal tract. Also called fibrocystic disease, mucoviscidosis
cystine /'sistɪn/ noun an amino acid. It can cause stones to form in the urinary system of people who have a rare inherited metabolic disorder.
cytogenesis /'sistɪt'ænəsɪs/ noun the study of the chemical activity of cells
cytogenetics /'sistɪtænə'tetɪks/ noun a branch of genetics which studies the function of cells, especially chromosomes, in heredity
cytokine /'sæt'ɒkən/ noun a protein secreted by cells of the lymph system which is involved in controlling response to inflammation

cytokinesis /'sæt'ɒkə'nɪsɪs/ noun changes in the cytoplasm of a cell during division
cytological smear /'sætələdʒə'smi/ 'smaɪə/ noun a sample of tissue taken for examination under a microscope
cytology /'sætələdʒə/ 'smaɪə/ noun the study of the structure and function of cells
cytolyis /'sætəlɪsɪs/ noun the breaking down of cells
cytomegalovirus /'sætə'məgələvəs, ˈvɛrəs/ noun one of the herpesviruses which can cause serious congenital disorders in a fetus if it infects the pregnant mother. Abbreviation CMV
cytometrist /'sætə'mətrɪst/ noun an instrument attached to a microscope, used for measuring and counting the number of cells in a specimen
cytopenia /'sætəpəniə/ 'piəniə/ noun a deficiency of cellular elements in blood or tissue
cytoplasm /'sætəpləzəm/ noun a substance inside the cell membrane which surrounds the nucleus of a cell

cytosarcinosis /sait'sar'saʊsɪs/ noun an instrument made of a long tube with a light at the end, used to inspect the inside of the bladder
cytoscopy /'sai[təskəpəri/ noun an examination of the bladder using a cystoscope (NOTE: The plural is cystoscopies.)
cytostomy /'sai[tɛstəmɪ, /'sai[tə'təmɪ/ noun a surgical operation to make an opening between the bladder and the abdominal wall to allow urine to pass without going through the urethra. Also called vesicostomy (NOTE: The plurals are cytostomies and cystotomies.)
cystourethroscope /'sai[təuθrəskəpə/ noun an instrument used to inspect the bladder and urethra

cystourethrography /'sai[təuθrəgrəfɪ/ noun X-ray examination of the bladder and urethra

cystourethroscope /'sai[təuθrəskəpə/ noun an instrument used to inspect the bladder and urethra
cyt- /sait/ prefix same as cyto- (used before verbs)
cyt- /sait- / prefix cell
cytotoxics /sait'tuksɪks/ noun the study of the chemical activity of cells
cytosine /saɪtəʊsɪn/ noun one of the four basic chemicals in DNA
cytosome /saɪtəʊsəm/ noun the body of a cell, not including the nucleus
cytotoxic /saɪtəʊtɒksɪk/ adjective 1. referring to a drug or agent which prevents cell division 2. referring to cells in the immune system which destroy other cells
cytotoxic drug /saɪtəʊtɒksɪk 'drʌɡ/ noun a drug which reduces the reproduction of cells, used to treat cancer
cytotoxin /saɪtəʊ'tɒksɪn/ noun a substance which has a toxic effect on cells
The plural is noun before vowels.

Who described this condition in soldiers in the American Civil War?

dacro- /dakrəʊ-/ prefix tears
dacroaenitis /dakrəʊəˈniːtɪs/ noun inflammation of the lacrimal gland
dacrocytitis /dakrəʊˈsɪtiːtɪs/ noun inflammation of the lacrimal sac when the tear duct, which drains into the nose, becomes blocked
dacrocytography /dakrəʊˌsɪtroʊˈgeɪri/ noun contrast radiography to determine the site of an obstruction in the tear ducts
dacrocytostinomosy /ˌdakrəʊˈsɪstrəʊˌstɪnəməʊsɪ/ noun a surgical operation to bypass a blockage from the tear duct which takes tears into the nose. Abbreviation DCR (NOTE: The plural is dacrocytostinomies.)
dacroolith /dakrəʊˈlɪθ/ noun a stone in the lacrimal sac
dacyrcoma /dakrɪˈkʌmə/ noun a benign swelling in one of the tear ducts (NOTE: The plural is dacryomas or dacryomata.)
dactyl /daktɪl/ noun a finger or toe
dactyl- /daktɪl-/ prefix same as dactylo- (used before vowels)
dactylitis /daktɪlɪˈtɪsɪs/ noun inflammation of the fingers or toes, caused by bone infection or rheumatic disease
dactylo- /daktɪləʊ-/ prefix referring to the fingers or toes
dactyloology /daktɪləˈlɒdʒɪ/ noun signs made with the fingers in place of words when talking to a person who is unable to hear, or when a person who is unable to hear or speak wants to communicate

dactylomegalgy /daktɪləmɪˈɡeɪlɪ/ noun a condition in which a person has longer fingers than usual

DAH abbreviation disordered action of the heart

Daltonism /ˈdɔːltənɪz(ə)m/ noun the commonest form of colour blindness, in which someone cannot see the difference between red and green. Also called protanopia [Described 1794. After John Dalton (1766–1844), English chemist and physician. Founder of the atomic theory, he himself was colour-blind.]

D & C /ˈdeɪ ki/ abbreviation dilatation and curettage
dander /ˈdeɪndər/ noun very small fragments that fall from the feathers, hair or skin of animals or people
dandrup /ˈdeɪdruːp/ noun pieces of dead skin from the scalp which fall out when the hair is combed. Also called pityriasis capitis, scurf

dandy-walker syndrome /ˌdændi_ˈwɔːkər_ˈsɪndrəʊm/ noun a congenital condition in which there is no Magendie’s foramen in the brain
dark adaptation /ˈdaːrk_ˌdɛədəp_ˈteɪʃən/ noun the reflex changes which enable the eye to continue to see in dim light. For example, the pupil becomes larger and the rods in the retina become more active than the cones.
data /ˈdeɪtə/ plural noun information in words or figures about a particular subject, especially information which is available on computer. In scientific usage, data is used with a plural verb: The data are accurate. In everyday language, data is often used with a singular verb: The recent data supports our case.
data bank /ˈdeɪtə bæŋk/ noun a store of information in a computer. The hospital keeps a data bank of information about possible kidney donors.
database /ˈdeɪtəbɪs/ noun a structured collection of information in a computer that can be automatically retrieved and manipulated

Data Protection Act /ˈdeɪtə_ prəˈtekʃən_ˌdeɪkt/ noun a parliamentary act intended to protect information about individuals that is held on computers. It ensures that all information is stored securely and allows people to have access to their entries.
daunder /ˈdeɪtər/ noun a female child of a parent. They have two sons and one daughter.
day blindness /ˈdeɪˌblaɪndnəs/ noun same as hemeralopia
day care /ˈdeɪ ˈkeər/ noun supervised recreation or medical care provided during the day for people who need special help, e.g. some elderly people or small children
day case /ˈdeɪ keɪs/ noun same as day patient
day case surgery /ˈdeɪ ˈkeɪs ˌsɜːdiˈjærɪ/ noun same as day surgery
day centre /ˈdeɪ ˈsɛntə/ noun a place providing day care
day nursery /ˈdeɪ ˈnɜːri/ noun a place where small children can be looked after during the daytime while their parents or guardians are at work
day patient /ˈdeɪ ˈpɛtənt/ noun a patient who is in hospital for treatment for a day and does not stay overnight. Also called day case
day patient care /ˈdeɪ ˈpɛtənt ˌkeər/ noun care for patients who are resident in a hospital during the daytime only
day recovery ward /ˈdeɪ ɪrˈkɛvrɪˌwɔːd/ noun a ward where day patients who have had minor operations can recover before going home
day surgery /ˈdeɪ ˌsɜːdiˈjærɪ/ noun a surgical operation which does not require the patient to stay overnight in hospital. Also called day case surgery
DB abbreviation decibel
DCR abbreviation dacryocystorhinostomy
DDS abbreviation US doctor of dental surgery
DDT abbreviation dichlorodiphenyltrichloroethane
de- /deɪ/ prefix removal or loss
dead fingers /dɛd ˈfɪŋɡəz/ noun the tips of the fingers
dead man /ˈdeɪ ˈmeɪn/ noun same as Raymond’s disease
dead space /dɛd speɪs/ noun a breath in the last part of the process of breathing in air which does not get further than the bronchial tubes
deaf /dɛf/ adjective not able to hear in circumstances where most people would hear
deaf and dumb /dɛf ənd ˈdʌmb/ noun not able to hear or to speak (NOTE: This term is regarded as offensive.)
deadness /ˈdeɪdnɛs/ noun the fact of being unable to hear in circumstances where most people would
deamination /ˈdeɪəˌmeɪʃən/ noun the process by which amino acids are broken down in the liver and urea is formed
death /dɛθ/ noun the permanent end of all natural functions
death rate /ˈdeθ rɛt/ noun the number of deaths per year per thousand of population (NOTE: The death rate from cancer of the liver has remained stable.)
debility /dɛˈbɪləti/ noun general weakness
debridement /dɪˈbrɪdəmənt/ noun the removal of dirt or dead tissue from a wound to help healing
decade- /dɛkəd/ prefix ten. Symbol d
Decadron /dɛkəˈdrɒn/ a trade name for dexamethasone
decalification /dɛkəˌkəliˈfɛɪʃən/ noun the loss of calcium salts from teeth and bones
decannulation /dɛkəˈnjuːləˈkeɪʃən/ noun the removal of a tracheostomy tube
decapsulation /dɛkəˈpɪtʃəˈkeɪʃən/ noun the act or process of cutting off the head of a person or animal
decay /dɪˈkeɪ/ noun 1. the process by which tissues become rotten, caused by the action of microorganisms and oxygen 2. damage caused to tissue or a tooth by the action of microorganisms, especially bacteria
decapsulation /dɛkəˈpɪtʃəˈkeɪʃən/ noun a surgical operation to remove a capsule from an organ, especially from a kidney
deaf /dɪˈkeɪ/ noun 1. The process by which tissues become rotten, caused by the action of microorganisms and oxygen 2. damage caused to tissue or a tooth by the action of microorganisms, especially bacteria
decibel /dɛsɪˈbɛl/ noun a unit of measurement of the loudness of sound, used to compare different levels of sound. Symbol dB
decidua /ˈdɛsɪdjuːə/ noun a membrane which lines the uterus after fertilisation (NOTE: The plural is deciduas or deciduae)
decidua basalis, where the embryo is attached, the decidua capsule is removed, which covers the embryo and the decidua vera which is the rest of the decidua not touching the embryo. It is expelled after the birth of the baby.
decidual /ˈdɛsɪdjuəl/ adjective referring to the decidua
deciduoma /ˈdɛsɪdjuəˌɔmə/ noun a mass of decidual tissue remaining in the uterus after birth (NOTE: The plural is deciduomas or deciduomata.)
deciduous /dɛsɪˈdjuəs/ adjective referring to teeth discarded at a later stage of development
deciduous dentition /dɛsɪˈdjuəs ˈdɛntɪʃən/ noun the set of twenty teeth which are gradually replaced by the permanent teeth as a child grows older
deciduous tooth /dɛsɪˈdjuəs tuθ/ noun same as primary tooth
decilitre /dɛsɪˈlɪtər/ noun a unit of measurement of liquid equal to one tenth of a litre. Symbol dl (NOTE: The US spelling is deciliter.)
decimetre /dɛsɪˈmɪtər/ noun a unit of measurement of length equal to one tenth of a metre. Symbol dm (NOTE: The US spelling is decimeter.)
decompensation  /dɪˈkɒmpənˈseʃn/ noun a condition in which an organ such as the heart cannot cope with extra stress placed on it and so is unable to perform its function properly.

decomposition  /dɪˈkɒmpəzəʃn/ noun the process by which dead matter is broken down by the action of bacteria or fungi.

decompression  /dɪˈkɒmpərʒn/ noun 1. a reduction of atmospheric pressure which occurs as a diver returns to the surface. 2. a controlled reduction of pressure to unblock the nasal passages.

decompression sickness  /dɪˈkɒmpərʒnˌsɪksəs/ noun same as caisson disease.

decoagulation  /dɪˈkɒɡələˈʃn/ noun the removal of a contaminating substance such as radioactive material.

decortication  /dɪˈkɔrteɪʃn/ noun the surgical removal of the cortex of an organ.

debride  /dɪˈbreɪd/ verb to remove dead matter by cutting it away; the act of open repair itself.

defibrillation  /dɪˈfɜːbrɪələˈʃn/ noun a procedure to correct an irregular heartbeat by applying a large electrical impulse to the chest wall, especially in potentially life-threatening circumstances. Also called cardioversion.

defibrillator  /dɪˈfɜːbrɪlətə/ noun an apparatus used to apply an electric impulse to the heart to make it beat regularly.

defibrination  /dɪˈfɜːbrɪnəʃn/ noun the removal of fibrin from a blood sample to prevent clotting.

deficiency  /dɪˈfɪʃn/ noun a lack of something necessary.

deficit  /dɪˈfɪsɪt/ noun the amount by which something is less than it should be.

defloration  /dɪˈflɔrəˈʃn/ noun the act of breaking the hymen of a virgin, usually at the first sexual intercourse.

deflorescence  /dɪˈflɔrəsəns/ noun the disappearance of a rash.

deformans  /dɪˈfɔrməns/ noun a lack of something necessary.

deformity  /dɪˈfɔrmətɪ/ noun an unusual shape or part of the body.

degeneration  /dɪˈdʒenərəˈʃn/ noun a change in the structure of a cell or organ so that it no longer works properly.

degenerative disease  /dɪˈdʒenərətɪv/ dɪˈdʒenərəˈtɪv/ noun a disease or disorder in which there is progressive loss of function of a part of the body, or in which a part of the body fails to repair itself.

deglutition  /dɪˈɡluːʃn/ noun the act of swallowing.

dehiscence  /dɪˈhɪsəns/ noun the act of opening wide.

dehydration  /dɪˈhaɪdrəˈʃn/ noun a dangerous lack of water in the body resulting from inadequate intake of fluids or excessive loss through sweating, vomiting or diarrhoea.

defecation  /dɪˈfɛkʃn/ noun the act of passing out faeces from the bowel.

defence  /dɪˈfens/ noun resistance against an attack of a disease.

defence mechanism  /dɪˈfens, ˌmeʃəm/ noun a subconscious reflex by which a person prevents himself or herself from showing emotion.

deferent  /dɪˈfɜːrənt/ adjective going away from the centre.

defervescence  /dɪˌfɜːrəˈvɛsəns/ noun a period during which a fever is subsiding.

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degeneration  /dɪˈdʒenərəˈʃn/ noun a change in the structure of a cell or organ so that it no longer works properly.
dehydrogenase /ˌdɪhaɪˈdərəʊdʒənəs/ noun an enzyme that transfers hydrogen between chemical compounds
déjà vu /ˈdɛʒə və/ noun an illusion that a new situation is a previous one being repeated, usually caused by a disease of the brain
delirium /ˈdɛlɪriəm/ noun a mental state in which someone is confused, excited and restless and has hallucinations
delirium tremens /ˈdɛlɪriəm ˈtreməns/ noun delirium tremens
delirium tremens /ˈdɛlɪriəm ˈtreməns/ noun delirium tremens
delirium alcoholemic /ˈdɛlɪriəm əˈləʊhoʊliəm/ noun delirium alcoholemic
Delhi boil /ˈdɛli ˈboil/ noun same as cutaneous leishmaniasis
delirium /ˈdɛlɪriəm/ noun a mental state in which someone is confused, excited and restless and has hallucinations
delirium tremens /ˈdɛlɪriəm ˈtreməns/ noun delirium tremens
main result of multiple sclerosis
fibres, caused, e.g. by injury to the head, or as the result of multiple sclerosis
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demulcent /ˈdɛmələnt/ noun a soothing substance which relieves irritation in the stomach
demulcifying /ˌdɛmələˈsaɪŋ/ adjective relating to the destruction of the myelin sheath round nerve fibres
demulcifying /ˌdɛmələˈsaɪŋ/ adjective relating to the destruction of the myelin sheath round nerve fibres

denervation /ˌdɛnəˈveɪʃən/ noun the stopping or cutting of the nerve supply to a part of the body
dengue /ˈdɛŋɡwi/ noun a tropical disease caused by an arbovirus transmitted by mosquitoes, characterised by high fever, pains in the joints, headache and rash. Also called breakbone fever
denial /ˈdiːnɪəl/ noun a person’s refusal to accept that he or she has a serious medical problem
Denis Browne splint /ˈdɛnɪs bɹəʊn ˈsplɪnt/ noun a metal splint used to correct a club foot
Described 1934. After Sir Denis John Wolko Browne (1892–1967), Australian orthopaedic and general surgeon working in Britain.
dens /ˈdɛnz/ noun a tooth, or something shaped like a tooth
dental hygiene /ˈdɛntəl ˈhaɪjəni/ noun procedures to keep the teeth healthy and free from disease
dental impaction /ˌdɛntəl ɪmˈpækʃən/ noun a condition in which a tooth is closely pressed against other teeth and cannot grow normally
dental plate /ˌdɛntəl ˈplæt/ noun a prosthesis made to the shape of the mouth, which holds artificial teeth
dental plate /ˌdɛntəl ˈplæt/ noun a prosthesis made to the shape of the mouth, which holds artificial teeth
dental prosthesis /ˌdɛntəl ˈprɒstəsɪs/ noun a prosthesis made to the shape of the mouth, which holds artificial teeth
dentist /ˈdɛntɪst/ noun a professional who treats the teeth
dentist /ˈdɛntɪst/ noun a professional who treats the teeth
dentistry /ˈdɛntɪstrɪ/ noun the profession of a dentist, or the branch of medicine dealing with teeth and gums
dentition /ˌdɛntɪˈʃən/ noun the number, arrangement and special characteristics of all the teeth in a person’s jaws

COMMENT: Children have incisors, canines and molars, which are replaced over a period of years by the permanent teeth: eight incisors, four canines, eight premolars and twelve molars, the last four molars being called wisdom teeth.
dentoid /ˌdɛntəd/ adjective shaped like a tooth
dentoid /ˌdɛntəd/ adjective shaped like a tooth
denture /ˈdɛntʃər/ noun a set of false teeth, fixed to a device which fits inside the mouth
deoxygenate /ˌdɪəˈɒksɨdʒəneɪt/ verb to remove oxygen from something
deoxygenated blood /ˌdɪəˈɒksɨdʒənt/ noun blood from which most of the oxy-
gen has been removed by the tissues. It is darker than arterial oxygenated blood. Also called venous blood. Compare deoxygenated blood.

deoxyribonucleic acid /dəkˈɒsɪbʌlə(ʊ)nəˈsaɪkəd/ noun full form of DNA. → RNA

Department of Health /ˈdeɪpɔrtmənt əv ℓɛəθ/ noun in the UK, the government department in charge of health services. Abbreviation DH

dependant /dɪˈpendənt/ noun a person who is looked after or supported by someone else. He has to support a family of six children and several dependants.

dependent /ˈpendənt/ adjective 1. needing the support of someone or something 2. addicted to a drug, referring to a part of the body which is hanging down

dependent relative /dɪˈpendənt ˈrɛlatɪv/ noun a person who is looked after by another member of the family

depersonalisation /dɪˈpɜːrsənəlɪˈzeɪʃn/ noun a psychiatric state in which someone does not believe he or she is real

depilation /dɪˈpɛləʃn/ noun the removal of hair

depilatory /dɪˈpɛlətəri/ noun a substance which removes hair. → adjective removing hair

Depo-Provera /dɪˈpəʊ prəˈvəːrə/ trademark for a progesterone derivative used in birth control and the treatment of endometriosis which is administered by three-monthly injection

depressant /dɪˈpresənt/ noun a drug which reduces the activity of part of the body, e.g. a tranquilliser

depressed /dɪˈpresəd/ adjective 1. experiencing a mental condition that prevents someone from carrying out the normal activities of life in the usual way. → clinically depressed Same as depressed 2. feeling miserable and worried (informal). He was depressed after his exam results. 3. referring to something such as a metabolic rate which is below the usual level

depressed fracture /dɪˈpresəd ˈfræktʃən/ noun a fracture of a flat bone such as those in the skull where part of the bone has been pushed down lower than the surrounding parts

depression /dɪˈpreʃn/ noun 1. a mental condition that prevents someone from carrying out the normal activities of life in the usual way. 2. a hollow on the surface of a part of the body

depressor /dɪˈpresər/ noun a muscle which pulls part of the body downwards

deprivation /dɪˈprɪvəʃn/ noun 1. the fact of not being able to have something that you need or want. → sleep deprivation 2. the lack of basic necessities of life

deradenitis /dərəˈdɛnɪtɪs/ noun inflammation of the lymph nodes in the neck

Dercum's disease /dɛrˈkʌmz ˈdɛriz/ noun same as adiposis dolorosa [Described 1868. After François Xavier Dercum (1856–1931), Professor of Neurology at Jefferson Medical College, Philadelphia, USA.]
derealisation /dɪˈriːələˌzeɪʃn/ noun a psychological state in which someone feels the world around him or her is not real

derm- /dɛrm/ prefix same as derma- (used before vowels)

dermoid /dɛrmɔɪd/ adjective 1. referring to the skin

dermatology /dɛrməˈtɒleɪkəl/ noun referring to dermatology

dermatologist /dɛrmətəˈlɒdʒɪst/ noun a doctor who specialises in the study and treatment of the skin and its diseases

dermatome /dɛrməˈtɒm/ noun 1. a special knife used for cutting thin sections of skin for grafting 2. an area of skin supplied by one spinal nerve

dermatomyositis /dɛrmətəˈmɔːsɪtɪs/ noun a collagen disease with a wasting inflammation of the skin and muscles

dermatophyte /dɛrməˈtɒfɪt/ noun a fungus belonging to one of three genera which affect the skin or hair, causing tinea

dermatophytosis /dɛrməˈtɒfɪtəˌsɪs/ noun a fungal infection of the skin caused by a dermatophyte

dermatoplasty /dɛrməˈtɒpləstɪ/ noun a skin graft, replacing damaged skin by skin taken from another part of the body or from a donor

dermatosis /dɛrməˈtɔsɪs/ noun a disease of the skin

dermis /dɛrmɪs/ noun a thick layer of living skin beneath the epidermis. Also called corium

dermo- /dɛrməʊ/ prefix same as derma-

dermoid /dɛrmɔɪd/ adjective 1. referring to the skin 2. like skin
Descemet's membrane /dɪˈsɛmətɪs/ noun one of the deep layers of the cornea [Described 1785. After Jean Descemet (1732–1810), French physician; Professor of Anatomy and Surgery in Paris.]
descending aorta /dɪˌsɛndɪŋ əˈrɔtə/ noun the second section of the aorta, which turns downwards. Compare ascending aorta
descending colon /dɪˌsɛndɪŋ ˈkəʊlən/ noun the third section of the colon which goes down the left side of the body. Compare ascending colon. See illustration at DIGESTIVE SYSTEM in Supplement
desensitisation /dɪˈsɛnstaɪˈzaʃən/ noun the act of making someone or something no longer sensitive to something such as an allergen
designer drug /dɪˈzaɪznər ˈdrʌg/ noun a drug that has been modified to enhance its properties (informal)
desogestrel /dɪˌsɔɡɛstrəl/ noun a hormone used as an oral contraceptive
desquamation /dɪˌskweɪˈmeɪʃən/ noun the continual process of losing the outer layer of dead skin
detached retina /dɪˈtækt/ ˈreɪtɪən/ noun a condition in which the retina becomes partially separated from the eyeball, causing loss of vision. Also called retinal detachment
COMMENT: A detached retina can be caused by a blow to the eye, or simply is a condition occurring in old age. If left untreated the eye will become blind. A detached retina can sometimes be attached to the choroid again using lasers.
detergent /dɪˈtɛrdʒənt/ noun a cleaning substance which removes grease and bacteria
deterioration /dɪˈtiərərیˈeɪʃən/ noun the fact of becoming worse. ☐ The nurses were worried by the deterioration in the patient’s reactions.
detox /dɪˈtɔks/ noun same as detoxification (informal)
detoxification /dɪˌtɔksɪˈfɪkəʃən/ noun, detoxification /dɪˌtɔksɪˈfɪkəʃən/ noun the removal of toxic substances to make a poisonous substance harmless
detrition /dɪˈtrɪʃən/ noun the fact of wearing away by rubbing or use
detritus /dɪˈtrɪtəs/ noun rubbish produced when something disintegrates
detrusor muscle /dɪˈtrʌzər ˈmʌskəl/ noun the muscular coat of the urinary bladder
detumescence /dɪˌʒuːmɛsəns/ noun 1. (of the penis or clitoris after an erection or orgasm) the process of becoming limp 2. (of a swelling) the process of disappearing
deuteronopia /djuːˈtrənəʊpiə/ noun a form of colour blindness in which someone cannot see green
develop /dɪˈveləp/ verb 1. to become larger and stronger, or more complex ☐ The embryo is developing normally. ☐ A swelling developed under the armpit. ☐ The sore throat developed into an attack of meningitis. 2. to make something start to happen ☐ We’re developing a new system for dealing with admission to A & E. 3. to make something start to grow or become larger, stronger or more complex ☐ He does exercises to develop his muscles. 4. to start to have an illness ☐ The baby may be developing a cold.
development /dɪˈveləpmənt/ noun 1. the process of growing, or of becoming larger and stronger, or more complex ☐ The development of the embryo takes place in the uterus. 2. something which happens and causes a change in a situation ☐ Report any developments to me at once.
developmental delay /dɪˈveləpməntˈdɛlɪ/ diˌˈkjuː/ noun the fact of being later than usual in developing, either physically or psychologically
deviance /dɪˈvɪns/ noun sexual behaviour which is considered unusual
deviated nasal septum /dɪˌdɪvɪətɪd ˈneɪzəl ˈseptəm/ , deviated septum /dɪˌdɪvɪətɪd ˈseptəm/ noun an unusual position of the septum of the nose which may block the nose and cause nosebleeds
deviation /dɪˌvɪˈeɪʃən/ noun 1. the fact of being different from what is usual or expected or something which is different from what is usual or expected 2. an unusual position of a joint or of the eye, as in strabismus
dexamethasone /dɪˈdɛksəməˈθəsən/ noun a synthetic steroid drug that is used to treat inflammation and hormonal imbalances
Dexa scan /dɛksə skən/ noun a technique to assess changes in someone’s bone density, as in osteoporosis or in Paget’s disease. Full form Dual Energy X-Ray Absorptiometry
dextr- /dɛkstrə/ prefix referring to the right, or the right side of the body
dextromoramide /dɛkstrəmɔrəməˈrɑːd/ noun an opioid drug used to reduce pain
dextrose /dɛkstrəs/ noun same as glucose
DH abbreviation Department of Health
Di abbreviation donor insemination
di- /dai/ prefix two, double
dia- /daiə/ prefix (through or throughout) 2. across 3. in different or opposite directions 4. apart
diabetes /daiˈbɛtɪs/ noun 1. one of a group of diseases which cause the body to produce large amounts of urine. ☐ gestational diabetes 2. same as diabetes mellitus
diabetes insipidus /daiˈbɛtɪs ɪnˈsɪpɪdəs/ noun a rare disorder of the pituitary gland causing an inadequate amount of the hormone vasopressin, which controls urine production, to be
diabetes mellitus 80

produced, leading to excessive passing of urine and extreme thirst

diabetes mellitus /ˌdaɪəˈbiːtɪs/ noun a disease where the body cannot control sugar absorption because the pancreas does not secrete enough insulin

COMMENT: Diabetes mellitus has two forms: Type I may have a viral trigger caused by an infection which affects the cells in the pancreas which produce insulin; Type II is caused by a lower sensitivity to insulin, is common in older people, and is associated with obesity. Symptoms of diabetes mellitus are tiredness, unusual thirst, frequent passing of water and sweet-smelling urine. Blood and urine tests show high levels of sugar. Treatment for Type II diabetes involves keeping to a strict diet and reducing weight, and sometimes the use of oral hypoglycaemic drugs such as glibenclamide. Type I diabetes is treated with regular injections of insulin.

diabetic cataract /ˌdaɪəˈbetɪk ˈkætərækt/ noun a cataract which develops in people who have diabetes

diabetic coma /ˌdaɪəˈbetɪk ˈkəʊma/ noun a state of unconsciousness caused by untreated diabetes

diabetic retinopathy /ˌdaɪəˈbetɪk rɪˈtɪnəpəθi/ noun a disease of the retina, caused by diabetes

diabetogenic /ˌdaɪəˈbetɪskənədʒɪk/ adjective which causes diabetes

diabetologist /ˌdaɪəˈbetələˈdʒɪst/ noun a doctor specialising in the treatment of diabetes mellitus

diabetes /ˌdaɪəˈbetɪs/ noun a fracture made by a surgeon to repair an earlier fracture which has set badly, or to correct a deformity

diachokinesis /ˌdaɪəˈkəkɪnɪs/ noun the natural ability to make muscles move limbs in opposite directions

diagnosis /ˌdaɪəˈgaɪnɪs/ noun the act of diagnosing a condition or illness. The doctor’s diagnosis was a viral infection, but the child’s parents asked for a second opinion. They found it difficult to make a diagnosis. Compare prognosis (NOTE: The plural is diagnoses.)

diagnostic /ˌdaɪəˈɡænɪstɪk/ adjective referring to diagnosis

diagnostic and treatment centre /ˌdaɪəˈɡænɪstɪk anˈtrɪtʃmənt sentə/ noun a facility mainly for day surgery or short-term stay, where a range of planned operations such as joint replacements, hernia repair and cataract removal can be undertaken. Abbreviation DTC

diagnostic radiographer /ˌdaɪəˈɡænɪstɪk riˈdɪgrəˌfər/ noun radiographer

dialysate /ˌdaɪəˈlɪsət/ noun material which is subjected to dialysis

dialysing /ˌdaɪəˈleɪziŋ/ noun an apparatus which uses a membrane to separate solids from liquids, e.g. a kidney machine

dialysis /ˌdaɪəˈleɪzi/ noun 1. a procedure in which a membrane is used as a filter to separate soluble waste substances from the blood 2. same as renal dialysis

diapedesis /ˌdaɪəˈpiːdəsɪs/ noun the movement of white blood cells through the walls of the capillaries into tissues in the development of inflammation

diaphoresis /ˌdaɪəˈfoʊrisɪs/ noun excessive perspiration

diaphoretic /ˌdaɪəˈfərətɪk/ noun a drug which causes sweating 1. adjective causing sweating

diaphragm /ˌdaɪəˈɡræm/ noun 1. a thin layer of tissue stretched across an opening, especially the flexible sheet of muscle and fibre which separates the chest from the abdomen and moves to pull air into the lungs in respiration 2. same as vaginal diaphragm

diaphragmatic /ˌdaɪəˈɡræmətɪk/ adjective referring to a diaphragm, or like a diaphragm

diaphyseal /ˌdaɪəˈfaɪziəl/ adjective referring to a diaphysis

diaphysis /ˌdaɪəˈfaɪzɪs/ noun the long central part of a long bone. Also called shaft. See illustration at BONE MARROW in Supplement

diaphysis /ˌdaɪəˈfaɪzɪs/ noun inflammation of the diaphysis, often associated with rheumatic disease

diarrhoea /ˌdaɪəˈraɪəˈjʊə/ noun a condition in which someone frequently passes liquid faeces 1. attack of diarrhoea 2. mild/severe diarrhoea

diarrhosis /ˌdaɪəˈraɪəˌrɒsis/ noun same as synovial joint

diastase /ˌdaɪəˈsteɪz/ noun an enzyme which breaks down starch and converts it into sugar

diastasis /ˌdaɪəˈsteɪsɪs/ noun a condition in which a bone separates into parts

diastema /ˌdaɪəˈsteɪmə/ noun 1. an unusually wide space between adjacent teeth 2. an unusual gap in any body part or organ

diastolic /ˌdaɪəˈstəlɪk/ adjective relating to the diastole

diastolic pressure /ˌdaɪəˈstəlɪk ˈprɛʃər/ noun blood pressure taken at the diastole (NOTE: Diastolic pressure is always lower than systolic.)
diathermy /ˌdaɪəˈθɜːmi/ noun the use of high-frequency electric current to produce heat in body tissue

diathermy needle /ˌdaɪəˈθɜːmi ˈnɪdəl/ noun a needle used in surgical diathermy

diathermy snare /ˌdaɪəˈθɜːmi snɛr/ noun a snare which is heated by electrodes and burns away tissue
of the medical treatment of patients specialises in the study of diet, especially some-
dietitian
dietetics
dietetics
dietetic
dietetic
called dietary fibre for the patients.

There are two types of fibre in food: insoluble and energy quantity of food you eat, or to change the type of diet for the patients. She died in a car crash.

Diet’s crisis /’daɪɪt(ə)’krasis/ noun a painful blockage of the ureter, causing back pressure on the kidney which fills with urine and swells. [After Joseph Dietl (1804–78), Polish physician.]
diet sheet /’daɪət sɪt/ noun a list of suggestions for quantities and types of food given to someone to follow

differential /’dɪফeəriəl/ adjective referring to a difference
differential diagnosis /’dɪfərəntɪəl dɪ’zeɪn(os)/ noun the identification of one disease from a number of other similar diseases by comparing the range of symptoms of each
differentiation /’difərəntiəʃən(os)/ noun the development of specialised cells during the early embryonic stage
diffuse /’dɪfjʊs/ verb /’dɪfjʊs/ id /’dɪfjʊs/ to spread through tissue, or cause something to spread. Some substances easily diffuse through the walls of capillaries. ■ adjective referring to a disease which is widespread in the body, or which affects many organs or cells
diffusion /’dɪfjʊʒən(os)/ noun the process of mixing a liquid with another liquid, or a gas with another gas

digest /’daɪəst/ verb to break down food in the alimentary canal and convert it into components which are absorbed into the body
digestion /’daɪəstʃən(os)/ noun the process by which food is broken down in the alimentary canal into components which can be absorbed by the body
digestive /’daɪəstɪv/ adjective relating to digestion
digestive juice /’daɪəstɪv dʒuːs/ noun gastric juice (usually plural)
digestive system /’daɪəstɪv sistəm(os)/ noun the set of organs such as the stomach, liver and pancreas which are associated with the digestion of food. Also called alimentary system

digestive tract /’daɪəstɪv trækts/ noun same as alimentary canal
digit /’dɪgɪt/ noun 1. a finger or a toe 2. a number
digitalin /’daɪgіəlіn(os)/, digitalis /’dіdɡіlіs’ ˈtɛlts/ noun a drug derived from foxglove leaves, used in small doses to treat heart conditions
digitalise /’dіdɡіlɪsaɪz/ verb to treat someone who has heart failure with digoxin
digital palpation /’dɪdɡіl pəltəp/ noun an examination of part of the body by feeling it with the fingers
digoxin /’dіdɡіləksn(os)/ noun an extract of foxglove leaves, used as a drug to stimulate the heart in cases of heart failure or irregular heart-beat
digoxin /dʒɪˈɡɒksɪn/ noun an extract of foxglove leaves, which acts more rapidly than digitalis when used as a heart stimulant

dihydrocodeine tartrate /daɪˈhɑːdrədiˈkəʊdɪns/ noun analgesic used to treat severe pain

dilatation /daɪˈleɪʃən/ noun the act of making a hollow space or a passage in the body bigger or wider 

dilatation of the cervix during labour

dilatation and curettage /daɪˈleɪʃən ənd kəˈruːtɪdʒ/ noun a surgical operation to scrape the interior of the uterus to obtain a tissue sample or to remove products of miscarriage. Abbreviation D & C

dilate /daɪˈleɪt/ verb to become wider or larger, or make something become wider or larger 

dilator /daɪˈleɪtər/ noun an instrument used to widen the entrance to a cavity

dilator pupillae muscle /daɪˈleɪtər pəˈpɪljɪ/ noun a muscle in the iris which pulls the iris back and so makes the pupil expand
dilatation hydrochloride /daɪˈleɪʃən ˈhaɪdrəklaʊə/ noun a calcium channel blocker used to treat hypertension

diluent /dɪˈluːənt/ noun a substance which is used to dilute a liquid, e.g. water
dilute /daɪˈluːt/ adjective with water added 

verb to add water to a liquid to make it less concentrated 

Dilute the disinfectant in four parts of water.
diminished /dɪˈmɪnɪʃtɪd/ noun an antihistamine drug that relieves travel sickness

dimetria /dɪˈmɛtrɪə/ noun a condition in which a woman has a double uterus

dioptric /daɪˈɒptrɪk/ noun a unit of measurement of the refraction of a lens

dip abbreviation distal interphalangeal joint
diphenoxalate /daɪˈfɛnˌɒksəlæt/ noun a drug related to pethidine that is used to treat diarrhoea, sometimes mixed with a little atropine in commercial preparations
diptheria /dɪˈfɪθəriə/ noun a serious infectious disease of children, caused by the bacillus Corynebacterium diphtheriae, characterised by fever and the formation of a fibrous growth like a membrane in the throat which restricts breathing
diptheroid /daɪˈfɪθərɔɪd/ adjective referring to a bacterium similar to the diphtheria bacterium

diplopia /daɪˈpləʊpiə/ noun paralysis of a similar part on both sides of the body, e.g. paralysis of both arms. Compare hemiplegia
diplegic /daɪˈpləɡɪk/ adjective referring to diplegia

diplo- /daɪˈpləʊ-/ prefix double

diploic /daɪˈpləʊɪk/ noun a layer of spongy bone tissue filled with red bone marrow, between the inner and outer layers of the skull

diploid /daɪˈpləʊɪd/ adjective referring to a cell where there are two copies of each chromosome, except the sex chromosome. In humans the diploid number of chromosomes is 46.
diploplasia /daɪˈpləpləsiə/ noun a condition in which someone sees single objects as double. Also called double vision
direct contact /daɪˈrek tanktɪk/ noun a situation where someone or something physically touches an infected person or object
director /daɪˈrektər/ noun an instrument used to limit the incision made with a surgical knife

dis- /daɪs/ prefix 1. undoing or reversal 2. removal from 3. lacking or deprived of
disability /daɪˈsɪbləti/ noun a condition in which part of the body does not function in the usual way and makes some activities difficult or impossible. See learning disability

Disabled Living Foundation /dɪˈsɑːldʒɪd lɪvɪŋ fɔːndəˈeɪʃən/ noun a charity which aims to help disabled people live independently

disarticulation /daɪˈsɑːrtɪkjuˈleɪʃən/ noun the amputation of a limb at a joint, which does not involve dividing a bone

disc /dɪsk/ noun a flat round structure.

disc discharge /daɪsk dɪʃərɑː dʒiʃər/ noun the secretion of liquid from an opening 1. The wound discharged a thin stream of pus. 2. To send a patient away from hospital because the treatment has ended

disc planning /daɪsk pləˈɡənɪŋ/ noun the work of making a plan for when a patient leaves hospital to live at home

disclosure check /daɪskləˈzos ʧeʃ/ noun same as CRB check

discomfort /daɪsˈkɑːmpfr/ noun a feeling of mild pain. You may experience some discomfort after the operation.
discrète /dɪskrɪt/ adjective separate, not joined together

disease /dɪˈzɪz/ noun a condition that stops the body from functioning in the usual way. An infectious disease. She is suffering from a very serious disease of the kidneys or from a serious...
kidney disease. O He is a specialist in occupational diseases. (NOTE: The term disease is applied to all physical and mental reactions which make a person ill. Diseases with distinct characteristics have individual names. For other terms referring to disease, see words beginning with path-.)
disfigure /dɪ'fɪgər/ verb to change someone’s appearance so as to make it less pleasant to look at O Her legs were disfigured by scars.
disfect /dɪ'sɛfɛkt/ verb to make the surface of something or somewhere free from microorganisms O She disinfected the skin with surgical spirit. O All the patient’s clothes have to be disinfected.
disfectant /dɪ'sɛfɛktnt/ noun a substance used to kill microorganisms on the surface of something
disinfaction /dɪ'sɪnfækʃən/ noun the removal of microorganisms on the surface of something
COMMENT: The words disinfect, disinfected, and disinfection are used for substances which destroy microorganisms on instruments, objects or the skin. Substances used to kill microorganisms inside infected people are antibiotics.
disinfestation /dɪ'sɪnfɛstəʃən/ noun the removal of insects or other pests from a place, person or animal
dislocate /dɪ'lsəkət/ verb to displace a bone from its usual position at a joint, or to become dislocated O He fell and dislocated his elbow. O The shoulder joint dislocates easily.
dislocation /dɪ'sləkʃən/ noun a condition in which a bone is displaced from its usual position at a joint. Also called luxation
dismember /dɪs'membər/ verb to cut off or pull off someone’s arms or legs, often violently or in an accident
dismemberment /dɪs'membərənt/ noun the state of being dismembered
disordered action of the heart /dɪs,ɔːrdəd ,ɑːk'tɑːn/ noun a condition in which someone has palpitations, breathlessness and dizziness, caused by effort or worry. Also called da Costa’s syndrome, cardiac neurosis. Abbreviation DAH
disorientation /dɪs,ɔːrɪəntə'ʃən/ noun a condition in which someone is confused and does not know where he or she is
dispensary /dɪ'spɛnsəri/ noun a place where drugs are prepared or mixed and given out according to a doctor’s prescription, e.g. part of a chemist’s shop or a department in a hospital
dispensary practice /dɪ'spɛnsərɪ 'præktɪs/ noun a doctor’s practice which dispenses prescribed medicines to its patients
displacement /dɪs'pleɪzmənt/ noun the fact of being moved out of the usual position O fracture of the radius together with displacement of the wrist
disposition /dɪs'poʊzəʃən/ noun a person’s general character or tendency to act in a particular way
dissect /dɪ'sɛkt/ verb to cut and separate tissues in a body to examine them
dissection /dɪs'sɛkʃən/ noun the action of cutting and separating parts of a body or an organ as part of a surgical operation, an autopsy or a course of study
dissemiated /dɪ'sɛmɪtɪd/ adjective occurring in every part of an organ or in the whole body
dissemiated intravascular coagulation /dɪs,ɛmɪtɪd 'ɪntrə,væskələl/ noun a disorder that causes extensive clot formation in the blood vessels, followed by severe bleeding. Abbreviation DIC
dissemiated sclerosis /dɪs,ɛmɪtɪd 'sklərəsɪs/ noun same as multiple sclerosis
dissemination /dɪs,ɛmɪ'tʃən/ noun the fact of being widespread throughout the body
dissociation /dɪs'səʊʃən/ noun 1. the separation of parts or functions 2. (in psychiatry) a condition in which part of the consciousness becomes separated from the rest and becomes independent
dissociative disorder /dɪ'səʊsətɪv dɪ'srədər/ noun a type of hysteria in which someone shows psychological changes such as a split personality or amnesia rather than physical ones
distal /dɪst'ɑːl/ adjective further away from the centre of a body
Distalgics /dɪst'ɑːl dɪts'lɪks/ a trade name for the analgesic co-proxamol
distally /dɪst'ɑːlɪ/ adverb placed further away from the centre or point of attachment. Opposite proximally. See illustration at ANATOMICAL TERMS in Supplement
distension /dɪst'ɛnʃən/ noun a condition in which something is swollen O Distension of the veins in the abdomen is a sign of blocking of the portal vein
distichiasis /dɪstɪ'kɪəsɪs/ noun the presence of extra eyelashes, sometimes growing on the meibomian glands
distraction /dɪstrækʃən/ noun 1. something that takes a person’s attention away from something else 2. a state where someone is very emotionally and mentally troubled
district general hospital

- **diagnosis** /diəˈzeɪʒən/ [hpstəri] noun a hospital which serves the needs of the population of a specific district
- **district nurse** /ˈdɪstrɪkt ˈnɜːs/ noun a nurse who visits and treats people in their homes
- **diarrhoea** /dəˈrɪhoʊə/ noun a disease of the large intestine, where the colon thickens and diverticula form in the walls, causing pain in the lower abdomen
- **diverticulitis** /dɪvɜrtɪkjuˈlɪtɪs/ noun an inflammation of diverticula formed in the wall of the colon
- **diverticulosis** /dɪvɜrtɪkjuˈlɔʊsɪs/ noun a condition in which diverticula form in the intestine but are not inflamed. In the small intestine, this can lead to blind loop syndrome.
- **diverticulum** /dɪvɜrtɪkjuˈləm/ noun a little sac or pouch which develops in the wall of the intestine or another organ (NOTE: The plural is diverticula.)
- **diversion** /dɪˈvɜʃən/ noun the action of cutting or splitting into parts
- **divulsor** /dɪˈvʌlsər/ noun a surgical instrument used to expand a passage in the body
- **dizziness** /dɪˈzɪznz/ noun the feeling that everything is going round because the sense of balance has been affected
- **DLE** abbreviation disseminated lupus erythematosus
- **do** /doʊ/ verb to express wishes or interest but the other does not
- **DOB** abbreviation date of birth
- **dobutamine** /dəˈbuːtəmən/ noun a drug used to stimulate the heart
- **Doctor** /ˈdɒktər/ noun a person who has trained in medicine and is qualified to examine people when they are ill to find out what is wrong with them and to prescribe a course of treatment
- **Döderlein's bacillus** /ˈdədərlɛnz ˈbæsɪləs/ noun a bacterium usually found in the vagina [After Albert Siegmund Gustav Döderlein (1860–1941), German obstetrician and gynaecologist.]
- **dolicho-** /dəlɪkoʊ-/ prefix long
- **dolichocephalic** /dəlɪkoʊˈsɛfəlɪk/ adjective referring to a person with an unusually long skull
- **dominant** /dəˈmænənt/ noun the characteristic of a gene form (allele) that leads to the trait
which it controls being shown in any individual carrying it

dominant /ˈdɒmnənt// adjective important or powerful [noun (of an allele) having the character-istic that leads to the trait which it controls being shown in any individual carrying it. Compare recessive
domino booking /ˈdɒmɪnəʊ bɪˈkɪŋ// noun an arrangement for the delivery of a baby, where the baby is delivered in hospital by a midwife and the mother and child return home soon afterwards

Donald-Fothergill operation /ˌdɒlnəld fəˈθərgɪl// noun an operation to close the neck of the vagina
donor /ˈdɒnər// noun a person who gives blood, tissue, organs or reproductive material to be used to treat another person
donor card /ˈdɒnər kɑːd// noun a card carried by people stating that they give permission for their organs to be transplanted into other people after they have died
donor insemination /ˌdɒnər ɪnˈseɪmən// noun artificial insemination using the sperm of an anonymous donor. Abbreviation DI
dopa /ˈdɒpə// noun a chemical related to adren-aline and dopamine. It occurs naturally in the body and in the form levodopa is used to treat Par-kinson’s disease.
dopamine /ˈdɒpəmən// noun a substance found in the medulla of the adrenal glands, which also acts as a neurotransmitter. Lack of dopamine is associated with Parkinson’s disease.
dopaminergic /ˈdɒpəmɪrnərɪk// adjective referring to a neurone or receptor stimulated by dopamine

Doppler transducer /ˈdɒplə trænsdʒəra// noun a device to measure blood flow, commonly used to monitor fetal heart rate

Doppler ultrasound /ˌdɒplə ˈɔːrləʊnɪsk// noun the use of the Doppler effect in ultrasound to detect red blood cells

Doppler ultrasound flowmeter /ˌdɒplə ˈɔːrləʊnɪsk ˌfləʊmɪtə// noun a device which measures the flow of blood and detects steady or irregular flow, allowing abnormalities or blockages to be detected
dorsa /ˈdɔrsə// plural of dorsum
dorsal /ˈdɔrsəl// adjective referring to the back. Opposite ventral
dorsal vertebrae /ˈdɔrsəl vɜːrˈtɪbrə// plural noun the twelve vertebrae in the back between the cervical vertebrae and the lumbar vertebrae
dorsi- /ˈdɔrsi// prefix referring to the back
dorsiflexion /ˌdɔrsɪˈfleksən// noun flexion towards the back of part of the body, e.g. raising the foot at the ankle. Compare plantar flexion
dorsal /ˈdɔrsəl// prefix same as dorsi-
dorsoventral /ˌdɔrsəˈventrəl// adjective referring to both the front and the back of the body
dorsum /ˈdɔrsəm// noun the back of any part of the body (NOTE: The plural is dorsa.)
dosage /ˈdɒsɪdʒ// noun a measured quantity of a drug calculated to be necessary for someone. A low dosage. The doctor decided to increase the dosage of antibiotics. The dosage for children is half that for adults.
dose /ˈdɒs// noun 1. a measured quantity of a drug or radiation which is to be given to someone at one time. It is dangerous to exceed the prescribed dose. 2. a short period of experiencing a minor illness (informal) A dose of flu is an infection with a sexually transmitted disease (informal) The verb to provide someone with medication (informal) She has been dosing herself with laxatives.
dosimeter /ˌdɒsɪˈmɪtər// noun an instrument which measures the amount of X-rays or other radiation received
dosimetry /ˌdɒsɪˈmɪtrɪ// noun the act of measuring the amount of X-rays or radiation received, using a dosimeter
double-blind randomised controlled trial /ˌdʌbl ˈblɪnd rɛndərəˈmoʊntɪzd ˈkəntrəˈtrɪəl// a trial used to test new treatments in which patients are randomly placed in either the treatment or the control group without either the patient or doctor knowing which group any particular patient is in

double pneumonia /ˌdʌbl ˈpɪnjərəm/ noun same as bilateral pneumonia

double uterus /ˌdʌbl əˈtɜrəs// noun a condition in which the uterus is divided into two sections by a membrane. Also called uter us didephys. C dimetria
double vision /ˌdʌbl əˈvɪʒən// noun same as diplopia (informal)
douche /dəʊʃ// noun a liquid forced into the body to wash out a cavity, or a device used for washing out a cavity

down below /ˈdaʊn ˈbɛlə// adverb used to refer politely to the genital area (informal)
down’s syndrome /ˈdaʊnz ˈsɜndrəm// noun a condition due to the existence of an extra copy of chromosome 21, in which a baby is born with slanting eyes, a wide face, speech difficulties and usually some degree of learning difficulty [Described 1866. After John Langdon Haydon Down (1828–96), British physician at Normans-field Hospital, Teddington, UK] 
downtownstairs /ˈdaʊntʃəˈstɛəs// adverb used to refer politely to the genital area (informal)
doxepin /ˌdɒksəˈpɪn// noun a drug used as a sed-ative and antidepressant
a machine which encloses the whole of the body

a hole with a drill

dressings need to be changed regularly.

applied to a wound to protect it

dressing

a covering or bandage applied to a wound to protect it. The patient’s dressings need to be changed regularly.

drill

a tool which rotates very rapidly to make a hole, especially a surgical instrument used in dentistry to remove caries. Verbs to make a hole with a drill. A small hole is drilled in the skull.

Drinker respirator

a machine which encloses the whole of the body except the head, and in which air pressure is increased and decreased, so forcing the person to breathe in and out. Also called iron lung

drip

a system for introducing liquid slowly and continuously into the body, by which a bottle of liquid is held above a person and the fluid flows slowly down a tube into a needle in a vein or into the stomach. After her operation, the patient was put on a drip.

drip feed

a drip containing nutrients

drug

a drug used to keep someone in a calm state before an operation.

drop

a small amount of liquid.

a sudden reduction or fall in the quantity of something. A drop in pressure.

drops

liquid medicine for the eye, nose, or ear administered with a dropper. A dropper.

droplet

a very small quantity of liquid.

droplet infection

an infection developed by inhaling droplets containing a virus, e.g. from a sneeze.

dropper

a small glass or plastic tube with a rubber bulb at one end, used to suck up and expel liquid in drops.

dropsy

a condition in which a drug has been given to someone.

Dr Smith
for so long that his or her body no longer reacts to it, and the dosage has to be increased.

Dry /dr/ adjective 1. not wet ○ The surface of the wound should be kept dry. 2. containing only a small amount of moisture ○ She uses a cream to soften her dry skin. (NOTE: drier – driest) 3. verb to remove moisture from something (NOTE: dries – drying – dried.)

Dry beriberi /dru/beri/beri/ noun beriberi associated with loss of feeling and paralysis.

dry eye syndrome /druk 'ai/, syndrom/ noun same as xerosis.

dry out /dru 'aut/ verb 1. same as dry 2. to treat someone for alcoholism, or undergo treatment for alcoholism (inpatient).

dry socket /'drukstok/ noun inflammation of the socket of a tooth which has just been removed.

DTC abbreviation diagnostic and treatment centre.

DVs abbreviation delirium tremens.

Duchenne muscular dystrophy /dru, fe/n, msk/julf/ 'distrafi/, Duchenne's muscular dystrophy /dru, fe/zn, msk/julf/ 'distrafi/, Duchenne /'dru/ 'fen/ noun an inherited form of muscular dystrophy that weakens the muscles of the upper respiratory and pelvic areas. It usually affects boys and causes early death. [Described 1849. After Guillaume Benjamin Arnaud Duchenne (1806–1875), French neurologist.]

Ducray's bacillus /dru, 'kreiz bs'elf/ noun a type of bacterium found in the lungs, causing chancroid. [Described 1889. After Augusto Ducray (1860–1940), Professor of Dermatology in Pisa, then Rome, Italy.]

duct /dukt/ noun a tube which carries liquids, especially one which carries secretions.

ductless /'duktls/ adjective without a duct.

ductless gland /'duktlsgland/ noun same as endocrine gland.

ductule /'duktjul/ noun a very small duct.

ductus /'duktus/ noun same as duct.

ductus deferens /'duktus 'defarsens/ noun one of two tubes along which sperm pass from the epididymus to the seminal vesicles near the prostate gland. Also called vas deferens. See illustration at UROGENITAL SYSTEM (MALE) in Supplement.

dull /dul/ adjective referring to pain which is not strong but which is continuously present ○ She complained of a dull throbbing pain in her head. ○ He felt a dull pain in the chest. 2. verb to make a sensation or awareness of a sensation less sharp ○ The treatment dulled the pain for a while. ○ The drug had dulled her senses.

dumbness /'dambns/ noun same as mutism.

dumping syndrome /'damp/ syndrom/ noun same as postgastrectomy syndrome.

duo- /duo/ prefix two.

for so long that his or her body no longer reacts to it, and the dosage has to be increased.
dysbasia /dɪsˈbɛzɪə/ noun difficulty in walking, especially when caused by a lesion to a nerve
dyschezia /dɪsˈkɛziə/ noun difficulty in passing faeces
dyschondroplasia /ˌdɪskɔndroʊˈplezɪə/ noun a condition in which the long bones are shorter than usual
dyschromatopsia /ˌdɪskrəˈmətɔpsɪə/ noun a condition where someone cannot distinguish colours
dyscoria /dɪsˈkɔrɪə/ noun an unusually shaped pupil of the eye
dyscrauria /dɪsˈkɹɔrɪə/ noun any unusual body condition (dated)
dysdiadochokinesia /ˌdɪskəɪdəˈdəʊkɪnɛsɪə/ noun the inability to carry out rapid movements, caused by a disorder or lesion of the cerebellum
dysentery /ˌdɪsɛntəri/ noun an infection and inflammation of the colon, causing bleeding and diarrhoea
dysfunction /dɪsˈfʌŋʃən/ noun an unusual functioning of an organ
dysfunctional /dɪsˈfʌŋʃənəl/ adjective 1. not working properly 2. unable to relate to other people emotionally or socially

dysfunctional uterine bleeding /dɪsˈfʌŋʃənl jʊˈtə(r)ɪn/ noun bleeding in the uterus not caused by a menstrual period

dysgenesis /dɪsˈdʒenəsɪs/ noun unusual development

dysgerminoma /dɪsˈdʒɜrminəmə/ noun a malignant tumour of the ovary or testicle

dysgraphia /dɪsˈɡrɑfɪə/ noun difficulty in writing caused by a brain lesion

dyskariosis /dɪsˈkærəsɪs/ noun the fact of becoming mature in an unusual way

dyskinnesia /ˌdɪskɪnˈnɪzɪə/ noun the inability to control voluntary movements

dyslalia /dɪsˈləliə/ noun a disorder of speech, caused by an unusual development of the tongue

dyslexia /dɪsˈlɛksɪə/ noun a disorder of development, where a person is unable to read or write properly and confuses letters

dyslogia /dɪsˈləʊdʒɪə/ noun difficulty in putting ideas into words

dysmaturity /dɪsˈmærətɪə/ noun a condition affecting newborn babies, shown by wrinkled skin, long fingernails and toenails and relatively little body fat

dysmenorrhoea /ˌdɪsməˈnəʊriə/ noun pain experienced at menstruation

dysostosis /ˌdɪsəˈtɒsɪs/ noun unusual formation of bones

dyspareunia /ˌdɪspəˈrjuːnɪə/ noun difficult or painful sexual intercourse in a woman

dysphagia /dɪsˈfædʒɪə/ noun a condition in which a person feels pains or discomfort in the stomach, caused by indigestion

dysphasia /dɪsˈfɛziə/ noun difficulty in swallowing

dysphasia /dɪsˈfɛziə/ noun difficulty in speaking and putting words into the correct order

dysphemia /dɪsˈfɪmɪə/ noun same as stammering

dysphonia /dɪsˈfənіə/ noun difficulty in speaking caused by impairment of the vocal cords, or by laryngitis

dysplasia /dɪsˈplezɪə/ noun an unusual development of tissue

dyspnoea /dɪsˈnɪə/ noun difficulty or pain in breathing

dyspnoic /dɪsˈpnɪk/ adjective difficult or painful when breathing

dyspraxia /dɪsˈpræksiə/ noun difficulty in carrying out coordinated movements

dysrhythmia /dɪsˈrθɪmə/ noun an unusual rhythm, either in speaking or in electrical impulses in the brain

dyssocial /dɪsˈsəʊʃəl/ adjective same as antisocial

dyssynergia /ˌdɪsəˈnɜrdʒɪə/ noun same as asynergia

dystaxia /dɪsˈtæksiə/ noun an inability to coordinate the muscles

dystocia /dɪsˈtɒsɪə/ noun difficult childbirth

dystonia /dɪsˈtɒniə/ noun disordered muscle tone, causing involuntary contractions which make the limbs deformed

dystrophia /dɪsˈtrafɪə/ noun the wasting of an organ, muscle or tissue due to lack of nutrients in that part of the body. Also called dystrophy

dystrophia adiposogenitalis /ˌdɪsˈtrafɪə əˈpɪdosəˌdʒenɪˈtelɪs/ noun same as Fröhlich’s syndrome

dystrophy /ˌdɪstrəˈfi/ noun same as dystrophia

dysuria /dɪsˈjuərɪə/ noun difficulty in passing urine
ear /ər/ noun an organ on the side of the head which is used for hearing (NOTE: For other terms referring to ears, see auricular and words beginning with ot-, oto-.)

Ear, Nose & Throat /ɪərst/ noun 1 a throat/ noun the study of the ear, nose and throat. Abbreviation ENT. Also called otorhinolaryngology.

earache /ɪərək/ noun pain in the ear. Also called otalgia.

ear canal /ɜːkəˈneɪl/ noun one of several passages in or connected to the ear, especially the external auditory meatus, the passage from the outer ear to the eardrum.

eardrum /ˈeɪdrəm/ noun the membrane at the end of the external auditory meatus leading from the outer ear, which vibrates with sound and passes the vibrations on to the ossicles in the middle ear. Also called tymringa, tympanum (NOTE: For other terms referring to the eardrum, see words beginning with tympan-, tympano-.)

early onset pre-eclampsia /ˈɛrli ɒnsən prɪˈeklæmpsɪə/ noun a condition in which pregnancy begins earlier than the 37th week of the pregnancy.

Ebola virus /ɪˈbɒlə vəˈrɑːs/ noun a highly contagious virus found in West Africa. Patients who are affected with it vomit, have bloody diarrhea and blood seeps through their skin.

eburamation /ɪˈbaːrəməʃ/ noun the conversion of cartilage into a hard mass with a shiny surface like bone.

ecbolic /ˈɛkboʊlɪk/ adjective a substance which produces contraction of the uterus and so induces childbirth or abortion.

eccunysis /ˈɛksəˌnaɪsɪs/ noun a dark area on the skin made by blood which has escaped into the tissues after a blow. Also called bruise, contusion.

eccrine /ˈɛkrɪn/ adjective referring to a gland, especially a sweat gland, which does not disintegrate and remains intact during secretion. Also called merocrine.

eccythesis /ˈɛksəˌsɪsθ/ noun same as ectopic pregnancy.

ECG abbreviation electrocardiogram.

echo- /ɛksoʊ/ prefix referring to sound.

echocardiogram /ˈɛksəˌkɑːrdɪəˌɡrɑːm/ noun a record of heart movements made using ultrasound.

echocardiography /ˈɛksəkɑːrdɪəˈɡrɑːfi/ noun the use of ultrasound to examine the heart.

echoencephalography /ˌɛkəʊˌɛnsəˌkɑːfələˈɡrɑːfi/ noun the use of ultrasound to examine the brain.

echocardiography /ˌɛkəʊˌkɑːrdɪəˈɡrɑːfi/ noun same as ultrasound.

echovirus /ˈɛkəʊˌvɜːrəs/ noun one of a group of viruses which can be isolated from the intestine and which can cause serious illnesses such as asptic meningitis, gastroenteritis and respiratory infection in small children. Compare reovirus.

eclampsia /ˈɛklæmpsɪə/ noun a serious condition of pregnant women at the end of pregnancy, caused by toxaeemia, in which the woman has high blood pressure and may go into a coma. Compare eclampsia.

ecmnesia /ˈɛkmiːnəs/ noun a condition in which someone is not able to remember recent events, while remembering clearly events which happened some time ago.

E. coli /ˈɛksoʊkiˌɒliː/ noun same as Escherichia coli.

economy class syndrome /ˈɛkəməni klas/ noun same as deep-vein thrombosis (informal).

ecraseur /ˈɛkrəzər/ noun a surgical instrument, usually with a wire loop, used to cut a part or a growth off at its base.

ECT abbreviation electroconvulsive therapy.

ect- /ˈɛkt/ prefix same as ecto- (used before vowels).

ecto- /ˈɛktəʊ/ prefix outside.

-ectomy /ˈɛktəmɪ/ suffix referring to the removal of a part by surgical operation.

ectoparasite /ˈɛktəˌpærəsət/ noun a parasite which lives on the skin. Compare endoparasite.

ectopia /ˈɛkˈtoʊpiːə/ noun a condition in which an organ or part of the body is not in its usual position.
ectopic /ɛktˈɒpɪk/ adjective not in the usual position. Opposite entopic

ectopic heart beat /ɛktˈɒpɪk hɑːrt bɪt/ noun an unusual extra beat of the heart which originates from a point other than the sinoatrial node. Also called extrasystole, premature beat.

ectopic pacemaker /ɛktˈɒpɪk ˈpæksmiːər/ noun an unusual focus of the heart muscle which takes the place of the sinoatrial node.

ectopic pregnancy /ɛktˈɒpɪk ˈprɛgnənsi/ noun a pregnancy where the fetus develops outside the uterus, often in one of the Fallopian tubes. Also called extrauterine pregnancy, ecysis.

ecostomy /ɛkˈstəʊmi/ noun a surgical opening made in an organ or body cavity.

edematous /ɪˈdɛmətəs/ adjective suffering from or characterized by swelling or distention.

EDD /ɛdˈɛktɪərɪn/ abbreviation expected date of delivery.

EDTA /ˈɛdtə/ noun a colourless chemical that can bind to heavy metals to remove them from the bloodstream. Full form ethylenediamine tetra-acetate.

Edwards‘ syndrome /ˈɛdwrədz ˈsɪndrəm/ noun a severe genetic disorder that results in malformations of the brain, kidney, heart, hands and feet. It is caused by an extra copy of chromosome 18 and those people who have it usually die within six months.

EEG /ɛdʒəɡ/ abbreviation electroencephalogram.

EFA /ɪˈfɛərən/ abbreviation essential fatty acid.

effacement /ɪˈfæsəmənt/ noun the thinning of the cervix before it dilates in childbirth.

effective dose /ɛkˈfɛktɪv ˈdəʊs/ noun a size of dose which will produce the effect required.

effector /ɪˈfɛktər/ noun a nerve ending in muscles or glands which has been activated to produce contraction or secretion.

afferent /əˈfɛrənt/ adjective carrying something away from part of the body or from the centre. Opposite efferent.

efferent nerve /ɛfˈɛrənt nɜːv/ noun same as motor nerve.

effleurage /ˌɛfləˈrɑːʒ/ noun a form of massage where the skin is stroked in one direction to increase blood flow.

effort syndrome /ɛfˈɔːt ˈsɪndrəm/ noun same as disordered action of the heart.

efusion /ɪˈfjuːʒən/ noun a discharge of blood, fluid or pus into or out of an internal cavity.

egg /ɛɡ/ noun a reproductive cell produced in the female body by an ovary, and which, if fertilised by the male sperm, becomes an embryo.

ego /ˈiːɡəʊ/ noun (in psychology) the part of the mind which is consciously in contact with the outside world and is influenced by experiences of the world.

EH/O abbreviation Environmental Health Officer.

EIA abbreviation exercise-induced asthma.

Eisenmenger syndrome /ˈaɪznəmənɡər ˈsɪndrəm/ noun heart disease caused by a septal defect between the ventricles, with pulmonary hypertension. [Described 1897. After Victor Eisenmenger (1864-1932), German physician.]

ejaculate /ɪˈdʒækjʊleɪt/ verb to send out semen from the penis.

ejaculation /ɪˈdʒækjʊleɪʃən/ noun the sending out of semen from the penis.

ejaculatio praecox /ɪˈdʒækjʊleɪʃən ˈprɛkoks/ noun a situation where a man ejaculates too early during sexual intercourse.

ejaculatory duct /ɪˈdʒækjʊlətərɪ ˈdʌkt/ noun one of two ducts leading from the seminal vesicles through the prostate gland to the urethra. See illustration at UROGENITAL SYSTEM (MALE).

elastic cartilage /əˈlɛstɪk ˈkɑːrtɪldʒ/ noun flexible cartilage, e.g. in the ear and epiglottis.

elastic fibre /əˈlɛstɪk ˈfaɪbrə/ noun fibre which can expand easily and is found in elastic cartilage, the skin and the walls of arteries and the lungs. Also called yellow fibre.

elastic tissue /əˈlɛstɪk ˈtjuːs/ noun connective tissue which contains elastic fibres, e.g. in the walls of arteries or of the alveoli in the lungs.

elasticin /əˈlɛstɪn/ noun a protein which occurs in elastic fibres.

elation /əˈleɪʃən/ noun the state of being happy, stimulated and excited.

elbow /ˈelbəʊ/ noun a hinged joint where the upper arm bone (humerus) joins the forearm bones (radius and ulna).

elbow crutch /ˈelbəʊ ˈkrʌtʃ/ noun a crutch which surrounds the arms at the elbows and has a handle to hold lower down the shaft.

elective care /əˈlɛktɪv ˈkɑːr/ noun hospital care which is planned in advance, rather than a response to an emergency.

elective surgery /əˈlɛktɪv ˈsɜːdʒərɪ/ noun surgical treatment when a case is not an emergency.

elastin /əˈleɪstɪn/ noun a protein occurring in elastic cartilage, skin, and the walls of arteries and the lungs. Also called yellow fibre.

elastin fibres /əˈleɪstɪn ˈfaɪbrz/ plural noun a type of connective tissue which contains elastic fibres, e.g. in the walls of arteries or of the alveoli in the lungs.

elastin protein /əˈleɪstɪn ˈprəʊtəˌmjan/ noun a protein which occurs in elastic fibres.

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elastin protein /əˈleɪstɪn ˈprəʊtəˌmjan/ noun a protein which occurs in elastic fibres.
treatment which a patient can choose to have but is not urgently necessary to save his or her life.

**electro-** /ɪˌlektroʊ-/ prefix referring to electricity

**electrocardiogram** /ɪˌlektroʊˈkɑːrdɪəɡrɑːm/ noun a chart which records the electrical impulses in the heart muscle. Abbreviation ECG, EKG

**electrocardiograph** /ɪˌlektroʊˈkɑːrdɪəɡrɑːf/ noun an apparatus for measuring and recording the electrical impulses of the muscles of the heart as it beats

**electrocardiography** /ɪˌlektroʊˈkɑːrdɪəɡrɑːfi/ noun the process of recording the electrical impulses of the heart

**electrocardiophonography** /ɪˌlektroʊˈkɑːrdɪəfəˈnɒɡrɑːf/ noun a process of recording the sounds of the heartbeats

**electrocautery** /ɪˌlektroʊˈkɑːtəri/ noun same as galvanocautery

**electroconvulsive therapy** /ɪˌlektroʊkənˈvɒlvɪs/ noun the treatment of severe depression and some mental disorders by giving someone who has been anaesthetised small electric shocks in the brain to make him or her have convulsions. Abbreviation ECT. Also called electroplexy

**electrode** /ɪˌlektroʊd/ noun the conductor of an electrical apparatus which touches the body and carries an electric shock

**electroencephalogram** /ɪˌlektroʊˈensɪfəɡrɑːm/ noun a chart on which the electrical impulses in the brain are recorded. Abbreviation EEG

**electroencephalograph** /ɪˌlektroʊˈensɪfəɡrɑːf/ noun an apparatus which records the electrical impulses in the brain

**electroencephalography** /ɪˌlektroʊˈensɪfəɡrɑːfi/ noun the process of recording the electrical impulses in the brain

**electrolysis** /ɪˌlektroʊˈlɛtɪskɪs/ noun the destruction of tissue such as unwanted hair by applying an electric current

**electrophoresis** /ɪˌlektroʊˈfɔːrisɪs/ noun the analysis of a substance by the movement of charged particles towards an electrode in a solution

**electroplexy** /ɪˌlektroʊˈpleksɪ/ noun same as electroconvulsive therapy

**electroretinogram** /ɪˌlektroʊrɪtənˈɡrɑːm/ noun the process of recording electrical changes in the retina when stimulated by light

**electrosurgery** /ɪˌlektroʊˌsɜːdʒəri/ noun an operation in which the surgeon uses an electrical current to cut or cauterise tissue

**electrotherapy** /ɪˌlektroʊˈθɛrəpi/ noun the treatment of a disorder such as some forms of paralysis by using low-frequency electric current to try to revive the muscles

**element** /ˈɛlmənt/ noun a basic simple chemical substance which cannot be broken down into simpler substances. A trace element

**elephantiasis** /ɪˌɛlfəntəˈziːsɪs/ noun a condition in which parts of the body swell and the skin becomes hardened, frequently caused by infestation with various species of the parasitic worm Filaria

**elicit** /ˈɛlɪvɪt/ verb to raise something or to lift something up. To control bleeding, apply pressure and elevate the part.

**elevation** /ˈɛlɪvəʃən/ noun 1. a muscle which raises part of the body 2. a surgical instrument used to lift part of a broken bone

**elimination** /ɪˌlɪməˈneɪʃən/ noun the removal of waste matter from the body

**elimination diet** /ɪˌlɪməˈneɪʃən/ noun a process in which an enzyme binds to an antibody or antigen and causes a colour change that shows the presence or amount of protein in a sample of biological material. Full form enzyme-linked immunosorbent assay

**elixir** /ˈelɪksər/ noun a sweet liquid which hides the unpleasant taste of a drug

**elliptocytosis** /ɪˌlɪpˈtɒsətɒsɪs/ noun a condition in which unusual oval-shaped red cells appear in the blood

**emaciation** /ɪˌmæʃəˈseɪʃən/ noun the fact of being extremely thin and underweight

**embolectomy** /ɪˌmɒblɛkˈtɒmɪ/ noun the surgical operation to remove a blood clot

**embolism** /ɪˌmɒblɪzɪz/ plural of embolus

**embolisation** /ˌɛmbəlɪˈzaʃən/ noun the use of emboli inserted down a catheter into a blood vessel to treat internal bleeding

**embolism** /ɪˌmɒblɪzɪz/ noun 1. the blocking of an artery by a mass of material, usually a blood clot, preventing the flow of blood

**embolus** /ɪˌmɒbləs/ noun 1. a mass of material which blocks a blood vessel, e.g. a blood clot, air bubble or fat globule 2. material inserted into a
embryonic membrane /ˌembrəˈmɛnnək/ noun one of the two layers around an embryo providing protection and food supply, i.e. the amnion and the chorion

emergency /ˈeməriʒəm/ noun a situation where urgent immediate action has to be taken

emotion /iˈməʃən/ noun a strong feeling

empathy /iˈmiθəpi/ noun the ability to understand the problems and feelings of another person

empyema /ɪmˈpaɪmə/ noun the collection of pus in a cavity, especially in the pleural cavity. Also called pyothorax

emulsion /ɪmˈʃən/ noun a combination of liquids such as oil and water which do not usually mix

EN abbreviation enrolled nurse
endarteritis obliterans /endəˈɛətɪtɪs əˈbɪltərənɪs/ noun a condition where inflammation in an artery is so severe that it blocks the artery.

endaural /ˈendəʊrəl/ adjective inside the ear

dominic /ˈdəʊmɪk/ adjective referring to any disease which is very common in specific places. ○ This disease is endemic to Mediterranean countries.

dend- /ˈendʊd/ prefix inside

dendobronchial /ˈendəʊbɹɒŋkʃəl/ adjective inside the bronchi

dendocardial /ˈendəʊkɑːrdɪəl/ adjective referring to the endocardium

dendocardial pacemaker /ˈendəʊkɑːrdɪəl ˈpeɪsmeɪkər/ noun a pacemaker attached to the lining of the heart

dendocardi tis /ˈendəʊkɑːrdɪtɪs/ noun inflammation of the membrane lining of the heart

dendocardium /ˈendəʊkɑːrdɪəm/ noun a membrane which lines the heart. See illustration at HEART in Supplement

dendocervicitis /ˈendəʊsɛrəvɪsɪtɪs/ noun inflammation of the membrane in the neck of the uterus

dendochondral /ˈendəʊkɔnθdrəl/ adjective inside a cartilage

dendocrine /ˈendəʊskrəʊn/ adjective relating to the endocrine glands or the hormones they secrete

dendocrine gland /ˈendəʊskrəʊn glænd/ noun a gland without a duct which produces hormones which are introduced directly into the bloodstream, e.g. the pituitary gland, thyroid gland, the adrenal gland and the gonads. Also called ductless gland. Compare exocrine gland

dendocrine system /ˈendəʊskrəʊn sɪstəm/ noun a system of related ductless glands

dendocrinologist /ˈendəʊskrəʊn ɪˌnʌsəlɒdʒɪst/ noun a doctor who specialises in the study of endocrinology

dendocrinology /ˈendəʊskrəʊn əˌnʌsəlɒdʒi/ noun the study of the endocrine system, its function and effects

dendoderm /ˈendəʊdɜːrm/ noun the inner of three layers surrounding an embryo. Also called endodermal

dendodermal /ˈendəʊdɜːrəl/ adjective referring to the endoderm. Also called endodermal

dendogenous /ˈendəʊdʒənəs/ adjective developing or being caused by something inside an organism. Compare exogenous

dendogenous depression /ˈendəʊdʒənəs dɪˈpreʃən/ noun depression caused by no obvious external factor

dendogenous eczema /ˈendəʊdʒənəs ˈeksmə/ noun eczema which is caused by no obvious external factor

dendolymph /ˈendəʊlɪm/ noun a fluid inside the membranous labyrinth in the inner ear

dendometrial /ˈendəʊmɪtrɪəl/ adjective referring to the endometrium

dendometrial laser ablation /ˈendəʊmɪtrɪəl ˈlɛzər ˈleɪʃən/ noun a gynaecological surgical procedure using a laser to treat fibroids or other causes of thickening of the lining of the uterus

dendometriosis /ˌendəʊmɪtrɪˈɔːsɪs/ noun a condition affecting women, in which tissue similar to the tissue of the uterus is found in other parts of the body

dendometritis /ˌendəʊmɪtrɪˈtɪtɪs/ noun inflammation of the lining of the uterus

dendometrium /ˌendəʊmɪtrɪəm/ noun the mucous membrane lining the uterus, part of which is shed at each menstruation (NOTE: The plural is endometria.)

dendomyocarditis /ˌendəʊməʊkɑːrdɪˈtɪs/ noun inflammation of the muscle and inner membrane of the heart

dendomyosium /ˌendəʊməʊˈsjuːsɪəm/ noun connective tissue around and between muscle fibres

dendonereurium /ˌendəʊnəˈnjuəriəm/ noun fibrous tissue between the individual fibres in a nerve

dendoparasite /ˌendəʊpəˈpərasɪt/ noun a parasite which lives inside its host, e.g. in the intestines. Compare ectoparasite

dendophthalmitis /ˈendəʊfθəlmlɪtɪs/ noun inflammation of the interior of the eyeball

dendorphin /ˌendəʊˈdɜːfɪn/ noun a peptide produced by the brain which acts as a natural painkiller. ○ encephalin

densope /ˈendəʊskɔp/ noun an instrument used to examine the inside of the body, made of a thin tube which is passed into the body down a passage. The tube has a fibre optic light, and may have small surgical instruments attached.

dendoscopic retrograde cholangiopancreatography /ˌendəʊskərɪpˈɡreɪd kɑːˈlæŋdʒɪəˈpænkrēətɒdʒrə/ noun a method used to examine the pancreatic duct and bile duct for possible obstructions. Abbreviation ERCP

denscopy /ˈendəʊskəpl/ noun an examination of the inside of the body using an endoscope

densoskeleton /ˈendəʊskəlɪkən/ noun the inner structure of bones and cartilage in an animal

densothrum /ˈendəʊθrʌm/ noun a membrane lining the bone marrow cavity inside a long bone

densothelial /ˌendəʊθɪˈlɪəl/ adjective referring to the endothelium
endothelioma  

ponenthelioma /endsoθelıˈma/ noun a malignant tumour originating inside the endothelium

dendothelium /endsoˈθelıəm/ noun a membrane of special cells which lines the heart, the lymph vessels, the blood vessels and various body cavities. Compare epithelium, mesothelium

dendotoxin /endsoˈtekson/ noun a toxic substance released after the death of some bacterial cells

derotracheal /endsoʊˈtrekʃəl/ adjective same as intratracheal

derotracheal tube /endsoʊˈtrekʃəl(t)ju:b/ noun a tube passed down the trachea, through either the nose or mouth, in anaesthesia or to help a person breathe

der plate /end plekt/ noun the end of a motor nerve, where it joins muscle fibre

der stage renal disease /end stɛrdʒˈtri:n(ə)l diˌzi:z/ noun the stage of kidney disease at which uraemia occurs and dialysis needs to start. Abbreviation ESRD

derema /ˈenəmə/ noun a liquid substance put into the rectum to introduce a drug into the body, to wash out the colon before an operation or for diagnosis

dergy /ˈenədʒi/ noun the force or strength to carry out activities ○ You need to eat certain types of food to give you energy.

dervation /ɛnəˈveʃən/ noun 1. general nervous weakness 2. a surgical operation to remove a nerve

dergement /ɛnˈɡɛrmənt/ noun (in obstetrics) the moment where part of the fetus, usually the head, enters the pelvis at the beginning of labour

dergozed /ɛnˈɡɔzdʒd/ adjective excessively filled with liquid, usually blood

derkephalin /ɛnˈkɛFalən/ noun US another spelling of encephalin

dropthalmos /ˌendroθələməs/ noun a condition in which the eyes are very deep in their sockets

Enrolled Nurse /inˈrɔuld ˈnaːrə/ noun ♀ second-level nurse

deniform cartilage /ˌendnɔrform ˈkɑrtəlɪdʒ/ noun same as xiphoid process

ENT abbreviation Ear, Nose & Throat

ENT department /ˈɛntı dıˈpærtmənt/ noun a department of otorhinolaryngology

deral - /ˈɛntərəl/ prefix same as entero- (used before vowels)

deral /ˈɛntərəl/ adjective referring to the intestine. Compare parenteral

deral feeding /ˈɛntərəl ˈfiːdɪŋ/ noun the feeding of a person by a nasogastric tube or by the infusion of liquid food directly into the intestine. Also called enteral nutrition

enteralgia /ˈɛntərəlˈɡeɪə/ noun same as colic

derally /ˈɛntərali/ adverb referring to a method of feeding a person by nasogastric tube or directly into the intestine

enteral nutrition /ˈɛntərəl njuˈtrəʃ(ə)n/ noun same as enteral feeding

deric /ˈɛnˌterɪk/ adjective referring to the intestine

deric-coated /ˈɛnˌterɪk ˈkoʊtɪd/ adjective referring to a capsule with a coating which prevents it from being digested and releasing the drug until it reaches the intestine

deritis /ˈɛntəˈritiəs/ noun inflammation of the mucous membrane of the intestine

dero- /ˈɛntəroʊ/ prefix referring to the intestine

Enterobacteria /ˈɛntərəbaˈbɛktrəz/ noun a family of Gram-negative bacteria, including Salmonella, Shigella, Escherichia and Klebsiella

enterobiasis /ˈɛntərəˌbaɪəsɪs/ noun a common children’s disease, caused by threadworms in the large intestine which cause itching round the anus. Also called oxyuriasis

enterobius /ɛnˈtəroʊbıəs/ noun a small thin nematode worm, one species of which, Enterobius vermicularis, infects the large intestine and causes itching round the anus. Also called threadworm, pinworm

enterocoele /ˈɛntərəkoʊəli/ noun /ˈɛntərəˈkoʊəli/ noun a hernia of the intestine

enterocoele /ˈɛntərəkəˈleɪtɪs/ noun inflammation of the colon and small intestine

enterolith /ˈɛntəroʊˌlɔθ/ noun a stone in the intestine

enteron /ˈɛntərən/ noun the whole intestinal tract

enteropathy /ˌɛntərˈɒpəθi/ noun any disorder of the intestine. ○ gluten-induced enteropathy

enteroscope /ˈɛntərəskəʊp/ noun an instrument for inspecting the inside of the intestine

enterostomy /ˈɛntərəˌstəʊmə/ noun a surgical operation to make an opening between the small intestine and the abdominal wall

enterotomy /ˈɛntərəˌtəʊmə/ noun a surgical incision in the intestine

enterotoxin /ˈɛntərəˌtɔksın/ noun a bacterial exotoxin which particularly affects the intestine

enterovirus /ˈɛntərəˌvoʊrəs/ noun a virus which prefers to live in the intestine. Enteroviruses include poliomyelitis virus, Coxackie viruses and the echoviruses.

entoderm /ˌɛntəˈdɜrm/ noun same as endoderm

entodermal /ˌɛntədɔrməl/ adjective same as endodermal
Entonox /ˈɛntɒnɒks/ noun a gas consisting of 50% oxygen and 50% nitrous oxide that is used as a painkiller during childbirth

etopic /ˈɛtɒpɪk/ adjective located or taking place in the usual position. Opposite ectopic

entropion /ɪnˈtrəpɪən/ noun a turning of the edge of the eyelid towards the inside

enucleation /ɪnˌnuːklɪˈeɪʃən/ noun the surgical removal of all of a tumour

enuresis /ˌɛnjoʊˈriːsɪs/ noun the involuntary passing of urine

enuretic /ˌɛnjuːrɪˈtɪk/ adjective referring to enuresis, or causing enuresis

environment /ɪnˌvɛnərəmənt/ noun the conditions and influences under which an organism lives

environmental /ɪnˌværəmənt(ə)l/ adjective referring to the environment

Environmental Health Officer /ɪnˌværəmənt(ə)l /ˈhelθᵊˌəfɜːs/ noun an official of a local authority who examines the environment and tests for air pollution, bad sanitation, noise pollution and similar threats to public health. Abbreviation EHO

enzyme /ɛnˈzaim/ noun a protein substance produced by living cells which aids a biochemical reaction in the body (NOTE: The names of enzymes mostly end with the suffix -ase.)

enzyme-linked immunosorbent assay /ˌɛnˈzaim ˈlaɪŋktˌɪnˌjuːmənt(ə)ˌɛnsənt ˈiːses/ noun full form of ELISA

eonism /ɪˈzaɪnɪz(ə)m/ noun cross-dressing, when a male wears female dress

eosin /ˈɛsəsɪn/ noun a red crystalline solid used as a biological staining dye

eosinopenia /ˌɛsəsɪnəˈpɛniə/ noun a reduction in the number of eosinophils in the blood

eosinophil /ˌɛsəsɪnəˈfɪl/ noun a type of cell that can be stained with eosin

eosinophilia /ˌɛsəsɪnəˈfɪliə/ noun an excess of eosinophils in the blood

epidendyma /ˈɛpɪdɛndɪmə/ noun a thin membrane which lines the ventricles of the brain and the central canal of the spinal cord

epidendymal /ˈɛpɪdɛndɪməl/ adjective referring to the epidendyma

ependymoma /ˈɛpɪdɛndɪməmə/ noun a tumour in the brain originating in the epidendyma

ephebrine /ˈɛfɪbrɪn/ noun a drug that relieves asthma and blocked noses by causing the air passages to widen

ephidrosis /ˌɛfɪdˈdrəʊsɪs/ noun an unusual amount of sweat

epi- /ˈɛpi/ prefix on or over

epiblepharon /ˌɛpɪˈblɛfərəʊn/ noun an unusual fold of skin over the eyelid, which may press the eyelashes against the eyeball

epicanthus /ˌɛpɪˈkæntəs/ noun an epithelial fold /ˌɛpɪkæntəθk /ˈfoʊld/ noun a large fold of skin in the inner corner of the eye, common in babies and also found in adults of some groups such as the Chinese

epicardial /ˌɛpɪˈkɑːrdɪəl/ adjective referring to the epicardium

epicardial pacemaker /ˌɛpɪkɑːrdɪəl /ˈpærɪmɛkt/ noun a pacemaker attached to the surface of the ventricle

epicardium /ˌɛpɪkɑːrdɪəm/ noun the inner layer of the pericardium which lines the walls of the heart, outside the myocardium. See illustration at HEART in Supplement

epicondyle /ˌɛpɪˈkɒndɪl/ noun a projecting part of the round end of a bone above the condyle

epicondyritis /ˌɛpɪkɑndɪˈrɪtɪs/ noun same as tennis elbow

epicranium /ˌɛpɪkrəˈnɪəm/ noun the five layers of the scalp, the skin and hair on the head covering the skull

epicritic /ˌɛpɪˈkrɪtɪk/ adjective referring to the nerves which govern the fine senses of touch and temperature

epidemic /ˌɛpɪdɛmɪk/ adjective spreading quickly through a large part of the population ○ The disease rapidly reached epidemic proportions. ■ noun an outbreak of an infectious disease which spreads very quickly and affects a large number of people

epidemiologist /ˌɛpɪˌdɛmɪˈɒlədʒɪst/ noun a person who specialises in the study of diseases in groups of people

epidemiology /ˌɛpɪˌdɛmɪˈɒlədʒi/ noun the study of diseases in the community, in particular how they spread and how they can be controlled

epidermal /ˌɛpɪˈdɛrməl/ adjective referring to the epidermis

epidermis /ˌɛpɪˈdɛrmɪs/ noun the outer layer of the skin, including the dead skin on the surface. Also called cuticle

epidermoid cyst /ˌɛpɪdɛrˈmoɪd ˈsɪst/ noun same as sebaceous cyst

epidermolyis /ˌɛpɪˈdɛrməl ˈsɪst/ noun separation of the epidermis from the tissue underneath, usually forming a blister

epidermolyis bullosa /ˌɛpɪˈdɛrməl ˈbʌləsə/ noun a group of disorders where blisters form on the skin

Epidermophyton /ˌɛpɪˈdɛrməfɪtən/ noun a fungus which grows on the skin and causes athlete’s foot, among other disorders

epididymal /ˌɛpɪˈdɪdɪməl/ adjective referring to the epididymis
epididymectomy /ˌepɪdɪdɪmˈɛktəmi/ noun the removal of the epididymis
epididymis /ˌepɪdɪdɪmɪs/ noun a long twisting thin tube at the back of the testis, which forms part of the efferent duct of the testes, and in which spermatozoa are stored before ejaculation. See illustration at UROGENITAL SYSTEM (MALE) in Supplement
epididymitis /ˌepɪdɪdɪmɪtɪs/ noun inflammation of the epididymis
epididymo-orchitis /ˌepɪdɪdɪməʊˌɔrktɪtɪs/ noun inflammation of the epididymis and the testes
epidural /ˌepɪˈdjuərl/ adjective on the outside of the dura mater. Also called extradural [noun] same as epidural anaesthesia
epidural anaesthesia /ˌepɪˈdjuərəl əˈnɛsθəˈreɪʃən/ noun a local anaesthesia in which anaesthetic is injected into the space between the vertebral canal and the dura mater
epidural block /ˌepɪdjuərəl ˈblɒk/ noun analgesia produced by injecting an analgesic solution into the space between the vertebral canal and the dura mater
epidural space /ˌepɪdjuərəl ˈspeɪs/ noun a space in the spinal cord between the vertebral canal and the dura mater
epigastriac /ˌepɪˈgæstrɪk/ adjective referring to the upper abdomen ○ The patient complained of pains in the epigastriac area.
epigastrium /ˌepɪˈgæstrɪəm/ noun the part of the upper abdomen between the ribcage and the navel. Also called the pit of the stomach
epiglottis /ˌepɪˈɡlɒtɪs/ noun a flap of cartilage at the root of the tongue which moves to block the windpipe when food is swallowed, so that the food does not go down the trachea
epiglottitis /ˌepɪglɒtˈtɪtɪs/ noun inflammation and swelling of the epiglottis
epilation /ˌepɪˈleɪʃən/ noun the process of removing hair by destroying the hair follicles
epilepsy /ˌepɪˈlepsɪ/ noun a disorder of the nervous system in which there are convulsions and loss of consciousness due to a disordered discharge of cerebral neurones
epileptic /ˌepɪˈleptɪk/ adjective having epilepsy, or relating to epilepsy [noun] a person with epilepsy (NOTE: The word ‘epileptic’ to describe a person is now avoided.)
epileptic fit /ˌepɪˈleptɪk ˈfɪt/ noun an attack of convulsions, and sometimes unconsciousness, due to epilepsy
epileptiform /ˌepɪˈleptɪfɔːm/ adjective being similar to epilepsy
epilola /ˌepɪˈlɒlə/ noun a hereditary disease of the brain associated with learning disabilities, epilepsy and tumours on the kidney and heart. Also called tuberose sclerosis
epimenorrhagia /ˌepɪmɛnəˈreidʒiə/ noun very heavy bleeding during menstruation occurring at very short intervals
epimenorrhoea /ˌepɪmɛnəˈreɪʃə/ noun menstruation at shorter intervals than twenty-eight days
diaphora /ˌdaɪəˈfəra/ noun a condition in which the eye fills with tears either because the lacrimal duct is blocked or because excessive tears are being secreted
epiphyseal /ˌepɪˈfaɪsəl/ adjective referring to an epiphysis
epiphysis /ˌepɪˈfaɪsɪs/ noun the area of growth in a bone which is separated from the main part of the bone by cartilage until bone growth stops. See illustration at BONE STRUCTURE in Supplement. Compare diaphysis, metaphysis
epilipo- /ˌepɪˈlɪpoʊ-/ prefix referring to the omentum
epiloon /ˌepɪˈluːn/ noun same as omentum
episclera /ˌepɪsklɪərə/ noun the outer surface of the sclera of the eyeball
episcleritis /ˌepɪsklɪˈrɪtɪs/ noun inflammation of the outer surface of the sclera in the eyeball
 episiorrhaphy /ˌepɪˈsɪərəˈræfaɪ/ noun a procedure for stitching torn labia majora
episiotomy /ˌepɪˈzɪətəˈmi/ noun a surgical cut of the perineum near the vagina to prevent tearing during childbirth
episodic /ˌepɪˈsɒdɪk/ adjective happening in separate but related incidents, e.g. asthma which occurs in separate attacks
epispadias /ˌepɪˈspædiəs/ noun a congenital condition where the urethra opens to the top of the penis and not at the end. Compare hypospadias
epistaxis /ˌepɪˈstæksɪs/ noun same as nosebleed
epithelial /ˌepɪˈθɛlɪəl/ adjective referring to the epithelium
epithelialisation /ˌepɪˈθɛlɪəlɪˈzeɪʃən/ noun the growth of skin over a wound
epithelioma /ˌepɪθɛlɪˈəʊmə/ noun a tumour arising from epithelial cells
epithelium /ˌepɪθɛlɪəm/ noun the layer or layers of cells covering an organ, including the skin and the lining of all hollow cavities except blood vessels, lymphatics and serous cavities. Compare endotheilum, mesotheilum
Epstein–Barr virus /ˌɛpstaɪn ˈbɑːr vəˈrɑːs/ noun a virus which probably causes glandular fever. Also called EB virus [isolated and described 1964. After Michael Anthony Epstein (b. 1921), Bristol pathologist; Murray Llewellyn
nerve ending that measures how fast erythrocytes settle in a tube, a test for measuring the rate of sedimentation of erythrocytes which is used to detect inflammation.

- **erythroblastosis** /əˈrɪθroʊˈblæstəs/ noun the presence of erythroblasts in the blood, usually found in haemolytic anaemia.

- **erythroblast** /əˈrɪθroʊˈblɑːst/ noun, a cell which forms an erythrocyte or red blood cell.

- **erythrocyte** /əˈrɪθroʊˈsɪt/ noun, a mature red blood cell.

- **erythrocyte sedimentation rate** /əˌrɪθroʊˈsɪt ˌsedəˈmeʃən rēt/ noun, a test that measures how fast erythrocytes settle in a sample of blood plasma, used to confirm whether various blood conditions are present. Abbreviation ESR.

- **erythrocytosis** /əˌrɪθroʊˈsɪtəˈsɪs/ noun an increase in the number of red blood cells in the blood.

- **erythroderma** /əˌrɪθroʊˈdɜrəmə/ noun, a condition in which the skin becomes red and flakes off.

- **erythroplasia** /əˌrɪθroʊˈpləsə/ noun, the formation of red blood cells in red bone marrow.
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erythropenia

erythropenia /ɪˈrɪθrəˌpiːniə/ noun a condition in which a person has a low number of erythrocytes in their blood.

erythroplasia /ɪˌrɪθrəˈpleɪziə/ noun the formation of lesions on the mucous membrane.

erythropoiesis /ɪˌrɪθrəˈpɔɪəsɪs/ noun same as erythropogenesis.

erythropoietin /ɪˌrɪθrəˈpɔɪətɪn/ noun a hormone that regulates the production of red blood cells.

erythropoiesis /ˌɛrɪθrəˈpɔɪəsɪs/ noun a condition in which someone sees things as if coloured red.

essential oil /ˈɛsθəˌɔɪl/ a dry scab, e.g. one formed on a burn.

Esscherichia /ˌɛsθəˈrɪkʃə/ noun a bacterium common in the gut.

Escherichia coli /ˌɛsθəˌrɪkʃə ˌkɒli/ noun a Gram-negative bacterium associated with acute gastroenteritis. Also called E. coli.

Esmarch’s bandage /ˌɛsθəˌmɑːrks ˈbændidʒ/ noun a rubber band wrapped round a limb as a tourniquet before a surgical operation and left in place during the operation so as to keep the site free of blood. [Described 1869. After Johann Friedrich August von Esmarch (1823–1908), Professor of Surgery at Kiel, Germany.]

Esotropia /ˌɛsəˈtropiə/ noun a type of squint, where the eyes both look towards the nose. Also called convergent strabismus.

ESR abbreviation erythrocyte sedimentation rate.

ESRD abbreviation end-stage renal disease.

essence /ˌɛsəˈsens/ noun a concentrated oil from a plant, used in cosmetics, and sometimes as analgesics or antiseptics.

essential amino acid /ˈɛsθəsəˌmɪnəˈmeɪd/ noun an amino acid which is necessary for growth but which cannot be synthesised in the body and has to be obtained from the food supply.

COMMENT: The essential amino acids are: isoleucine, leucine, lysine, methionine, phenylalanine, threonine, tryptophan and valine.

essential element /ˌɛsθəˈsɛnəl ˈeləmənt/ noun a chemical element which is necessary to the body’s growth or function, e.g. carbon, oxygen, hydrogen and nitrogen.

essential fatty acid /ˌɛsθəˌsɛnəl ˈfeɪʃiəl ˈɛsθəˌsid/ noun an unsaturated fatty acid which is necessary for growth and health. Abbreviation: EFA.

COMMENT: The essential fatty acids are: linoleic acid, linolenic acid and arachidonic acid.

essential hypertension /ˌɛsθəˌsɛnəl ˈhɑːptən/ noun high blood pressure without any obvious cause.

essential oil /ˌɛsθəˌsɛnəl ˈɔɪl/ noun a medicinal or fragrant oil distilled from some part of a plant.

essential tremor /ˌɛsθəˌsɛnəl ˈtrɛmor/ noun an involuntary slow trembling movement of the hands often seen in elderly people.

essential uterine haemorrhage /ˌɛsθəˌsɛnəl ˈjuːtətrən ˈhɛməˈɔrɪdʒ/ noun heavy uterine bleeding for which there is no obvious cause.

ethambutol /ˌɛθəmbjuˈbɒtəl/ noun a drug that is part of the treatment for bacterial infections such as tuberculosis.

ethanol /ˈɛθənɔl/ noun a colourless liquid, present in alcoholic drinks such as whisky, gin and vodka, and also used in medicines and as a disinfectant. Also called ethyl alcohol.

ethene /ˈɛθɪnəl/ noun same as ethylene.

ether /ˈɛθə/ noun same as ethylene.

ethereal /ˈɛθɪrəl/ adjective concerning ethics.

ethical /ˈɛθɪkəl/ adjective relating to a culturally or racially distinctive group of people.

ethanol /ˈɛθənɔl/ noun a dry scab, e.g. one formed on a burn.

etiology /ˌɛθəˈtɪləˌdʒi/ noun the study of how a disease or syndrome is caused.
euphoria /juːˈfɔːriə/ noun a feeling of extreme happiness

Eustachian canal /juːˈsteɪʃən/ noun a passage through the porous bone forming the outside part of the Eustachian tube

Eustachian tube /juːˈsteɪʃən/ noun the tube which connects the pharynx to the middle ear. See illustration at EAR in Supplement [Described 1652, but actually named after Eustachy by Valsalva a century later. Bartolomeo Eustachio (1520–74), physician to the Pope and Professor of Anatomy at Rome.]

euthanasia /juːθəˈnæsɪə/ noun the painless killing of an incurably ill person or someone in a permanent coma in order to end their distress. Also called mercy killing [NOTE: This practice is illegal in most countries.]

euthyroid /juːˈθɜːrəld/ noun a condition where the thyroid is functioning normally

evacuant /ɪˈvekʃənt/ noun a medicine which makes a person have a bowel movement

evacuation /ɪˈvekʃən/ noun the act of removing the contents of something, especially discharging faeces from the bowel

evacuation of retained products of conception /ɪˈvekʃən əv ɪˈretənd ɪˈprɛdɪkts əv ˈkænˈsepʃən/ noun a D & C operation performed after an abortion or miscarriage to ensure the uterus is left empty. Abbreviation ERPC

evaluation /ɪˈvalʃən/ noun the act of examining and calculating the quantity or level of something. O In further evaluation of these patients no side-effects of the treatment were noted.

eventration /ɪˈventrəʃən/ noun the pushing of the intestine through the wall of the abdomen

eversion /ɪˈvɜːʃən/ noun the act of turning towards the outside or turning inside out. See illustration at ANATOMICAL TERMS in Supplement

evortor /ɪˈvɔrtər/ noun a muscle which makes a limb turn outwards

evidence-based /ˌɛvɪdənsˈbɛzd/ adjective based on the results of well-designed trials of specific types of treatment for specific conditions O evidence-based practice

evidence-based medicine /ˌɛvɪdənsˈbɛzd miːˈdɛsɪn/ noun medical practice where findings from research are used as the basis for decisions

evisceration /ˌvɪskəˈreɪʃən/ noun the surgical removal of the abdominal viscera. Also called exenteration

evolution /ˌɛvəˈluːʃən/ noun a process of change in organisms which takes place over a very long period involving many generations

evisceration /ˌvɪskəˈreɪʃən/ noun the act of extracting something by force

Ewing's tumour /ˈjuːɪŋz ˈtjuːmər/ Ewing's sarcoma /ˈjuːɪŋz ˈsɑːkəmə/ noun a malignant tumour in the marrow of a long bone [Described 1922. After James Ewing (1866–1943), Professor of Pathology at Cornell University, New York, USA.]

EWS /jɛdʒɛz/ noun an ‘early warning system’ designed to alert healthcare professionals to new developments in technologies, pharmaceuticals and treatments

ex-/eks/ prefix same as ex- [used before vowels]

exacerbation /ɪɡəˈzɛrəˌbeɪʃən/ noun 1. the fact of making a condition worse 2. a period when a condition becomes worse

exanthem /ɪɡəˈzænθəm/ noun a skin rash found with infectious diseases like measles or chickenpox

exanthematous /ɪkˈskænθəˈtjuːəs/ adjective referring to an exanthem or like an exanthem

exception /ɪkˈsepʃən/ noun 1. something that does not fit into or is excluded from a general rule or pattern 2. the act or condition of being excluded

exchange transfusion /ɪkˈʃɛnsfɜːn/ noun the method of treating leukaemia or erythroblastosis in newborn babies, where almost all the blood is removed from the body and replaced with healthy blood

excise /ɪkˈsaɪz/ verb to cut something out

excision /ɪkˈsɪʃən/ noun an operation by a surgeon to cut and remove part of the body such as a growth. Compare incision

excitation /ɪkˈsɛtʃən/ noun the state of being mentally or physically aroused

excite /ɪkˈsaɪt/ verb 1. to stimulate someone or something 2. to give an impulse to a nerve or muscle

excoriation /ɪkˈsɛriəʃən/ noun a raw skin surface or mucous membrane after rubbing or burning

excrement /ɪkˈskrɪmənt/ noun same as faeces

excrecence /ɪkˈskrɛsəns/ noun a growth on the skin

excreta /ɪkˈskrɛtə/ plural noun waste material from the body, especially faeces

excrescence /ɪkˈskrɛsəns/ noun the act of passing waste matter, e.g. faeces, urine or sweat, out of the body

excruciating /ɪkˈskrʌʃəˈtʃɪŋ/ adjective extremely painful O He had excruciating pains in his head

exenteration /ɪkˌsentəˈreɪʃən/ noun same as evisceration
exercise /ek'seiz/ noun 1. physical or mental activity, especially the active use of the muscles as a way of keeping fit, correcting a deformity or strengthening a part O Regular exercise is good for your heart. O He doesn’t do or take enough exercise. 2. a particular movement or action designed to use and strengthen the muscles i.e. verb to take exercise, or exert part of the body in exercise O He exercises twice a day to keep fit.

exercise-induced asthma /ek'seizwaiz/ in djuist/ 'æsmə/ noun asthma which is caused by exercise such as running or cycling. Abbreviation EIA

exfoliation /ek'seii'leif(ə)n/ noun the loss of layers of tissue such as sunburnt skin

exfoliative /ek'seii'leitiv/ adjective referring to exfoliation

exfoliative dermatitis /ek'seii'deimətətis/ noun a typical form of dermatitis where the skin becomes red and comes off in flakes

exhalation /eks'həleif(ə)n/ noun the act of breathing out. Opposite inhalation

exhalation /eks'həleif(ə)n/ verb to breathe out. Opposite inhale

exhibitionism /eks'hii'biiʃə(ə)n/ noun a desire to show the genitals to a person of the opposite sex

exo- /eksəu/ prefix out of, outside

exocrine gland /ek'skɔrən gland/ noun a gland with ducts which channel secretions to particular parts of the body such as the liver, the sweat glands, the pancreas and the salivary glands. Compare endocrine gland

exogenous /ek'səun'jənəs/ adjective developing or caused by something outside the organism. Compare endogenous

exomphalos /ek'səmfa'ləs/ noun same as umbilical hernia

exophthalmic goitre /ek'zəfθælmik 'ɡəitə/ noun a form of hyperthyroidism, in which the neck swells and the eyes protrude. Also called Graves’ disease

exophthalmos /ek'səfθælməs/ noun protruding eyeballs

exostosis /ek'səstə'səs/ noun a benign growth on the surface of a bone

exotic /iks'ttik/ adjective referring to a disease which occurs in a foreign country

exotoxin /ek'sə'toksən/ noun a poison, produced by bacteria, which affects parts of the body away from the place of infection, e.g. the toxins which cause botulism or tetanus

exotropia /ek'sətra'pəriə/ noun same as divergent strabismus

expectant mother /ek'spektənt 'mɛθəd/ noun a pregnant woman

expectorant /ek'spektərənt/ noun a drug which helps someone to cough up phlegm

expectoration /ek'spektə'reif(ə)n/ noun the act of coughing up fluid or phlegm from the respiratory tract

experimental learning /ek'spentrəl 'ləuin/ noun the process of learning from experience

expert patient /ek'spektər 'piənt/ noun a patient with a long-term illness who has been taught how to manage his or her own medical care

expiration /ek'spa'reif(ə)n/ noun 1. the act of breathing out, or pushing air out of the lungs OExpiration takes place when the chest muscles relax and the lungs become smaller. Opposite inspiration 2. death

expire /ik'spair/ verb 1. to breathe out 2. to die

expiration /ek'spa'reif(ə)n/ noun a procedure or surgical operation where the aim is to discover the cause of symptoms or the nature and extent of an illness

exploratory surgery /ik'spleərətəri/ noun a surgical operation in which the aim is to discover the cause of a person’s symptoms or the nature and extent of an illness

expression /ik'spreif(ə)n/ noun 1. the look on a person’s face which shows what he or she thinks and feels O His expression showed that he was annoyed. 2. the act of pushing something out of the body O the expression of the fetus and placenta during childbirth

exsanguinate /ik'sæŋgwənit/ verb to drain blood from the body

exsanguination /ik'sæŋgwə'nijəf(ə)n/ noun the removal of blood from the body

extension /ik'stenʃən/ noun 1. the stretching or straightening out of a joint 2. the stretching of a joint by traction

extensor /ik'stenəs/ noun muscle /ik'stenəs 'mæskəl/ noun a muscle which makes a joint become straight. Compare flexor

exterior /ik'stəriər/ noun the outside of something

externa /ik'strɛna/ noun the outside of the eye

external cardiac massage /ik'strækəl 'meisəsu/ noun a method of making someone’s heart start beating again by rhythmic pressing on the breastbone

external ear /ik'strænəl 'iər/ noun same as outer ear

external haemorrhoids /ik'strænəl 'heəmərəhədz/ plural noun haemorrhoids in the skin just outside the anus

external iliac artery /ik'strænəl 'ɪliək 'ærtəri/ noun an artery which branches from the aorta in the abdomen and leads to the leg

external jugular /ik'strænəl 'dʒuɡələ/ noun the main jugular vein in the neck, leading from the temporal vein

external nares /ik'strænəl 'nɛrəz/ plural noun same as anterior nares
extirpation /ˌekstrəˈpiːʃən/ noun the total removal of a structure, an organ or growth by surgery

extradural haematoma /ˌekstrəˈdjuːrəl/ noun a blood clot which forms in the head outside the dura mater, caused by a blow

extradural haemorrhage /ˌekstrəˈdjuərəl/ noun a serious condition where bleeding occurs between the dura mater and the skull

extraembryonic membranes /ˌekstrəˈembri,ənɪk/ noun tissues which are not part of the embryo

extrapleural /ˌekstrəˈpljuərəl/ adjective outside the pleural cavity

extrapyramidal /ˌekstrəˈpɪrəmədʒəl/ adjective outside the pyramidal tracts

extrapyramidal system /ˌekstrəˈpɪrəmədʒəl/ noun a motor system which carries motor nerves outside the pyramidal system

extrapyramidal tracts /ˌekstrəˈpɪrəmədʒəl/ plural noun same as extrapyramidal system

extravert /ˌekstrəˈvɜːrt/ noun a person who is interested in people and things in the external world

extubation /ˌekstrəˈbeɪʃən/ noun the removal of a tube after intubation

eye /aɪ/ noun the part of the body with which a person sees (NOTE: For other terms referring to the eye, see ocular, optic and words beginning with oculo-, ophth-, ophthalm-, ophthalmo-)
eyeball /æbˈbɔːl/ noun the round ball of tissue through which light passes, located in the eye socket and controlled by various muscles

eyebrow /ˈaɪbrow/ noun an arch of skin with a line of hair above the eye

eye drops /əs ˈdrəps/ plural noun medicine in liquid form which is put into the eye in small amounts

eyelash /ˈaɪləʃ/ noun a small hair which grows out from the edge of the eyelid

eyelid /ˈaɪlɪd/ noun a piece of skin which covers the eye. Also called blepharon, palpebra

extracapsular /ˌekstrəˈkæpsjʊlər/ adjective outside a capsule

extracapsular fracture /ˌekstrəˈkæpsjʊlər/ noun a fracture of the upper part of the femur, which does not involve the capsule round the hip joint

extracellular /ˌekstrəˈsɛlər/ adjective outside cells

extracellular fluid /ˌekstrəˌsɛlər ˈflʌɪd/ noun a fluid which surrounds cells

extra-/ˈekstrə/ prefix outside

extracapsular /ˌekstrəˈkæpsjʊlər/ adjective outside a capsule

extracapitis /ˌekstrəˈkæpitəs/ noun a sensory nerve which is affected by stimuli from outside the body, e.g. in the eye or ear

extrapyramidal /ˌekstrəˈpɪrəmədʒəl/ adjective occurring or developing outside the uterus

extrapyramidal tracts /ˌekstrəˈpɪrəmədʒəl/ noun a motor system which carries motor nerves outside the pyramidal system

extrapyramidal system /ˌekstrəˈpɪrəmədʒəl/ noun a motor system which carries motor nerves outside the pyramidal system

extrapyramidal tracts /ˌekstrəˈpɪrəmədʒəl/ plural noun same as extrapyramidal system

extrapyramidal /ˌekstrəˈpɪrəmədʒəl/ adjective involving perception by means other than the usual five senses

extrasyostole /ˌekstrəˈsɪstəuli/ noun same as ectopic heartbeat

extraterine /ˌekstrəˈtɜːrin/ adjective occurring or developing outside the uterus

extraterine pregnancy /ˌekstrəˈtɜːrin/ noun a situation where a bodily fluid, such as blood or secretions, escapes into tissue

extraversion /ˌekstrəˈvɜːrzən/ noun same as extrovert

extremities /ˌekstrəˈmiːtiz/ plural noun the parts of the body at the ends of limbs, e.g. the fingers, toes, nose and ears

extremitas /ˌekstrəˈmiːtəs/ noun 1. a limb 2. the part of a limb farthest away from the body, especially the hand or foot 3. a situation or state of great distress or danger 4. the greatest intensity of something

extrinsic /ˌekstrɪsɪnk/ adjective external, originating outside a structure

extrinsic factor /ˌekstrɪsɪnk ˈfæktaɪr/ noun a former term for vitamin B12, which is necessary for the production of red blood cells

extrinsic muscle /ˌekstrɪsɪnk ˈmjuːskl/ noun a muscle which is some way away from the part of the body it operates

extremum /ˌekstrəˈmjuːm/ noun 1. (in mathematics) a condition in which a person is interested in people and things other than themselves 2. a congenital turning of an organ inside out

extrovert /ˌekstrəˈvɜːrt/ noun a person who is interested in people and things in the external world

external /ˌekstrən/ noun 1. a congenital turning of an organ inside out

external /ˌekstrən/ adjective same as otitis externa

external otitis /ˌekstrən əˈtɪtəs/ noun same as otitis externa

external respiration /ˌekstrən ˈrespiˈreɪʃən/ noun the part of respiration concerned with oxygen in the air being exchanged in the lungs for carbon dioxide from the blood

external /ˌekstrən/ adjective same as otitis externa

external respiration /ˌekstrən ˈrespiˈreɪʃən/ noun the part of respiration concerned with oxygen in the air being exchanged in the lungs for carbon dioxide from the blood

external /ˈekstrən/ adjective same as otitis externa
eye socket (NOTE: For other terms referring to the eyelids, see words beginning with blephar-, blepharo-)
eye socket /ˈɔɪ sɛkt/ noun same as orbit
eyestrain /ˈæstərɪn/ noun tiredness in the muscles of the eye with a headache, which may be caused by an activity such as reading in bad light or working on a computer screen. Also called asthenopia
eyetooth /ˈætʃəθ/ noun a canine tooth, one of two pairs of pointed teeth next to the incisors (NOTE: The plural is eyeteeth.)
Factor VIII /faktər ˈwɪtʃ/ noun a protein in plasma which promotes the clotting of blood and is lacking in people with haemophilia A.

Factor IX /faktər ˈɛks/ noun a protein in plasma which promotes the clotting of blood and is lacking in people with haemophilia B. Also called Christmas factor.

Factor XI /faktər ˈeɪtʃ/ noun a protein in plasma which promotes the clotting of blood and is lacking in people with haemophilia C.

Factor XII /faktər ˈtwelv/ noun a protein in plasma which promotes the clotting of blood and is lacking in some people with haemophilia. Also called Hageman factor.

faeces /ˈfɛsɪz/ noun faecal matter: that which is excreted by the bowels. This is solid waste material that is left over after digestion.

fail /feɪl/ verb 1. not to be successful in doing something: The doctor failed to see the symptoms. 2. She has failed her pharmacy exams. 3. He failed his medical and was rejected by the police force. 4. to become weaker and less likely to recover.

failure to thrive /feɪljuər tuː ˈθruː/ noun same as marasmus.

Fahrenheit /ˈfeɪrənhaɪt/ Fahrenheit scale /ˈfeɪrənhaɪt skɛl/ noun a scale of temperatures where the freezing and boiling points of water are 32° and 212° under standard atmospheric pressure (NOTE: Used in the US, but less common in the UK. Usually written as an F after the number sign: 32°F (say: 'thirty-two degrees Fahrenheit').)
faint /feint/ verb to stop being conscious for a short time and, usually, fall down. noun a loss of consciousness for a short period, caused by a temporary reduction in the blood flow to the brain.

fainting fit /feintɪŋ fɪt/, fainting spell /feintɪŋ spɛl/ noun same as syncope. She often had fainting fits when she was donating.

Fairbanks’ splint /feɪbæŋksz spʌnt/ noun a special splint used for correcting Erb’s palsy.

faith healing /feθə hiθlɪŋ/ noun the treatment of pain or illness by a person who prays and may also lay his or her hands on the patient.

falciform /falˈsɪmər/ adjective in the shape of a sickle.

Fallopian tube /fælˈpɪsən ˈtjuːb/ noun one of the bottom five tubes which connect the ovaries to the uterus. See illustration at urogenital system (female) in Supplement. Also called oviduct, salpinx. (Note: For other terms referring to Fallopian tubes, see words beginning with salping-, salpingo-.) (Described 1561. After Gabriele Fallopio (1523–63), Italian man of medicine. He was Professor of Surgery and Anatomy at Padua, where he was also Professor of Botany.)

Fallot’s tetralogy /fæləʊts ˈtɛtərəlɔːdi/ noun same as tetralogy of Fallot.

false rib /fɔːsl ˈrɪb/ noun one of the bottom five ribs on each side which are not directly attached to the breastbone.

familial /fəˈmɪliəl/ adjective referring to a family.

familial adenomatous polyposis /fəˈmlɪəl ədəˈnɒmətəs ˈpɒliˌpəsɪs/ noun a hereditary disorder where polyps develop in the small intestine. Abbreviation FAP.

familial disorder /fəˈmlɪəl dɪˈɔrədər/ noun a hereditary disorder which affects several members of the same family.

family /ˈfæməli/ noun a group of people who are related to each other, especially mother, father and children.

family doctor /ˈfæməli ˈdɒktər/ noun a general practitioner.

family planning /ˈfæməli ˈplænɪŋ/ noun the use of contraception to control the number of children in a family.

family planning clinic /ˈfæməli ˈplænɪŋ ˈklɪnɪk/ noun a clinic which gives advice on contraception.

family therapy /ˈfæməli ˈθerəpi/ noun a type of psychotherapy where members of the family of a person with a disorder meet a therapist to discuss the condition and try to come to terms with it.

famotidine /ˈfɑːməˌtɪdən/ noun a histamine which reduces the secretion of gastric acid and is used to treat ulcers.

Fanconi syndrome /fænˈkɒnɪ sɪndrəm/ noun a kidney disorder where amino acids are present in the urine [Described 1927. After Guido Fanconi (1892–1979), Professor of Pediatrics at the University of Zurich, Switzerland.]

fantasy /ˈfæntəsɪ/ noun a series of imaginary events which someone believes really took place.

FAP abbreviation familial adenomatous polyposis.

farcy /ˈfærsi/ noun a form of glands which affects the lymph nodes.

farmer’s lung /ˈfærmər ˈluːŋ/ noun a type of asthma caused by an allergy to rotting hay.

fascia /fæˈʃɪə/ noun fibrous tissue covering a muscle or an organ. (Note: The plural is fasciae.)

fasciculation /fæsɪˈkjuːleɪʃən/ noun small muscle movements which appear as trembling skin.

fasciculus /fæsɪˈkjʊləs/ noun a bundle of nerve fibres. (Note: The plural is fasciculi.)

fascitis /fæsɪˈtɪs/ noun an inflammation of the connective tissue between muscles or around organs.

fastigium /fæstɪˈdʒɪəm/ noun the highest temperature during a bout of fever.

fat /fæt/ adjective big and round in the body. You ought to eat less – you’re getting too fat. (Note: fatter – fattest.) noun 1, a white oily substance in the body, which stores energy and protects the body against cold. 2, a type of food which supplies protein and Vitamins A and D, especially that part of meat which is white, and solid substances like lard or butter produced from animals and used for cooking, or liquid substances like oil. 3, If you don’t like the fat on the meat, cut it off. 4, Fry the eggs in some fat. (Note: Fat has no plural when it means the substance; the plural fats is used to mean different types of fat. For other terms referring to fats, see also lipid and words beginning with steato-.)

fatigue /fəˈtɪɡ/ noun very great tiredness.

fatigue fracture /fəˈtɪɡ frækʃər/ noun a stress fracture.

fatty /ˈfæti/ adjective containing fat.

fatty acid /ˈfæti ˈæsɪd/ noun an organic acid belonging to a group that occurs naturally as fats, oils and waxes. 1, essential fatty acid.

fatty degeneration /ˈfæti dʒidʒəˈneɪʃən/ noun same as adipose degeneration.

fauces /fɔːsəs/ noun an opening between the tonsils at the back of the throat, leading to the pharynx.

FDA abbreviation US Food and Drug Administration.
fear /fər/ noun a state where a person is afraid of something · fear of flying
febricula /fɪˈbrɪkjuːlə/ noun a low fever
febrifuge /fɪˈbrɪfjuːɡ/ noun a drug which prevents or lowers a fever, e.g. aspirin · adjective preventing or lowering fever
febrile /ˈfɪbrɪl/ adjective referring to a fever, or caused by a fever
febrile convulsion /ˌfɪbrɪl kənvəlʃən/ noun a convulsion in a child, lasting a short time, associated with a fever
febrile disease /ˌfɪbrɪl dɪˈziːs/ noun a disease which is accompanied by fever
feeculation /ˈfɛkjuːləʃən/ noun the act of bringing male and female reproductive matter together. Also called fertilisation
feedback /ˈfɪdbɛk/ noun 1, information or comments about something which has been done · The initial feedback from patients on the new service was encouraging. 2, the linking of the result of an action back to the action itself
Feeling's solution /ˈfɛlɪŋz,ˌsæljuːn/ noun a solution used in Fehling's test to detect sugar in urine [Described 1848. After Hermann Christian von Felling (1812–85), Professor of Chemistry at Stuttgart, Germany.]
Fehling's solution /ˈfɛlɪŋz ˌsɛlvən/ noun a solution used in Fehling's test to detect sugar in urine containing iron with a valency of two
femoral hernia /ˈfɛmərəl ˈhɜrnɪə/ noun a hernia of the bowel at the top of the thigh
femoral nerve /ˈfɛmərəl ˈnɜːv/ noun a nerve which governs the muscle at the front of the thigh
femoral pulse /ˈfɛmərəl ˈpʌls/ noun a pulse taken in the groin
femoral triangle /ˈfɛmərəl ˈtræŋɡəl/ noun a slight hollow in the groin which contains the femoral vessels and nerve. Also called Scarp's triangle
femoral vein /ˈfɛmərəl ˈviːn/ noun a vein running up the upper leg, a continuation of the popliteal vein
femur /ˈfɛmər/ noun the bone in the top part of the leg which joins the acetabulum at the hip and the tibia at the knee. Also called thighbone. See illustration at PELVIS in Supplement. (NOTE: The plural is femora.)
-fen /fɛn/ suffix used in names of non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs · ibuprofen
fenestra /ˈfɛnɛstrə/ noun a small opening in the ear
fenestra ovalis /ˈfɛnɛstrə əʊˈvælɪs/ noun same as oval window
fenestra rotunda /ˈfɛnɛstrə ˈrəʊtəndə/ noun same as round window
fenestration /ˈfɛnɛstrəˈteɪʃən/ noun a surgical operation to relieve deafness by making a small opening in the inner ear
fenoprofen /fɛnˈproʊfən/ noun a non-steroidal, anti-inflammatory drug that is used to manage the pain of arthritis
fentanyl /fɛnˈtɑːnl/ noun a narcotic drug that is a powerful painkiller
fermentation /fɛrˈmɛntəʃən/ noun a process where carbohydrates are broken down by enzymes from yeast and produce alcohol. Also called zymosis
ferric /ˈfɛrkɪk/ adjective containing iron with a valency of three
ferritin /fɛrˈtɪtn/ noun a protein found in the liver that binds reversibly to iron and stores it for later use in making haemoglobin in red blood cells
ferrous /fɛrˈəs/ adjective containing iron with a valency of two
ferrous sulphate /fɛrəs ˈsʌlfət/ noun a white or pale green iron salt that is used in the treatment of iron-deficient anaemia
ferrule /ˈfɜːrəl/ noun a metal or rubber cap or ring that strengthens and protects the lower end of a crutch or walking stick · verb to fit a ferrule onto a crutch or walking stick
fertile /fɜːtl/ adjective able to produce children. Opposite sterile
fertilisation, noun the joining of an ovum with a sperm to form a zygote and so start the development of an embryo.
fertility, noun the number of births per year calculated per 1000 females aged between 15 and 44.
FESS abbreviation functional endoscopic sinus surgery.
fester, verb (of an infected wound) to become inflamed and produce pus.
festation, noun a way of walking in which a person takes short steps, seen in people who have Parkinson’s disease.
fetal, adjective referring to a fetus.
fetal alcohol syndrome, noun damage caused to the fetus by alcohol in the blood of the mother, which affects the growth of the embryo, including its facial and brain development. Abbreviation FAS.
fetal dystocia, noun a difficult childbirth caused by a malformation or mal-presentation of the fetus.
fetal heart, noun the heart of the fetus.
fetal monitor, noun an electronic device which monitors the fetus in the uterus.
fetal position, noun a position where a person lies curled up on his or her side, like a fetus in the uterus.
fetishism, noun a psychological disorder in which someone gets sexual satisfaction from touching objects.
feto-, prefix fetus.
fetoprotein, noun a protein produced by feto-nephron, which helps make blood coagulate.
fibrin, noun a protein produced by fibrinogen, which helps make blood coagulate.
fibrinolytic drugs, noun an enzyme which digests fibrin. Also called plasmin.
fibrinolysis, noun the removal of blood clots from the system by the action of fibrinolysin on fibrin. Also called thrombolysis.
fibrinolytic, adjective referring to fibrinolysis or fibrinolytic drugs. Also called thrombolytic.
fibro-, prefix referring to fibres.
fibroadenoma, noun a benign tumour formed of fibrous and glandular tissue.
fibroblast, noun a long flat cell found in connective tissue, which develops into collagen.
fibrocartilage, noun cartilage and fibrous tissue combined.
fibrochondritis, noun inflammation of the fibrocartilage.
fibrocyst, noun a benign tumour of fibrous tissue.
fibrocystic, adjective referring to a fibrocyst.
fibrocystic disease, noun the fibrocystic disease of the pancreas, also called cystic fibrosis.
fibrocyte, noun a cell which derives from a fibroblast and is found in connective tissue.
fibroid, noun a tumour made of fibrous tissue.
The plural is noun filiform caused by parasitic threadworms in the lymph which is found especially in the lymph system, Filaria filament fight or to escape n fight or flight reaction fibular ankle. Compare bones in the lower leg between the knee and the fibula fibrous tissue rounds the heart, and is attached to the main blood fibrous pericardium where fibrous tissue holds two bones together so of the back inflammation of the fibrous tissue which sur-

fibrositis fibrosis fibrosarcoma fibromyoma fibroplasia fibromyoma fibrous capsule fibrous tissue surrounding a kidney. Also called renal capsule fibrous joint fibrous tissue holds two bones together so that they cannot move, as in the bones of the skull fibrous pericardium fibrous tissue around the heart, and is attached to the main blood vessels fibrous tissue fibula fibular fibrous tissue of the two bones in the lower leg between the knee and the ankle. Compare fibula (NOTE: The plural is fibu-

fibula fibular fibula field of vision v field av same as visual field fight or flight reaction fast ze 'flight ri ak'kja'zam noun the theory that an organism which is faced with a threat reacts either by preparing to fight or to escape fill- prefix referring to a thread filament filament noun a long thin structure like a thread filamentous -mentas adjective like a thread Filaria filaria a thin parasitic worm which is found especially in the lymph system, and is passed to humans by mosquitoes (NOTE: The plural is Filariae.) filariasis filariais noun a tropical disease caused by parasitic threadworms in the lymph system, transmitted by mosquito bites filliform /filif'sim/ adjective shaped like a thread filliform papillae /filif'spm po'pi li/ plural noun papillae on the tongue which are shaped like threads, and have no taste buds filipuncture /filip.uk'tfs noun the procedure of putting a wire into an aneurysm to cause blood clotting filling /'filit/ noun a surgical operation carried out by a dentist to fill a hole in a tooth with amalgam filter /'fitl/ noun a piece of paper or cloth through which a liquid is passed to remove any solid substances in it ■ verb to pass a liquid through a membrane, piece of paper or cloth to remove solid substances 0 Impurities are filtered from the blood by the kidneys. FIM abbreviation functional independence measure fimbria fimbriis noun a fringe, especially the fringe of hair-like processes at the end of a Fallo-

pian tube near the ovaries (NOTE: The plural is fimbriae.) finger fingers noun one of the five parts at the end of the hand, but usually not including the thumb (NOTE: The names of the fingers are: little finger, third finger or ring finger, middle finger, forefinger or index finger.) finger-nose test /'fing'noz noun a test of coordination, where the person is asked to close their eyes, stretch out their arm and then touch their nose with their index finger fingerprint /'fingprint noun a mark left by a finger when something is touched. 0 genetic fingerprint firm /'firn/ group of doctors and consultants in a hospital, especially one to which a trainee doctor is attached during clinical studies (informal) first aid /fast 'eaid/ noun help given by a non-

medical person to someone who is suddenly ill or injured before full-scale medical treatment can be given 0 She gave him first aid in the street until the ambulance arrived. first-aid kit /fast 'eaid ki t noun a box with bandages and dressings kept ready to be used in an emergency first-aid post /fast 'eaid paut noun first-aid station /fast 'eaid steitjo'n noun a place where injured people can be taken for immediate care first-degree burn /fast di,gra: 'heinarmard plural noun haemorrhoids which remain in the rectum first-degree relative /fast di,gra: 'heinrelativ noun a relative with whom an individual shares 50% of their genes, e.g. a father, mother, sibling or child
first intention /fɜːst inˈtenʃn/ noun the healing of a clean wound where the tissue forms again rapidly and no prominent scar is left

first-level nurse /ˈfɜːst ˌlevɪəl/ noun, first-level Registered Nurse /ˌfɜːst ˌlevɪəl ˌrɛdɪstɪst/ noun a nurse who has passed qualifying examinations, is registered as such with the Nursing and Midwifery Council and can act in an independent decision-making role. Compare second-level nurse

fissure /ˈflɪsər/ noun a crack or groove in the skin, tissue or an organ

fistula /ˈflɪstjʊlə/ noun a passage or opening which has been made unusually between two organs, often near the rectum or anus

fit /fɪt/ adjective strong and physically healthy • She exercises every day to keep fit. • The doctors decided the patient was not fit for surgery. (NOTE: fitter – fittest)

fitting – fitted. Note also: you fit someone with an appliance.

fitness /ˈfɪtɪs/ noun the fact of being strong and healthy • Being in the football team demands a high level of physical fitness. • He had to pass a fitness test to join the police force.

5-hydroxy-tryptamine /ˌfɪəˈtreɪdʒɪˌtrɪptəmɪn/ noun a compound which exists in blood platelets and is released after tissue is injured, and is a neurotransmitter important in sleep, mood and vasomotor control. Also called serotonin

fixed /ˈfɪkst/ adjective referring to a person who has too close an attachment to another person, often to a parent

fixator /ˈfɪkstər/ noun a metal rod placed through a bone to keep a part of the body rigid

flaccid /ˈflæksɪd/ adjective soft or flabby

flaccidity /ˈflæksɪdɪti/ noun the state of being flaccid

flex /fleks/ verb to bend something

flexibility /ˈfleksəbɪləti/ noun the act of bending a joint

flexor /ˈfleksər/ muscle /ˈfleksər, ˈfleksər ˈmʌsəl/ noun a muscle which makes a joint bend. Compare extensor

flexure /ˈfleksər/ noun 1. a bend in an organ 2. a fold in the skin

floaters /ˈflætərz/ plural noun same as muscae volantes

floating kidney /ˈfleɪtɪŋ ˈkɪndri/ noun same as nephropoiesis

floating rib /ˈfleɪtɪŋ ˈrɪb/ noun one of the two lowest ribs on each side, which are not attached to the breastbone

flooding /ˈflʌdɪŋ/ noun same as menorrhagia

floppy baby syndrome /ˈflɒpi ˈbæbi ˌsɜːndrəm/ noun same as ataxia congenita

flora /ˈflɔːrə/ noun bacteria which exist in a particular part of the body

florid /ˈflɔːrid/ adjective with an unhealthy glowing pink or red complexion

flowmeter /ˈfləʊmətər/ noun a meter attached to a pipe, e.g. in anaesthetic equipment, to measure the speed at which a liquid or gas moves in the pipe

flu /flu/ noun 1. same as influenza 2. a very bad cold (informal) (NOTE: Sometimes written 'flu to show it is a short form of influenza.)
1. rays converge through a lens
2. focal epilepsy
3. the lens where light is focused
4. flutter
5. increases serotonin in the brain and is used to treat depression
6. fluoxetine
7. fluoroscopy
8. body onto a screen, so that the part of the body
9. fluoroscope
10. fluorine
11. toothpaste
12. of fluorine and sodium, potassium or tin
13. fluoride
14. fluorescent
15. radiation
16. fluorescence
17. 'date rape' cases, is a controlled drug in the UK
18. settles inside the liver, in the bloodstream and in other parts of the body
19. dialysis or other treatment
20. fluid balance
21. fluid balance
22. fluid
23. of movement of liquid inside part of the body or of movement
24. fluctuation
25. fluconazole
26. coccal infections and pneumonia
27. flucloxacillin
28. length

food intolerance

flucloxacillin /fluˈkloʊzəksiˌlin/ noun a drug related to penicillin and effective against streptococcal infections and pneumonia

fluconazole /ˈfluːkənəzoʊl/ noun a drug used to treat fungal infections such as candidiasis

fluctuation /ˈfʌktʃəˈʃən/ noun the feeling of movement of liquid inside part of the body or inside a cyst when pressed by the fingers

fluid /ˈfluːɪd/ noun 1. a liquid 2. any gas, liquid or powder which flows

fluid balance /ˈfluːɪdˌbæləns/ noun the maintenance of the balance of fluids in the body during dialysis or other treatment

fluke /flʌki/ noun a parasitic flatworm which settles inside the liver, in the bloodstream and in other parts of the body

flunitrazepam /ˌfljuːniˈtræzɪpəm/ noun a tranquilliser that, because of its association with ‘date rape’ cases, is a controlled drug in the UK

fluorescence /ˈfljuːɔrstəns/ noun the sending out of light from a substance which is receiving radiation

fluorescent /ˈfljuːərəs/ adjective referring to a substance which sends out light

fluoride /ˈfljuːərəd/ noun a chemical compound of fluorine and sodium, potassium or tin

fluorine /ˈfljuərən/ noun a chemical element found in bones and teeth (NOTE: The chemical symbol is F)

fluoroscope /ˈfluːərəskəʊp/ noun an apparatus which projects an X-ray image of a part of the body onto a screen, so that the part of the body can be examined as it moves

fluoroscopy /ˈfljuːərəskəʊpi/ noun an examination of the body using X-rays projected onto a screen

fluoxetine /ˌfljuːətskəʊtʃiˌn/ noun a drug that increases serotonin in the brain and is used to treat anxiety and depression

flush /flʌʃ/ noun a red colour in the skin ■ verb 1. to wash a wound with liquid 2. (of person) to turn red

flutter /ˈflʌtər/ noun a rapid movement, especially of the atra of the heart, which is not controlled by impulses from the sinoatrial node

flux /flʌks/ noun an excessive production of liquid from the body

focal /ˈfɔksəl/ adjective referring to a focus

focal distance /ˈfɔksəl ˈdistəns/, focal length /ˈfɔksəl ˈlɛŋθ/ noun the distance between the lens of the eye and the point behind the lens where light is focused

focal epilepsy /ˈfɔksəl ˈɛpɪləpsɪ/ noun epilepsy arising from a localised area of the brain

focus /ˈfɔksəs/ noun 1. the point where light rays converge through a lens 2. the centre of an infection (NOTE: The plural is foci.) ■ verb 1. to adjust a lens until an image is clear and sharp 2. to see clearly □ He has difficulty in focusing on the object.

focus group /ˈfɔskəs ɡruːp/ noun a discussion group of lay people brought together under professional guidance to discuss issues such as care

foetal /ˈfɛtəl/ adjective another spelling of fetal (NOTE: The spelling foetal is common in general use in British English, but the spelling fetal is the accepted international spelling for technical use.)

foetoscope /ˈfɛtəskəʊp/ noun another spelling of fetoscope

foetus /ˈfɛtəs/ noun another spelling of fetus (NOTE: The spelling foetus is common in general use in British English, but the spelling fetus is the accepted international spelling for technical use.)

folacin /ˈfələsən/ noun same as folic acid

folic acid /ˈfɔlɪk ˈæsid/ noun a vitamin in the Vitamin B complex found in milk, liver, yeast and green vegetables such as spinach, which is essential for creating new blood cells

follicle /ˈfɒlɪkəl/ noun a tiny hole or sac in the body

follicle-stimulating hormone /ˌfɒlɪklˌstɪmjuˈleɪtɪŋ həʊmən/ noun a hormone produced by the pituitary gland which stimulates ova in the ovaries and sperm in the testes. Abbreviation FSH

follicular /ˌfɒlɪkjʊlər/, folliculate /ˌfɒlɪkjʊələt/ adjective referring to follicles

folliculitis /ˌfɒlɪkjʊləˈlaɪtɪs/ noun inflammation of the hair follicles, especially where hair has been shaved

fomentation /ˈfəʊməntəʃən/ noun same as poultice

fomites /ˌfoʊmɪtɪz/ plural noun objects touched by someone with a communicable disease which can then be the means of passing on the disease to others

fontanelle /ˈfɒntənəl/ noun the soft cartilage between the bony sections of a baby’s skull

food allergy /ˈfɔd əˈlædjər/ noun a substance in food which produces an allergy

food allergy /ˈfɔd əˈlædjər/ noun an allergy to a specific food such as nuts, which causes a severe reaction that may lead to life-threatening anaphylactic shock

food canal /ˈfɔd ˈkænəl/ noun the passage from the mouth to the rectum through which food passes and is digested

food intolerance /ˈfɔd ɪnˈtɜːlamən/ noun an adverse reaction to some foods such as oranges, eggs, tomatoes and strawberries
food poisoning

foot /fʊt/ noun the end part of the leg on which a person stands

foramen /fɔːrəmən/ noun a natural opening inside the body, e.g. the opening in a bone through which veins or nerves pass (NOTE: The plural is foramina.)

foramen magnum /fɔːrəmən ˈmæɡnəm/ noun the hole at the bottom of the skull where the brain is joined to the spinal cord

foramen ovale /fɔːrəmən əˈvæjual/ noun an opening between the two parts of the heart in a fetus

COMMENT: The foramen ovale usually closes at birth, but if it stays open the blood from the veins can mix with the blood going to the arteries, causing cyanosis.

forced expiratory volume /fɔːstɪ ek ˈspɪrat(ə)rɪ ˈvɒljuːm/ noun the maximum amount of air that can be expelled in a given time. Abbreviation FEV

forceps /fɔːsps/ noun a surgical instrument with handles like a pair of scissors, made in different sizes and with differently shaped ends, used for holding and pulling

forceps delivery /fɔːsps diˈlivərɪ/ noun childbirth where the doctor uses forceps to help the baby out of the mother’s uterus

fore- /fɔːr-/ prefix in front

forearm /fɔːrərm/ noun the lower part of the arm from the elbow to the wrist

forebrain /fɔːbriːn/ noun the front part of the brain in an embryo

forefinger /fɔːfɪŋɡər/ noun the first finger on the hand, next to the thumb

foregut /fɔːɡʌt/ noun the front part of the gut in an embryo

foreign /fɔrˈeni/ adjective 1, not belonging to your own country ◆ foreign visitors ◆ a foreign language 2, referring to something that is found where it does not naturally belong, especially something found in the human body that comes from a source outside the body ◆ a foreign object ◆ foreign matter

foreign body /fɔrˈniː bɔdɪ/ noun a piece of material which is not part of the surrounding tissue and should not be there, e.g. sand in a cut, dust in the eye or a pin which has been swallowed ◆ The X-ray showed the presence of a foreign body.

forensic /fɔrˈnɛsk/ adjective relating to the use of science in solving criminal investigations or settling legal cases

forensic medicine /fɔrˈnɛsk ˌmɛd(ə)ˈsiː/ noun the branch of medical science concerned with finding solutions to crimes against people and which involves procedures such as conducting autopsies on murdered people or taking blood samples from clothes

foreskin /fɔrˈskiːn/ noun the skin covering the top of the penis, which can be removed by circumcision. Also called prepuce

forewaters /fɔːrˈwɔːtəz/ plural noun fluid which comes out of the vagina at the beginning of childbirth when the amniotic bursts

formaldehyde /fɔrˈmɔːldihaɪd/ noun a gas with an unpleasant smell that is a strong disinfectant. When dissolved in water to make formalin, it is also used to preserve medical specimens

formalin /fɔrˈmælɪn/ noun a solution of formaldehyde in water, used to preserve medical specimens

formation /fɔrˌməˈkeɪʃn/ noun an itching feeling where the skin feels as if it were covered with insects

formula /fɔrˈmjʊələ/ noun 1, a way of indicating a chemical compound using letters and numbers, e.g. H₂SO₄, 2, instructions on how to prepare a drug

formulary /fɔrˈmjʊlərɪ/ noun a book that lists medicines together with their formulae

fornix /fɔrnɪks/ plural noun an arch (NOTE: The plural is fornices.)

fornix cerebri /fɔrnɪks ˈsɜːrbrɪ/ noun a section of white matter in the brain between the hippocampus and the hypothalamus. See illustration at brain in Supplement

foscarnet /fɔsˈkeɪrɪnt/ noun an antiviral drug administered by intravenous injection that is effective against herpesviruses that are resistant to acyclovir. It is especially used for people with AIDS.

fossa /fɒsə/ noun a shallow hollow in a bone or the skin

foster children /fɒstər ˈtʃildrəʊ/ plural noun children brought up by people who are not their own parents

foster parent /fɒstər ˈpærənt/ noun a woman or man who brings up a child born to other parents

Fothergill’s operation /θɔːtərɡɪlz ˈɒpərəʃn/ noun a surgical operation to correct prolapse of the uterus [After W. E. Fothergill (1865–1926), British gynaecologist.]

foundation hospital /fəʊnˈdeʃn/ noun a hospital in the UK, a type of hospital that is independent of its Local Health Authority in financial matters

fourchette /fɔrʃet/ noun a fold of skin at the back of the vulva

fovea /fəʊvɛə/ noun a depression in the retina which is the point where the eye sees most clearly. See illustration at eye in Supplement

FP10 /fepti/ noun the form used in the UK, an NHS prescription for a GP
fracture /frækta/ verb 1. (of bone) to break ○ The rib fractured in two places. 2. to break a bone ○ He fractured his wrist. noun a break in a bone ○ rib fracture or fracture of a rib fragile-X syndrome /ˌfrædʒi 'eksˌsɪndrəm/ noun a hereditary condition in which part of an X chromosome is constricted, causing mental impairment fragilitas ossium /ˈfɾeɡiˌlətəs 'osɪuːm/ noun a hereditary condition where the bones are brittle and break easily, similar to osteogenesis imperfecta frame /frɛm/ noun 1. the particular size and shape of someone’s body 2. the main part of a building, ship or bicycle, etc., which holds it together ○ the bicycle has a very light frame ○ I’ve broken the frame of my glasses 3. a solid support for something, ○ walking frame, Zimmer frame framyctin /friˈmeɪsɪtn/ noun an antibiotic fraternal twins /ˈfretənəl/ 'twinz/ plural noun same as dizygotic twins freckle /fʁɛkl/ noun a harmless small brownish patch on the skin that becomes more noticeable after exposure to the sun. Freckles are often found in people with fair hair. Also called lentigo n verb to mark something, or become marked with freckles freeze /friːz/ verb to anaesthetise part of the body (informal) ○ They froze my big toe to remove the nail. Freiberg's disease /ˈfriːbərgz dɪz/ 'zɪz/ noun osteochondritis of the head of the second metatarsus [Described 1914. After Albert Henry Freiberg (1869–1940), US surgeon.] fremitus /ˈfriːmətəs/ noun vibrations or trembling in part of someone’s body, felt by the doctor’s hand or heard through a stethoscope frenectomy /friˈnɛktəmɪ/ noun an operation to remove a frenum frenotomy /friˈnɒtəmɪ/ noun an operation to split a frenum frenum /ˈfriːnəm/ noun 1. a fold of mucous membrane under the tongue or by the clitoris frequency /ˈfriːkwənsi/ noun 1. the number of times something takes place in a given time ○ the frequency of micturition 2. the rate of vibration in oscillations Freudian /ˈfroʊdɪən/ adjective understandable in terms of Freud’s theories, especially with regard to human sexuality ○ noun someone who is influenced by or follows Freud’s theories or methods of psychoanalysis friable /ˈfriːəb(ə)l/ adjective easily broken up into small pieces friar’s balsam /ˈfriəər ˈbælsəm/ noun a mixture of various plant oils, including benzoin and balsam, which can be inhaled as a vapour to relieve bronchitis or congestion friction /ˈfrɪkʃ(ə)n/ noun the rubbing together of two surfaces friction fremitus /ˈfrɪkʃ(ə)nˌfriːmətəs/ noun a scratching sensation felt when the hand is placed on the chest of someone who has pericarditis friction murmur /ˈfrɪkʃ(ə)nˌmɜːrmər/ noun the sound of two serous membranes rubbing together, heard with a stethoscope in someone who has pericarditis or pleurisy Friedländer’s bacillus /ˈfɾiːdlnədəz ˈbæksələs/ noun the bacterium Klebsiella pneumoniae which can cause pneumonia [Described 1882. After Carl Friedländer (1847–87), pathologist at the Friedrichshain Hospital, Berlin, Germany.] Friedman’s test /ˈfriːdmənz ˈtest/ noun a test for pregnancy [After Maurice H. Friedman (1923–91), US physician.] Friedreich’s ataxia /ˈfriːdrɪkərs ˈætəksiə/ noun an inherited nervous disease which affects the spinal cord and is associated with club foot, an unsteady walk and speech difficulties. Also called dystrophia adipsogenitalis [Described 1863. After Nicholas Friedreich (1825–82), Professor of Pathological Anatomy at Würzburg, later Professor of Pathology and Therapy at Heidelberg, Germany.] frigidity /ˈfɾɪdʒɪdətɪ/ noun the fact of being unable to experience orgasm, sexual pleasure or sexual desire fringe medicine /ˈfrɪŋzˌmedəsən/ noun types of medical practice which are not usually taught in medical schools, e.g. homeopathy or acupuncture (informal) frog plaster /ˈfrɔɡˌplʌstə/ noun a plaster cast made to keep the legs in an open position after an operation to correct a dislocated hip Fröhlich’s syndrome /ˈfrɔhlɪksˌsɪndrəm/ noun a condition in which someone becomes obese and the genital system does not develop, caused by an adenoma of the pituitary gland [Described 1901. After Alfred Fröhlich (1871–1953), Professor of Pharmacology at the University of Vienna, Austria.] frontal /ˈfrɒnt(ə)l/ adjective referring to the forehead or to the front of the head. Opposite occipital frontal bone /ˈfrɒnt(ə)l bɔːn/ noun a bone forming the front of the upper part of the skull behind the forehead frontal lobe /ˈfrɒnt(ə)l lɔʊb/ noun the front lobe of each cerebral hemisphere frontal lobotomy /ˈfrɒnt(ə)l ˈlɒbətəmɪ/ noun formerly, a surgical operation on the brain to treat mental illness by removing part of the frontal lobe
frontal sinus /fræntəʊs/ 'sæməʊs/ noun one of two sinuses in the front of the face above the eyes

front passage /frænt 'pæsɪdʒ/ (informal) 1, same as urethra 2, same as vagina

frostbite /frɒstbaɪt/ noun an injury caused by very severe cold which freezes tissue

frozen shoulder /frəʊzn 'ʃəʊlda/ noun stiffness and pain in the shoulder, caused by inflammation of the membranes of the shoulder joint after injury or a period of immobility, when deposits may form in the tendons

frozen watchfulness /frəʊzn 'wɛtʃɛzn/ noun an expression of petrified fear on a child’s face, especially in children who have been abused

fructose /frʊkəs/ noun fruit sugar found in honey and some fruit, which together with glucose forms sucrose

frusemide /frʊzəmɪd/ noun same as furosamide

FRSH abbreviation follicle-stimulating hormone

-fuge /fjuːdʒ/ suffix driving away

fulguration /flʌgəˈreɪʃən/ noun the removal of a growth such as a wart by burning with an electric needle. Also called electodesiccation

full thickness burn /fʊl ˈθɪknəs ˈbruːn/ noun same as deep dermal burn

fulminating /ˈfʊlmɪnəntɪŋ/ fulminating /ˈTʊlmɪnəntɪŋ/ adjective referring to a dangerous disease which develops very rapidly

fumigation /fʊmiˈɡeɪʃən/ noun the process of killing insects in an area with gas or smoke

function /fəŋkʃən/ noun the particular work done by an organ. What is the function of the pancreas? The function of an ovary is to form eggs. Verb to work in a particular way. The heart and lungs were functioning normally. His kidneys suddenly stopped functioning.

functional /fʌŋkʃənəl/ adjective referring to a disorder or illness which does not have a physical cause and may have a psychological cause, as opposed to an organic disorder

functional endoscopic sinus surgery /ˌfʌŋkʃənəl ˈendəskɪnpukˈsainəs ˌsədʒnəs/ noun the removal of soft tissue in the sinuses using an endoscope. Abbreviation EESS

functional enuresis /ˈfʌŋkʃənəl ˈɛnjuərɪs/ noun bedwetting which has a psychological cause

functional independence measure /ˌfʌŋkʃənəl ɪndɪˈpendəns meɪs/ noun a measure of disability. Abbreviation FIM

fundoplication /ˈfʌndəplɪˈkeɪʃən/ noun the process of wrapping the fundus of the stomach round the lower end of the oesophagus

fundus /ˈfʌndəs/ noun the bottom of a hollow organ such as the uterus

fungal /ˈfʌŋɡəl/ adjective relating to, or caused by, fungi. A fungal skin infection

fungate /ˈfʌŋɡeɪt/ verb (of some skin cancers) to increase rapidly at a late stage of tumour formation

fungicide /ˈfʌŋɡsaɪd/ noun a substance used to kill fungi

fungiform papillae /ˈfʌŋɡɪfɔːrm ˈpæpɪli/ noun rounded papillae on the tip and sides of the tongue, which have taste buds

fungoid /ˈfʌŋɡwɪd/ adjective like a fungus

fungus /ˈfʌŋɡəs/ noun an organism such as yeast or mould, some of which cause disease (Note: The plural is fungi. For other terms referring to fungi, see words beginning with myco-)

fungiculitis /ˌfʌŋɡɪkjuˈlɪtɪs/ noun inflammation of the spermatic cord

funiculus /ˈfjunɪkələs/ noun one of the three parts of the white matter in the spinal cord. The three parts are called the lateral, anterior and posterior funiculus.

funis /ˈfjuːnɪs/ noun an umbilical cord

funnel chest /ˈfʌnɔl ˈchest/ noun same as pectus excavatum

furry bone /ˈfɜːri ˈbəʊn/ noun same as olecranon (informal)

furfuraceous /ˈfɜːfərəs/ adjective referring to skin which is scaly

furor /ˈfjʊərər/ noun an attack of wild violence, especially in someone who is mentally unwell

furosemide /ˌfjuːroʊˈsɛmɪd/ noun a drug which causes an increase in urine production, used to relieve water retention in the body. Also called frusemide

furred tongue /ˈfɜːrd ˈtʌŋ/ noun a condition when the papillae of the tongue are covered with a whitish coating. Also called coated tongue

furunculous /ˈfjʊrʌŋkələs/ adjective referring to boils which are shaped like a spindle, with a wider middle section which becomes narrower at each end

furunculosis /ˈfjʊrʌŋkələsɪs/ noun a condition in which several boils appear at the same time

fusaric acid /ˈfjuːsərɪk əˈsɪd/ noun an antibiotic used to prevent protein synthesis

fusiform /ˈfjuːzɪfɔːrm/ adjective referring to muscles which are shaped like a spindle, with a wider middle section which becomes narrower at each end

fusiform /ˈfjuːzɪfɔːrm/ adjective referring to, or caused by, fungi. A fungal skin infection

furunculosis /ˈfjʊrʌŋkələsɪs/ noun the act of joining, especially a surgical operation to relieve pain in the joint by joining the bones at the joint permanently so that they cannot move

Fybogel /ˈfaɪbədʒəl/ a trade name for ispaghula
G

**g** abbreviation gram

**GABA** /'ɡæbə/ abbreviation gamma aminobutyric acid

**gag** /ɡæɡ/ noun an instrument placed between the teeth to stop the mouth from closing [verb to experience a reaction similar to that of vomiting]

O Every time the doctor tries to examine her throat, she gaggs. O He started gagging on the endotracheal tube.

**gait** /ɡeɪt/ noun a way of walking

**galactocele** /ɡəˈlæktəsəl/ noun a breast tumour which contains milk

**galactorrhoea** /ɡəˈlæktərhesiə/ noun the excessive production of milk

**galactosaeemia** /ɡəˌlæktəsɔˈsiːmiə/ noun a congenital condition where the liver is incapable of converting galactose into glucose, with the result that a baby’s development may be affected [NOTE: The treatment is to remove galactose from the diet.]

**galactose** /ɡəˈlæktəs/ noun a sugar which forms part of milk, and is converted into glucose by the liver

**galea** /ɡeɪlɪə/ noun any part of the body shaped like a helmet, especially the loose band of tissue in the scalp [NOTE: The plural is galeae.]

**gall** /ɡɔːl/ noun same as bile

**gall bladder** /ɡɔːlˈblædər/ noun a sac situated underneath the liver, in which bile produced by the liver is stored. See illustration at DIGESTIVE SYSTEM in Supplement

**Gallie’s operation** /ˈɡælɪz əpərəʃən/ noun a surgical operation where tissues from the thigh are used to hold a hernia in place [Described 1921. After William Edward Gallie (1882–1959), Professor of Surgery at the University of Toronto, Canada.]

**gallipot** /ˈɡælipɔt/ noun a little container for ointment

**gallium** /ˈɡæliəm/ noun a metallic element a radionuclide of which is used to detect tumours or other tissue disorders [NOTE: The chemical symbol is Ga.]

**gallop rhythm** /ˈɡæləp _ˈrɪðm/ noun the rhythm of heart sounds, three to each cycle, when someone is experiencing tachycardia

**gallstone** /ˈɡælstən/ noun a small stone formed from insoluble deposits from bile in the gall bladder. O calculus

**galvanism** /ˈɡæləvnɪzɪm/ noun a treatment using low voltage electricity

**galvanocautery** /ˈɡæləvnəʊˌkætəri/ noun the removal of diseased tissue using an electrically heated needle or loop of wire. Also called electrocautery

**gamete** /ɡæmɪt/ noun a sex cell, either a spermatozoon or an ovum

**gamete intrafallopian transfer** /ɡæmɪt _ɪntɪrəfəˈlɒpɪən _ˈtrɑːnsfər/ noun a technique to combine eggs and sperm outside the body and then insert them into the Fallopian tubes. Abbreviation **GIFT**

**gametogenesis** /ˈɡæmɪtəˌdʒenəsɪs/ noun the process by which a gamete is formed

**gammal** /ˈɡæml/ noun a surgical dressing, formed of a layer of cotton wool between two pieces of gauze

**gamma aminobutyric acid** /ˈɡæmə _əˌmɪnəˌbaɪtɪrɪk _ˈæsɪd/ noun an amino acid neurotransmitter. Abbreviation GABA

**gamma camera** /ˈɡæmə kəˈmərə/ noun a camera for taking photographs of parts of the body into which radioactive isotopes have been introduced

**gamma globulin** /ˈɡæmə _ˈɡləbjʊlɪn/ noun a protein found in plasma, forming antibodies as protection against infection

**gamma ray** /ˈɡæmə rɛ/ noun a ray which is shorter than an X-ray and is given off by radioactive substances

**gangl**- /ˈɡæŋgl-/ prefix referring to ganglia

**ganglion** /ˈɡæŋɡliən/ noun 1. a mass of nerve cell bodies and synapses usually covered in connective tissue, found along the peripheral nerves with the exception of the basal ganglia 2. a cyst of a tendon sheath or joint capsule, usually at the wrist, which results in a painless swelling con-
ganglionectomy 114

The surgical removal of a ganglion

gangrene /ˈgæŋɡriːn/ noun a condition in which tissues die and decay, as a result of bacterial action, because the blood supply has been lost through injury or disease of the artery. After she had frostbite, gangrene set in and her toes had to be amputated.

gangrenous /ˈgæŋɡrənəs/ adjective referring to, or affected by, gangrene

gargle /ˈgɑːrl/ verb to put some antiseptic liquid solution into the back of the mouth and then breathe out air through it

gargoyleism /ˈɡɑːɡɔɪlɪzəm/ noun a congenital condition of the metabolism which causes polyaccharides and fat cells to accumulate in the body, resulting in mental impairment, swollen liver and coarse features. Also called Hurler’s syndrome

gas /ɡæs/ noun 1. a substance such as nitrogen, carbon dioxide or air, which is neither solid nor fluid at ordinary temperatures and can expand infinitely (NOTE: The plural gases is used only when referring to different types of gas.) 2. gas which accumulates in the stomach or alimentary canal and causes pain

gas and air analgesia /ˈɡæs ənd ˈeə ərəniəl /noun a form of analgesia used when giving birth, in which a mixture of air and gas is given

gas exchange /ˈɡæs ɪksˌfɛnˈdʒɛs/ noun the process by which oxygen in the air is exchanged in the lungs for waste carbon dioxide carried by the blood

gas gangrene /ˈɡæs ˈɡæŋɡriːn/ noun a complication of severe wounds in which the bacterium Clostridium welchii breeds in the wound and then spreads to healthy tissue which is rapidly decomposed with the formation of gas

gash /ɡæʃ/ noun a long deep cut made accidentally by something sharp. She had to have three stitches in the gash in her thigh.

gasp /ɡæsp/ noun a short breath taken with difficulty. His breath came in short gasps. She was gasping for breath.

gas pain /ˈɡæs peɪn/ noun a pain caused by excessive formation of gas in the stomach or intestine.

gastr- /ˈɡæstr-/ prefix same as gastro- (used before vowels)

gastrectomy /ˈɡæstrəktəmɪ/ noun the surgical removal of the stomach

gastric /ˈɡæstrɪk/ adjective referring to the stomach

gastric acid /ˈɡæstrɪk ˈæsɪd/ noun hydrochloric acid secreted into the stomach by acid-forming cells

gastric flu /ˈɡæstrɪk ˈflʊ/ noun any mild stomach disorder (informal)

gastric juice /ˈɡæstrɪk ˈdʒuːɪs/ noun the mixture of hydrochloric acid, pepsin, intrinsic factor and mucus secreted by the cells of the lining membrane of the stomach to help the digestion of food. (NOTE: Often used in the plural.)

gastric laveage /ˈɡæstrɪk ˈlɛvɪdʒ/ noun a lavage of the stomach, usually to remove a poisonous substance which has been absorbed. Also called stomach washout

gastric pit /ˈɡæstrɪk ˈpɪt/ noun a deep hollow in the mucous membrane forming the walls of the stomach

gastric ulcer /ˈɡæstrɪk ˈʌlsər/ noun an ulcer in the stomach. Abbreviation GU

gastrin /ˈɡæstrɪn/ noun a hormone which is released into the bloodstream from cells in the lower end of the stomach, stimulated by the presence of protein, and which in turn stimulates the flow of acid from the upper part of the stomach

gastrinoma /ˈɡæstrɪnəʊmə/ noun a tumour of the islet cells, leading to excessive gastric acid

gastritis /ˈɡæstrətrətɪs/ noun inflammation of the stomach

gastro- /ˈɡæstrəʊ/ prefix referring to the stomach

gastrocele /ˈɡæstrəʊsəli/ noun a condition in which part of the stomach wall becomes weak and bulges out. Also called stomach hernia

gastrocinemius /ˈɡæstrəkɪnəmɪəs/ noun a large calf muscle

gastrocolic /ˈɡæstrəʊkəlɪk/ adjective referring to the stomach and colon

gastrocolic reflex /ˈɡæstrəʊkəlɪk rɪˈfleks/ noun a reflex resulting in the stomach and colon

gastrocolic sond /ˈɡæstrəʊkəlɪk sɒnd/ noun an examination of the stomach and duodenum

gastroduodenal /ˈɡæstrəʊdjuːənəl/ adjective referring to the stomach and duodenum

gastroduodenoscopy /ˈɡæstrəʊdjuːənəskəpi/ noun an examination of the stomach and duodenum

gastroduodenostomy /ˈɡæstrəʊdjuːədənəstəmi/ noun a surgical operation to join the duodenum to the stomach so as to bypass a blockage in the pylorus

gastroenteritis /ˈɡæstrəʊˌɛntəˈrɪtɪs/ noun inflammation of the membrane lining the intestines and the stomach, caused by a viral infection and resulting in diarrhoea and vomiting

gastroenterology /ˈɡæstrəʊˌɛntəˈrələdʒɪ/ noun the study of the digestive system and its disorders
gastroenterostomy (ˈɡæstrəˌnɜːtərəˌstɑːmə) noun a surgical operation to join the small intestine directly to the stomach so as to bypass a peptic ulcer

gastroepiploic (ˌɡæstrəˌɛpɪˈplɔɪk) adjective referring to the stomach and greater omentum

gastroepiploic artery (ˌɡæstrəˌɛpɪˈplɔɪk ˈɑrtnə) noun an artery linking the gastroduodenal artery to the splenic artery

Gastrografin (ˈɡæstrəˌɡrɑːfɪn) a trade name for a gelatinous contrast medium for use in X-rays

GDC abbreviation General Dental Council

Gehrig's disease (ˈɡeərɪdʒz ˈdɪzɪz) noun same as amyotrophic lateral sclerosis

Geiger counter (ˈɡiːjər ˈkuːntə) noun an instrument for the detection and measurement of radiation [Described 1908. After Hans Geiger (1882–1945), German physicist who worked with Rutherford at Manchester University, in 1912]

gel (ˈdʒel) noun a suspension that sets into a jelly-like solid

gelatin (ˈdʒeɪlətən) noun a protein found in collagen which is soluble in water, used to make capsules for medicines

gelatinous (ˈdʒeɪlətənəs) adjective referring to gelatin or something with a texture like jelly

gemellus inferior (ˈɡɛmləs ˈɪnərɪər) noun either of the two muscles arising from the ischium. Also called gemellus superior muscle, gemellus inferior muscle

gender (ˈdʒendər) noun the fact of being of the male or female sex

gender reassignment surgery (ˈdʒendər ˈriːəznəsən ˈsɜːrəʤəni) noun surgery to change someone's sex

gender reorientation (ˈdʒendər ˈriːənɔrɪətʃən) noun the alteration of a person's sex through surgical and drug treatment

gene (ˈdʒiːn) noun a unit of DNA on a chromosome which governs the synthesis of a protein sequence and determines a particular characteristic

general amnesia (ˈdʒɛnerəl əˈmənɪziə) noun a sudden and complete loss of memory, to the extent that a person does not even remember who he or she is

general anaesthesia (ˈdʒɛnerəl əˈneəsθiəsɪə) noun a substance given to make someone lose consciousness so that a major surgical operation can be carried out

General Dental Council (ˈdʒɛnerəl ˈdalɪntʃəl) noun the official body that registers and supervises dentists. Abbreviation GDC

general hospital (ˈdʒɛnerəl ˌhɒspɪtoʊ(ɔ)l) noun a hospital which does not specialise in particular types of illness or particular age groups
General Household Survey

General Household Survey /ˈdʒenəʊhʊsəl/ noun a survey of households carried out continuously by the Office for National Statistics.

generalised /ˈdʒenəralaɪzd/, generalized adjective 1. spreading throughout the body.

generalised anxiety disorder /ˈdʒenəralaɪzd æŋˈzɜːraɪtɪ dɪs,ɹəd/ noun a state of continual anxiety for which there is no specific cause.

General Medical Council /ˈdʒenərmedɪk/ noun the official body that licenses qualified doctors to practise medicine. Abbreviation GMC.

General Optical Council /ˈdʒenəroptɪk/ noun the official body that registers and supervises opticians.

general practice /ˈdʒenərəl ˈpræktɪs/ noun a medical practice where doctors offer first-line medical care for all types of illness to people who live locally, refer them to hospital if necessary and encourage health promotion.

general practitioner /ˈdʒenərəl prəkˈtɪsər/ noun a doctor who provides first-line medical care for all types of illness to people who live locally, refers them to hospital if necessary and encourages health promotion. Abbreviation GP.

gene replacement therapy /ˈdʒɛnɪ nɛtɪk riˈpleɪmənt ˈθerəpi/ noun the replacement of missing genes or damaging gene variations in cells by the insertion of appropriate genes to treat a genetic disorder. Also called gene therapy.

COMMENT: Gene replacement therapy has been used successfully in animals, and is in the early stages of research in humans, but may be useful in the future treatment of cystic fibrosis, thalassaemia and other genetic disorders.

generic /ˈdʒɛnərik/ adjective 1. referring to medicine which does not have a special trademark or brand name given to it by its manufacturer.

-genesis /ˈdʒɛnəsɪs/ suffix production or origin.

gene therapy /ˈdʒɛnɪ ˈθerəpi/ noun same as gene replacement therapy.

genetic /ˈdʒɛnɪtɪk/ adjective referring to genes.

genetic code /ˈdʒɛnɪtɪk ˈkɔd/ noun the characteristics of the DNA of a cell which are passed on when the cell divides and so are inherited by a child from its parents.

genetic counselling /ˈdʒɛnɪtɪk ˈkɑːnsəlɪŋ/ noun advice and support given to people if they or their children might be affected by inherited genetic disorders.

genetic disorder /ˈdʒɛnɪ dɪsˈɔːdər/ noun a disorder or disease caused by a damaging gene variation that may be inherited.

genetic engineering /ˈdʒɛnɪtɪk ˈɛndɪɡɪn/ noun same as genetic modification (informal).

genetic fingerprint /ˈdʒɛnɪtɪk ˈfɪŋgpərpt/ noun the pattern of sequences of genetic material unique to an individual. Also called DNA fingerprint.

genetic fingerprinting /ˈdʒɛnɪ tɪk ˈfɪŋgpərptɪŋ/ noun a method of revealing an individual’s genetic profile, used in paternity queries and criminal investigations. Also called DNA fingerprinting.

geneticist /ˈdʒɛnɪtɪsɪst/ noun a person who specialises in the study of the way in which characteristics and diseases are inherited through the genes.

genetic modification /ˈdʒɛnɪtɪk ˈmɒdɪfɪkeɪʃən/ noun a method used to trace throughout a family the inheritance of a gene such as those causing cystic fibrosis or Huntington’s Chorea, in order to diagnose and predict genetic disorders.

-genic /ˈdʒɛnɪk/ suffix referring to a product or something which produces.

genicular /ˈdʒɛnikəla/ adjective referring to the knee.

genital /ˈdʒentɪkl/ adjective referring to the reproductive organs. plural genititals same as genital organs.

genitalia /ˈdʒentɪliə/ noun the genital organs.

genital organs /ˈdʒentɪkl ˈɔrganz/ noun the external organs for reproduction, i.e. the penis and testicles in males and the vulva in females. Also called genitils, genitalia.

genital wart /ˈdʒentɪkl ˈwɔːt/ noun a wart in the genital or anal area, caused by a sexually transmitted virus.

genito- /ˈdʒentɪtəʊ/ prefix referring to the reproductive system.

genitourinary /ˈdʒentɪtəʊˌ jʊərəˈnəri/ adjective referring to both the reproductive and urinary systems. Abbreviation GU.

genitourinary system /ˈdʒentɪtəʊˌ jʊərəˈnəri ˈsɪstəm/ noun the organs of reproduction and urination, including the kidneys.
genotype /dʒəʊˈtɪp/ noun the genetic makeup of an individual. Compare phenotype

gentamicin /dʒɛntəˈmæsɪn/ noun an antibiotic that is effective against a variety of different disease-causing organisms. Patients usually receive it by injection and it can cause serious side effects.

gentian violet /dʒɛntʃiənˈvɪətl/ noun an antiseptic blue dye, used to paint on skin infections and also to stain specimens. Also called crystal violet

genial /dʒɛnɪəl/ adjective referring to the knee

genucubital position /dʒɛnjuˈkjuːbɪtəl/ position noun the position of someone resting on their knees and elbows

genupectoral position /dʒɛnjuˈpektərl/ position noun the position of someone resting on their knees and upper chest

genus /ˈdʒeɪnəs/ noun a category of related living organisms. A genus is divided into different species. (Note: The plural is genera.)

genu valgum /dʒɛnjuˈvælɡəm/ noun same as knock-knee

genu varum /dʒɛnjuˈværəm/ noun same as bow legs

geri- /dʒɛri/ prefix referring to old age

geriatric /dʒɛrɪˈtrɪk/ adjective 1. referring to old people 2. specialising in the treatment or study of diseases of old people

geriatrician /dʒɛrɪˈtrɪʃən/ noun a doctor who specialises in the treatment or study of diseases of old people

geriatrics /dʒɛrɪˈtrɪktɪks/ noun the study of the diseases and disorders of old people. Compare paediatrics

germ /dʒɜːm/ noun 1. a microorganism which causes a disease, e.g. a virus or bacterium (informal) □ Germs are not visible to the naked eye. 2. a part of an organism capable of developing into a new organism

German measles /dʒɜːrnəmˈzɛls/ noun the study of the diseases and disorders of old people. Compare rubella

germ cell /dʒɜːm sɛl/ noun a cell which is capable of developing into a spermatocoon or ovum. Also called gonocyte

germal epithelium /dʒɜːrməl ˈɛpɪθlɪəm/ noun the outer layer of the ovary

germ layer /dʒɜːrm ləˈlɛr/ noun one of two or three layers of cells in animal embryos which form the organs of the body

gerontologist /dʒɜːrəntəˈlɑːdʒɪst/ noun a specialist in gerontology

gerontology /dʒɜːrəntəˈnɑːlədʒi/ noun the study of the process of ageing and the diseases of old people

Gesell’s developmental chart /ɡɛsəlz ˈdɛvələpmənt(ə)l ˈʃɑːrt/ noun a chart showing the development of motor reactions and growth patterns in children

gestation /dʒɛsˈteɪʃən/ period noun 1. the process of development of a baby from conception to birth in the mother’s womb 2. same as gestation period

gestational age /dʒɛsˈteɪʃən(ə)l ˈeɪdʒ/ noun the age of a fetus, calculated from the mother’s last period to the date of birth

gestational diabetes /dʒɛsˈteɪʃən(ə)l ˈdaɪəbetɪs/ noun a form of diabetes mellitus which develops in a pregnant woman

gestation period /dʒɛsˈteɪʃən ˈpiəriəd/ noun the period, usually of 266 days, from conception to birth, during which the baby develops in the mother’s womb. Also called pregnancy

gestodene /dʒɛstəˈdɛni/ noun an oral contraceptive

get better /dʒɛt ˈbɛtər/ verb 1. to become healthy again after being ill □ He was seriously ill, but seems to be getting better. 2. (of an illness) to stop or become less severe □ Her cold has got better.

getting on /dʒɛtɪŋ ən/ adjective becoming elderly □ Her parents are getting on.

GFR abbreviation glomerular filtration rate

GH abbreviation growth hormone

Ghon’s focus /ɡəʊnz ˈfaʊkəs/ noun a spot on the lung produced by the tuberculosis bacillus [Described 1912. After Anton Ghon (1866–1936), Professor of Pathological Anatomy at Prague, Czech Republic.]

GI abbreviation gastrointestinal

Giardia /dʒɜːrɪdɪə/ noun a microscopic protozoan parasite which causes giardiasis

giardiasis /dʒɜːrɪˈdæsɪs/ noun a disorder of the intestine caused by the parasite Giardia lamblia, usually with no symptoms, but in heavy infections the absorption of fat may be affected, causing diarrhea. Also called lamblia
giddiness /ˈɡɪdɪns/ noun a condition in which someone has difficulty in standing up and keeping their balance because of a feeling that everything is turning around □ He began to experience attacks of giddiness.

GIFT /ɡɪft/ noun a procedure in which a surgeon removes eggs from a woman’s ovary, mixes them with sperm and places them in one of her Fallopian tubes to help her conceive a child. Full form gamete intrafallopian transfer

gigantism /dʒɪˈɡæntɪzəm/ noun a condition in which someone grows very tall, caused by excessive production of growth hormone by the pituitary gland
Gilbert’s syndrome /gilbəts ˈsɪndrəm/ noun an inherited disorder where the liver does not deal with bilirubin correctly

Gilliam’s operation /ˈɡɪliəmz ˈɒpərəʃən/ noun a surgical operation to correct retroversion of the uterus [After David Tod Gilliam (1844–1923), physician, Columbus, Ohio, USA.]

gingiv- /ˈdʒɪŋvə/- prefix referring to the gums
gingiva /ˈdʒɪŋvəs/ noun same as gum (NOTE: The plural is gingivae.)
gingivectomy /ˈdʒɪŋvətəməti/ noun the surgical removal of excess gum tissue
gingivitis /ˈdʒɪŋvɪtɪs/ noun inflammation of the gums as a result of bacterial infection
ginglymus /ˈdʒɪŋglɪməs/ noun a joint which allows movement in two directions only, e.g. the knee or elbow. Also called hinge joint. Compare ball and socket joint
ginseng /ˈdʒɪŋsəŋ/ noun a plant root widely used as a tonic and a traditional Chinese herbal remedy
girdle /ˈgɜrdəl/ noun a set of bones making a ring or arch
Girdlestone’s operation /ˈɡɜrdəlstəʊn/ noun a surgical operation to relieve osteoarthritis of the hip [After Gathorne Robert Girdlestone (1881–1950), Nuffield Professor of Orthopaedics at Oxford, UK]
glabella /ˈɡlæbələ/ noun a flat area of bone in the forehead between the eyebrows
glabioidus /ˈɡlæbiədəs/ noun the middle section of the sternum
gland /ɡlænd/ noun an organ in the body containing cells that secrete substances such as hormones, sweat or saliva which act elsewhere
glanders /ˈɡlændəz/ noun a bacterial disease of horses, which can be caught by humans, with symptoms of high fever and inflammation of the lymph nodes
glandular /ˈɡlændjuələr/ adjective referring to glands
glandular fever /ˈɡlændjuələr ˈfɜːvər/ noun same as infectious mononucleosis
glans /ˈɡlæns/ noun a rounded part at the end of the penis or clitoris. See illustration at UNOGENITAL SYSTEM (MALE) in Supplement

Glasgow coma scale /ˌɡleɪsəˈkoʊmə ˈskæl/, Glasgow scoring system /ˌɡleɪsəˈkoʊmə ˈsɛrɪŋгруппują noun a seven-point scale for evaluating someone’s level of consciousness
glasst /ˈɡlaːst/ noun an artificial eye made of glass
glaucoma /ˈɡloʊkəmə/ noun a condition of the eyes, caused by unusually high pressure of fluid inside the eyeball, resulting in disturbances of vision and blindness
gleet /ˈɡliːt/ noun a thin discharge from the vagina, penis, a wound or an ulcer
glenohumeral joint /ˈɡlɛnoʊhjuːmərəl ˈdʒɒnt/ noun the shoulder joint
glenoid /ˈɡlɛnɔɪd/ adjective shaped like a small shallow cup or socket
glenoid cavity /ˈɡlɛnɔɪd ˈkeɪvətɪ/ noun the head of the humerus fits
glia /ˈɡliːə/ noun connective tissue of the central nervous system, surrounding cell bodies, axons and dendrites. Also called neuroglia
glial cell /ˈɡliːəl ˈsɛl/ noun a cell in the glia
glial tissue /ˈɡliːəl ˈtʃɪʃ/ noun same as glia
glibenclamide /ˈɡlɪbənkləməd/ noun a sulphonylurea drug used to treat Type II diabetes mellitus
gliclazide /ˈɡlɪkləzəd/ noun an antidiabetic drug used to treat Type II diabetes mellitus
glio- /ˈɡlɪəʊ-/ prefix referring to the glial cell
glioma /ˈɡlɪəʊmə/ noun any tumour of the glial tissue in the brain or spinal cord
gliomyoma /ˈɡlɪəʊməˌməʊmə/ noun a tumour of both the nerve and muscle tissue
glipizide /ˈɡlɪpəzəd/ noun a drug used to reduce the glucose level in the blood
Glisson’s capsule /ˈɡlɪsənz ˈkæpsjʊl/ noun a tissue sheath in the liver containing the blood vessels [After Francis Glisson (1597–1677), philosopher, physician and anatomist at Cambridge and London, UK]
globin /ˈɡlobɪn/ noun a protein which combines with other substances to form compounds such as haemoglobin and myoglobin
globule /ˈɡlobəl/ noun a round drop, especially of fat
globulin /ˈɡlobjuːlɪn/ noun a protein, present in blood, belonging to a group that includes antibodies
globus /ˈɡloʊbəs/ noun any ball-shaped part of the body
globus hystericus /ˈɡloʊbəs hɪˈstɜːrɪkəs/ noun a feeling of not being able to swallow, caused by worry or embarrassment
glomerular /ˈɡləmərəl/ adjective referring to a glomerulus
glomerular capsule /ˈɡlɒmərəl kəps/ noun same as Bowman’s capsule
glomerular filtration rate /ˈɡlɒmərəl fləˈtʃərəʃən rət/ noun the rate at which the kidneys filter blood and remove waste matter
glomerular tuft /ˈɡlɒmərəl tʌft/ noun a group of blood vessels in the kidney which filter the blood
glomerulitis plural of glomerulitis
glomerulonephritis /ˈɡlɒmərələnəˈfərɪtɪs/ noun inflammation causing lesions of glomeruli in the kidney
glomeruler /ˈɡlɒmərələ/ adjective relating to the tongue
glossal /ˈɡlɔsəl/ adjective relating to the tongue
glossectomy /ˈɡlɔsəktəmi/ noun the surgical removal of the tongue
glossitis /ˈɡlɔsɪtɪs/ noun inflammation of the surface of the tongue
glossoscopy /ˈɡlɔsəskəpi/ noun a surgical incision into the tongue
GLOSSOTOMY /ˈɡlɔsətəmɪ/ noun a surgical incision into the tongue
glottis /ˈɡlɔtɪs/ noun an opening in the larynx between the vocal cords, which forms the entrance to the main airway from the pharynx
glucose /ˈɡlʌksəʊ/ noun a simple sugar found in some fruit, but also broken down from white sugar or carbohydrate and absorbed into the body or secreted by the kidneys. Also called DEXTROSE
glucose tolerance test /ˈɡlʌksəʊ təˈlɔrəns tɛst/ noun a test for diabetes mellitus, in which someone eats glucose and his or her urine and blood are tested at regular intervals. Abbreviation GTT
glue ear /ˈɡluː ɪər/ noun a condition in which fluid forms behind the eardrum and causes deafness. Also called secretion otitis media
glue-sniffing /ˈɡluː ˈsnɪftɪŋ/ noun solvent abuse
glutamic oxaloacetic transaminase /ɡluːˈtæmɪk ˈɒksələˌeɪktɪs trənsəˈmeɪnəs/ noun an enzyme used to test for viral hepatitis
glutamic pyruvic transaminase /ɡluːˈtæmɪk ˈpjuːrvɪk trənsəˈmeɪnəs/ noun an enzyme produced in the liver and released into the blood if the liver is damaged
gluteal /ˈɡljuːtəl/ adjective referring to the buttocks
gluteal artery /ˈɡljuːtəl ˈætərɪ/ noun one of the two arteries supplying the buttocks, the inferior gluteal artery or the superior gluteal artery
gluteal muscle /ˈɡljuːtəl ˈmʌskəl/ noun a muscle in the buttock. ◀gluteus
gluteal vein /ˈɡljuːtəl ˈvɛn/ noun one of two veins draining the buttocks, the inferior gluteal vein and the superior gluteal vein
GLUTEN /ˈɡlutən/ noun a protein found in some cereals, which makes the grains form a sticky paste when water is added
Gluten enteropathy /ˈɡljuːtən ˌentərəˈpræθi/ same as gluten-induced enteropathy
Gluten-induced enteropathy /ˈɡljuːtən ɪnˌdjuːst ˌentərəˈpræθi/ noun 1, an allergic disease mainly affecting children, in which the lining of the intestine is sensitive to gluten, preventing the small intestine from digesting fat 2, a condition in adults where the villi in the intestine become smaller and so reduce the surface which can absorb nutrients (NOTE: Symptoms include a swollen abdomen, pale diarrhoea, abdominal pains and anaemia.) ◀also called coeliac disease
Glutens /ˈɡlutəns/ noun one of three muscles in the buttocks, responsible for movements of the hip. The largest is the Gluteus maximus, while the Gluteus medius and Gluteus minimus is smaller.
GLYCE- /ˈɡlæsk/ prefix same as glyco- (used before vowels)
glycaemia /ˈɡlaiərəˈsɪmiə/ noun the level of glucose found in the blood. ◀Hypoglycaemia, hyperglycaemia
glycerin /'glaɪsərɪn/ noun a colourless viscous sweet-tasting liquid present in all fats [NOTE: Synthetic glycerin is used in various medicinal preparations and also as a lubricant in items such as toothpaste and cough medicines.)
glyco- /'glaɪkəʊ/-prefix referring to sugar
glycogen /'glaɪkəʊdʒən/ noun a type of starch, converted from glucose by the action of insulin, and stored in the liver as a source of energy
glycogenesis /'glaɪkəʊsɪdʒɪsɪs/ noun the process by which glucose is converted into glycogen in the liver
glycogenolysis /'glaɪkəʊdʒɪnɒlɪsɪs/ noun the process by which glycogen is broken down to form glucose
glycoside /'glaɪkəʊsɪd/ noun a chemical compound of a type which is formed from a simple sugar and another compound [NOTE: Many of the drugs produced from plants are glycosides.)
glycosuria /'glaɪkəʊsjuərɪə/ noun a high level of sugar in the urine, a symptom of diabetes mellitus

GMC abbreviation General Medical Council
gnathic /'næθtɪk/-adjective referring to the jaw
gnathoplasty /'næθəʊplæstɪ/ noun surgery on the jaw
gnawing /'nɔːɪŋ/-adjective referring to a physical or emotional feeling that is persistent and uncomfortable ○ a gnawing pain ○ gnawing anxiety
goeblet cell /'ɡəʊblɛt ˈsɛl/ noun a tube-shaped cell in the epithelium which secretes mucus

GOC abbreviation General Optical Council
goître /'ɡəʊɪtə/ noun an excessive enlargement of the thyroid gland, seen as a swelling round the neck, caused by a lack of iodine [NOTE: The US spelling is goiter.]
gold /ɡɔʊld/ noun a soft yellow-coloured precious metal, used as a compound in various drugs, and sometimes as a filling for teeth [NOTE: The chemical symbol is Au.]
golden hour /ˈɡɔldən ˈhɔːr/ noun the first hour after a serious injury when the most difference can be made to the patient's health
golfer's elbow /ˈɡɔlfɜːrˈ ˈeləʊ/ noun inflammation of the tendons of the elbow

Golgi apparatus /'ɡɔldʒi ˈæpəˌrɪtəs/ noun a folded membranous structure inside the cell cytoplasm which stores and transports enzymes and hormones [Described 1898. After Camillo Golgi (1843–1926), Professor of Histology and later Rector of the University of Pavia, Italy. In 1906 he shared the Nobel Prize with Santiago Ramón y Cajal for work on the nervous system.]
golgi cell /ˈɡɔldʒi ˈsɛl/ noun a type of nerve cell in the central nervous system, either with long axons (Golgi Type 1) or without axons (Golgi Type 2)
gompohisis /'ɡɒməpɒhiˈsɪs/ noun a joint which cannot move, like that between a tooth and the jaw
gonad /ɡəʊnəd/ noun a sex gland which produces gametes and also sex hormones, e.g. a testicle in males or an ovary in females
gonadotropic hormone /ˌɡəʊnədəˈtrɔtɪk ˈhɔrmən/ noun one of two hormones, the follicle-stimulating hormone and the luteinising hormone, produced by the anterior pituitary gland which have an effect on the ovaries in females and on the testes in males
gonadotrophin /ˌɡəʊnədəˈtrɔfɪn/ noun any of a group of hormones produced by the pituitary gland which stimulates the sex glands at puberty; human chorionic gonadotrophin
go-ni- /ˈɡəʊnənɪ-/ prefix same as goni- (used before a vowel)
go-nion /ˈɡəʊnənɪən/ noun the outer point at which the lower jawbone angles upwards
go-nopuncture /ˌɡəʊnəˈnɒpəntʃər/ noun a surgical operation for draining fluid from the eyes of someone who has glaucoma
go-ni-tomy /ˌɡəʊnəˈnəʊtəmɪ/ noun a surgical operation to treat glaucoma by cutting Schlemm's canal
go-nococal /ˌɡəʊnəˈnəʊkəl/ adjective referring to gonococcus
go-nococcus /ˌɡəʊnəˈnəʊkəs/ noun a type of bacterium, Neisseria gonorrhoea, which causes gonorrhoea [NOTE: The plural is gonococci.]
go-nocyte /ˌɡəʊnəsəʊtɪ/ noun same as germ cell
go-norrhoea /ˌɡəʊnəˈrɒriə/ noun a sexually transmitted disease which produces painful irritation of the mucous membrane and a watery discharge from the vagina or penis
goose bumps /ˈɡuːz ˈbʌmps/, goose flesh /ˈɡuːs flɛʃ/, goose pimples /ˈɡuːs ˈpɪmp(ə)lz/ noun a reaction of the skin when someone is cold or frightened, the skin being raised into many little bumps by the action of the arrector pili muscles. Also called cutis anserina
go-get /ˈɡɔsɪdʒɪt/ noun a surgical instrument used to remove stones from the bladder
go-out /ˈɡaʊut/ noun a disease in which unusual quantities of uric acid are produced and form crystals in the cartilage round joints. Also called podagra

GP abbreviation general practitioner
great toe

great toe /ˈgreɪ təʊ/ noun same as big toe

greenstick fracture /ˈgrɪnɪstɪk ˈfræktʃə/ noun a type of fracture occurring in children, where a long bone bends, but is not completely broken

grey commissure /ˈgriː ˈkɒmɪsjuər/ noun part of the grey matter nearest to the central canal of the spinal cord, where axons cross over each other

grey matter /ˈgriː ˈmeɪtər/ noun nerve tissue which is of a dark grey colour and forms part of the central nervous system

COMMENT: In the brain, grey matter encloses the white matter, but in the spinal cord, white matter encloses the grey matter.

grief counsellor /ˈɡriːf ˈkɔːnsələr/ noun a person who helps someone to cope with the feelings they have when someone such as a close relative dies

gripe water /ˈɡriːp ˈwɔːtər/ noun a solution of glucose and alcohol, used to relieve abdominal pains in babies

groin /ɡrɔɪn/ noun a junction at each side of the body where the lower abdomen joins the top of the thighs  

He had a dull pain in his groin.  
(NOTE: For other terms referring to the groin, see inguinal.)

grommet /ˈɡrɔmət/ noun a tube which can be passed from the external auditory meatus into the middle ear, usually to allow fluid to drain off, as in someone who has glue ear

ground substance /ˈɡraʊnd ˈsʌbstəns/ noun same as matrix

group /ɡrɔu̯p/ noun several people, animals or things which are all close together  
A group of patients were waiting in the surgery.  
verb to bring things or people together in a group, or come together in a group  
The drugs are grouped under the heading ‘antibiotics’.

group practice /ˈɡrɔu̯p ˈpræktɪs/ noun a medical practice where several doctors or dentists share the same office building and support services

group therapy /ˈɡrɔu̯p ˈθerəpɪ/ noun a type of psychotherapy where a group of people with the same disorder meet together with a therapist to discuss their condition and try to help each other

growing pains /ˈɡrəʊɪŋ ˈpeɪnz/ plural noun pains associated with adolescence, which can be a form of rheumatic fever

growth /ɡrəʊθ/ noun 1. the process of increasing in size  
The growth in the population since 1960  
The disease eats children’s growth.  2. a cyst or tumour  
The doctor found a cancerous growth on the left breast.  
He had an operation to remove a small growth from his chin.

growth factor /ɡrəʊθ ˈfæktaʊ/ noun a chemical, especially a polypeptide, produced in the body which encourages particular cells to grow  
a nerve growth factor

growth hormone /ɡrəʊθ ˈhəʊmən/ noun a hormone secreted by the pituitary gland during sleep, which stimulates growth of the long bones and protein synthesis. Also called somatropin

grumbling appendix /ˈɡrʌmɪnɡ əˈpɛndɪks/ noun a veriform appendix that is always slightly inflamed (informal) or chronic appendicitis

GU abbreviation 1. gastric ulcer 2. genitourinary

guanine /ˈɡwənən/ noun one of the four basic chemicals in DNA

guardian ad litem /ˈɡɜːrdiən əd ˈlɪtəm/ noun a person who acts on behalf of a minor who is a defendant in a court case

guardian Caldicott /ˈɡɜːrdiən ˈkældɪkot/ noun in the UK, a person appointed by a hospital or Health Trust to make sure that information about patients is kept confidential, following the Caldicott Report of 1997

Guillain-Barré syndrome /ˈɡɪlɪn ˈbærɪ ˈsɪndrəʊm/ noun a nervous disorder in which, after a non-specific infection, demyelination of the spinal roots and peripheral nerves takes place, leading to generalised weakness and sometimes respiratory paralysis. Also called Landry’s paralysis [Described 1916. After Georges Guillaum, (1876–1961), Professor of Neurology in Paris, France, Jean Alexandre Barré (1880–1967), Professor of Neurology in Strasbourg, France.]

guillotine /ˈɡɪlʊtɪn/ noun a surgical instrument for cutting out tonsils

guinea worm /ˈɡɪni ˈwɔːm/ noun same as Dracunculus

Gulf War syndrome /ɡʊlf ˈwɔːr ˈsɪndrəʊm/ noun a collection of unexplained symptoms, including fatigue, skin disorders, and muscle pains, affecting some soldiers who fought in the Gulf War in 1991

gullet /ˈɡʌltəl/ noun same as oesophagus

gum /ɡʌm/ noun the soft tissue covering the part of the jaw which surrounds the teeth  
Her gums are red and inflamed.  
A build-up of tartar can lead to gum disease. Also called gingiva (NOTE: For other terms referring to the gums, see words beginning with gingiv-)

gumboil /ˈɡʌmbɔɪl/ noun an abscess on the gum near a tooth

gustation /ˈɡʌstəʃən/ noun the act of tasting

gustatory /ˈɡʌستətɔrɪ/ adjective referring to the sense of taste

gut /ɡʌt/ noun 1. the tubular organ for the digestion and absorption of food. Also called intestine 2. a type of thread, made from the intestines of sheep. It is used to sew up internal incisions and
dissolves slowly so does not need to be removed.

catgut

Guthrie test /ˈɡʌθri ɪst/ noun a test used on babies to detect the presence of phenylketonuria [After R. Guthrie (1916–95), US paediatrician.]

gutta /ˈɡʌtə/ noun a drop of liquid, as used in treatment of the eyes (NOTE: The plural is guttae.)

gutter splint /ˈɡʌtə splint/ noun a shaped container in which a broken limb can rest without being completely surrounded

GVHD abbreviation graft versus host disease

gyn- /ˈɡæn-/ prefix same as gynaecological (informal) • a gyne appointment

gypsum /ˈʒɪpsm/ noun calcium sulphate, used as plaster of Paris

gyrus /ˈdʒɜːrəs/ noun a raised part of the cerebral cortex between the sulci
H2-receptor antagonist /ˌestɪ tjuː rɪˈsepotrən/ noun a drug that inhibits the production of stomach acid and so relieves indigestion and gastric ulcers.

habit /ˈhæbɪt/ noun 1. an action which is an automatic response to a stimulus 2. a regular way of doing something 3. He got into the habit of swimming every day before breakfast. 4. She’s got out of the habit of taking any exercise.

habit-forming drug /ˈhæbɪt fɔrmiŋ dɹəɡ/ noun a drug which is addictive

habitual abortion /ˈhæbɪtjuːl əˈbɔːʃn/ noun a condition in which a woman has abortions with successive pregnancies

habituation /ˈhæbɪtjuːəʃən/ noun the fact of being psychologically but not physically addicted to or dependent on a drug, alcohol or other substance

habitus /ˈhæbɪtəs/ noun the general physical appearance of a person, including build and posture

haem /hæm/ noun a molecule containing iron which binds proteins to form haemoproteins such as haemoglobin and myoglobin

haem- /hæm/ prefix same as haemo- (used before vowels)

haemagglutination /ˈhæməɡɡljuːtɪˈneɪʃən/ noun the clumping of red blood cells, often used to test for the presence of antibodies

haemangioma /ˈhæmənædʒiˈəʊmə/ noun a harmless tumour which forms in blood vessels and appears on the skin as a birthmark

haemarthrosis /ˈhæmərθrəʊsɪs/ noun pain and swelling caused by blood leaking into a joint

haematemesis /ˌhæmətəˈmɛsɪs/ noun a condition in which someone vomits blood, usually because of internal bleeding

haematic /ˈhæmətɪk/ adjective referring to blood

haematin /ˈhæmətɪn/ noun a substance which forms from haemoglobin when bleeding takes place

haematinic /ˈhæmətəˈtɪnɪk/ noun a drug which increases haemoglobin in blood, used to treat anaemia, e.g. an iron compound

haemato-/ˌhɪmətəʊ/ prefix referring to blood

haematocrit /ˌhɪmətəˈkraɪt/ noun same as packed cell volume

haematocyst /ˌhɪmətəˈkʌst/ noun a cyst which contains blood

haematological /ˌhɪmətəˈɒlədʒɪkəl/ adjective referring to haematology

haematologist /ˌhɪmətəˈɒlədʒɪst/ noun a doctor who specialises in haematology

haematology /ˌhɪmətəˈɒlədʒɪ/ noun the scientific study of blood, its formation and its diseases

haematomata /ˌhɪmətəˈtəmətə/ noun a mass of blood under the skin caused by a blow or by the effects of an operation

haematometra /ˌhɪmətəˈmətmərə/ noun excessive bleeding in the uterus

haematomyelia /ˌhɪmətəməˈjɛliə/ noun a condition in which blood leaks into the spinal cord

haemato- /ˌhɪmətəʊ/ prefix referring to blood

haematopoeisis /ˌhɪmətəˈpɔːrɪsɪs/ noun same as haemopoiesis

haematolysin /ˌhɪmətəlɪˈsɪn/ noun same as haemolysin

haematoozon /ˌhɪmətəˈzuːən/ noun a parasite living in the blood (NOTE: The plural is haematozoa.)

haematuria /ˌhɪmətəˈjʊriə/ noun the unusual presence of blood in the urine, as a result of injury or disease of the kidney or bladder

haemmin /ˈhɪməmən/ noun a salt derived from haemoglobin, used in the treatment of porphyria

haemo- /ˌhɪməʊ/ prefix referring to blood

haemochromatosis /ˌhɪməˈskrəʊmətəsɪs/ noun an inherited disease in which the body absorbs and stores too much iron, causing cirrhosis of the liver and giving the skin a dark colour. Also called bronze diabetes

haemoconcentration /ˌhɪməʊˌkɒnsənˈtreɪʃən/ noun an increase in the percentage of red blood cells because the volume of plasma is reduced. Compare haemodilution
haemocytometer /ˌhaɪməˈsaɪtəmətə/ noun a glass jar in which a sample of blood is diluted and the blood cells counted
haemodialysed patient /ˌhaɪmədəʊˈaɪələzd/’peɪʃəm/ noun someone who has undergone haemodialysis
haemodialysis /ˌhaɪmədəˈaɪələsɪs/ noun same as kidney dialysis
haemodilution /ˌhaɪmədəˈljuːʃən/ noun a decrease in the percentage of red blood cells because the volume of plasma has increased. Compare haemoconcentration
haemoglobin /ˌhaɪməˈɡloʊbən/ noun a red respiratory pigment formed of haem and globin in red blood cells which gives blood its red colour. It absorbs oxygen in the lungs and carries it in the blood to the tissues. Abbreviation Hb, oxycarrying oxyhaemoglobin, carboxyhaemoglobin
haemoglobininaemia /ˌhaɪməˈɡloʊbənˈaɪəmə/ noun a condition in which haemoglobin is found in blood plasma
haemoglobinopathy /ˌhaɪməˈɡloʊbənˈɒθərpi/ noun an inherited disease of a group which result from damaging variations in the production of haemoglobin, e.g. sickle-cell anaemia
haemoglobinuria /ˌhaɪməˈɡloʊbərɪə/’juːrəriə/ noun a condition in which haemoglobin is found in the urine
haemogram /ˈhaɪməɡrəʊm/ noun the printed result of a blood test
haemolysis /ˌhaɪməˈlaɪsɪs/ noun a protein which destroys red blood cells
haemolysis /ˈhaɪməˌlaɪsɪs/ noun the destruction of red blood cells
haemolytic /ˌhaɪməˈlaɪtɪk/ adjective destroying red blood cells ■ noun a substance which destroys red blood cells, e.g. snake venom
haemolytic anaemia /ˌhaɪməˈlaɪtɪk əˈnɛmɪə/ noun a condition in which the destruction of red blood cells is about six times the usual rate, and the supply of new cells from the bone marrow cannot meet the demand
haemolytic disease of the newborn /ˌhaɪməˌləʊtɪk ˈdɪzəv ˌev ˌðə njuːˈbɜːtn/ noun a condition in which the red blood cells of the fetus are destroyed because antibodies in the mother’s blood react against them
haemolytic jaundice /ˌhaɪməˈlaɪtɪk ˈdʒɔʊndɪs/ noun jaundice caused by haemolysis of the red blood cells. Also called prehepatic jaundice
haemolytic uraemic syndrome /ˌhaɪməˌlaɪtɪk ˌjuːrəˈɛmɪk ˌsɜːrˈdʒəni/ noun a condition in which haemolytic anaemia damages the kidneys
haemopericardium /ˌhaɪməˌpərɪˈkɑːrdiəm/ noun a condition in which blood is found in the pericardium
haemoperitoneum /ˌhaɪməˌpərɪˈtəʊniəm/ noun a condition in which blood is found in the peritoneal cavity
haemophilia A /ˌhaɪməˈfɪliə ə/ noun the most common type of haemophilia, in which the inability to synthesise Factor VIII, a protein that promotes blood clotting, means that the blood clots very slowly
haemophilia B /ˌhaɪməˈfɪliə ˈbiː/ noun a less common type of haemophilia, in which the inability to synthesise Factor IX, a protein that promotes blood clotting, means that the blood clots very slowly. Also called Christmas disease
haemophilic /ˌhaɪməˌfɪlɪk/ adjective referring to haemophilia
haemophilus /haɪməˈfɪliəs/ noun a genus of bacteria which needs specific factors in the blood to grow
Haemophilus influenzae /haɪməˌfɪlɪəs ˈɪnfləˌenzə/ noun a bacterium which lives in healthy throats, but which can cause pneumonia if a person’s resistance is lowered by a bout of flu
Haemophilus influenzae type B /haɪməˌfɪlɪəsˌɪnfləˌenzə tʌp ˈbiː/ noun a bacterium which causes meningitis. Abbreviation Hib
haemophthalmia /ˌhaɪməˌfθəlmaɪə/ noun a condition in which blood is found in the vitreous humour of the eye
haemopneumothorax /ˌhaɪməˌpnuəməˌθɔrəks/ noun same as pneumohaemothorax
haemopoiesis /ˌhaɪməˌpəʊiˈsɪəs/ noun the continual production of blood cells and blood platelets in the bone marrow. Also called blood formation
haemopoietic /ˌhaɪməˌpəʊiˈtɪk/ adjective referring to the formation of blood in the bone marrow
haemoptysis /haɪməˌpɔtɪsɪs/ noun a condition in which someone coughs blood from the lungs, especially caused by a serious illness such as anaemia, pneumonia, tuberculosis or cancer
haemorrhage /ˈheɪməˌrɑːdʒ/ noun the loss of a large quantity of blood, especially from a burst blood vessel ○ He died of a brain haemorrhage. ■ verb to bleed heavily ○ The injured man was haemorrhaging from the mouth
haemorrhagic /ˌheɪməˌrɑːdʒɪk/ adjective referring to heavy bleeding
haemorrhagic disease of the newborn /ˌheɪməˌrɑːdʒɪk ˈdɪzəv ˌev ˌðə njuːˈbɜːtn/ noun a disease of newly born babies, which makes haemorrhage easily, caused by temporary lack of prothrombin
haemorrhagic disorder /ˌheɪməˌrɑːdʒɪk dɪˈziːv/ noun a disorder in which haemorrhages occur, e.g. haemophilia
haemorrhagic stroke /ˈhæmərədʒɪk strəʊk/ noun a stroke caused by a burst blood vessel
haemorrhoidectomy /ˌhæmərəˈoidətɪk/ noun the surgical removal of haemorrhoids
haemorrhoids /ˌhæmərəˈɔɪdz/ plural noun swollen veins in the ano-rectal passage. Also called piles
haemosalpinx /ˌhæmoʊˈsælpɪŋks/ noun the accumulation of blood in the Fallopian tubes
haemosiderosis /ˌhæməsɪˈdərəsɪs/ noun a disorder in which iron forms large deposits in the tissue, causing haemorrhaging and destruction of red blood cells
haemostasis /ˌhæməsˈtæstɪs/ noun the process of stopping bleeding or slowing the movement of blood
haemostat /ˌhæməsˈtæt/ noun a device which stops bleeding, e.g. a clamp
haemotherax /ˌhæməθəˈræks/ noun a condition in which blood is found in the pleural cavity
Hageman factor /ˈhægmən ˈfæktər/ noun same as Factor XII
HAL abbreviation Hospital Acquired Infection
hair cell /ˈhɛər sɛl/ noun a receptor cell which converts fluid pressure changes into nerve impulses carried in the auditory nerve (NOTE: For other terms referring to hair, see words beginning with pilo-, trich-, tricho-)
hair follicle /ˈhɛər ˈfəlɪk(ə)l/ noun the cells and tissue that surround the root of a hair
hairline fracture /ˈhɛərlайн ˈfræktʃər/ noun a very slight crack in a bone caused by injury
hair papilla /ˈhɛər pəˈpələ/ noun a part of the skin containing capillaries which feed blood to the hair
half-life /ˈhɑːflaɪf/ noun 1. a measurement of the period of time taken before the concentration of a drug has reached half of what it was when it was administered 2. the time taken for half the atoms in a radioactive isotope to decay
halitosis /ˌhælɪtəˈsɪs/ noun a condition in which a person has breath which smells unpleasant. Also called bad breath
hallucinate /ˈhæləkəneɪt/ verb to have hallucinations, hallucinations. ♀ The patient was hallucinating.
hallucination /ˈhæləkəneɪʃən/ noun an experience of seeing an imaginary scene or hearing an imaginary sound as clearly as if it were really there
hallucinatory /ˈhæləkəniətərɪ/ adjective referring to a drug which causes hallucinations
Hansen's disease /ˈhænznəs di/zi/ noun same as leprosy 
haploid /ˈhæplɔɪd/ adjective referring to a cell such as a gamete where each chromosome occurs only once. In humans the haploid number of chromosomes is 23. 
Harrison groove /ˈhærɪzn gru/ noun a hollow on either side of the chest which develops in children who have difficulty in breathing, seen especially in cases of rickets 
Harri son’s sulcus /ˈhærɪzn səlks/ noun a hollow on either side of the colon 
Harrison’s sulcus /ˈhærɪzn səlks/ noun a hollow on either side of the chest which develops in children who have difficulty in breathing, seen especially in cases of rickets 
Harri son’s operation /ˈhærɪzn ɒpərəʃən/ noun the surgical removal of the prostate gland [After S.H. Harris (1880–1936), Australian surgeon.] 
Hartmann’s solution /ˈhɑːrtmæn əəs ˈsɛʃən/ noun a solution of saline containing a large amount of potassium chloride, used in temporary body irrigation, after surgery or injury [Named after S.H. Harris (1880–1936), Australian surgeon.] 
Harrow /ˈhɔːrəʊ/ noun an area of north-west London 
Hartnup disease /ˈhɑːrtnʌp di/zi/z/ noun an inherited condition affecting amino acid metabolism and producing thick skin and impaired mental development [After the name of the family in which this hereditary disease was first recorded.] 
Harvest /ˈhærvɪst/ verb to take something for use elsewhere, e.g. a piece of skin for a graft or eggs for IVF 
Hashimoto’s disease /ˈhæʃmətəs ˈdiziz/ noun a type of goitre in middle-aged women, where the woman is sensitive to secretions from her own thyroid gland, and, in extreme cases, the face swells and the skin turns yellow [Described 1912. After Hakaru Hashimoto (1881–1934), Japanese surgeon.] 
hashish /ˈhæʃɪʃ/ noun cannabis 
haustrom /ˈhɔːstrəm/ noun a sac on the outside of the colon [NOTE: The plural is haustroha.] 
Haversian canal /ˈhævərəʃən ˈkeɪnl/ noun a fine canal which runs vertically through the Haversian systems in compact bone, containing blood vessels and lymph ducts [Described 1689. After Clifton Havers (1657–1702), English surgeon.] 
Haversian system /ˈhævərəʃən ˈsɪstəm/ noun a unit of compact bone built around a Haversian canal, made of a series of bony layers which form a cylinder. Also called osteon 
Hay fever /ˈheɪfɪvər/ noun inflammation in the nasal passage and eyes caused by an allergenic reaction to plant pollen
health authority

health authority /ˈhelθ æˌθɔrəti/ noun Strategic Health Authority

healthcare /ˈhelθkɛər/ health care noun the general treatment of people with medical disorders, especially the use of measures to stop a disease from occurring

healthcare assistant /ˈhelθkɛər əˈsistənt/ noun someone who assists health professionals in looking after a sick or dependent person

Healthcare Commission /ˈhelθkɛər kəˈmɪsn/ the independent inspection body for the NHS

healthcare delivery /ˈhelθkɛər ˈdɛlɪvəri/ noun the provision of care and treatment by the health service

healthcare professional /ˈhelθkɛər ˈprəfərənt/ noun a qualified person who works in an occupation related to health care, e.g. a nurse

healthcare system /ˈhelθkɛər ˈsɪstəm/ noun any organised set of health services

health centre /ˈhelθ sɛntər/ noun a public building in which a group of doctors practice

health education /ˈhelθ ɪˈdʒuːˌkeɪʃən/ noun the process of teaching people, both school children and adults, to do things to improve their health, e.g. to take more exercise

Health Education Authority /ˈhelθ ɪˈdʒuːˌkeɪʃən æˌθɔrəti/ noun a government health promotion agency in England designed to help people make aware of how they can improve their health. Abbreviation HEA

health food /ˈhelθ ˈfʊd/ noun food that is regarded as good for health, especially containing ingredients such as cereals, dried fruit and nuts and without additives

health inequality /ˈhelθ ɪnˌkwɪlənsi/ noun the differences that exist in health across the social classes, with poorer people tending to experience poorer health

health information service /ˈhelθ ɪnˌfərəməns/ noun service delivered via a free telephone helpline. Abbreviation HIS

health insurance /ˈhelθ ɪnˈʃʊrəns/ noun insurance which pays the cost of treatment for illness

Health Ombudsman /ˈhelθ əˌmʌbdəzmən/ noun same as Health Service Commissioner

health promotion /ˈhelθ prəˈmɔr∫ən/ noun the act of improving the health of a particular community or of the public generally, e.g. using health education, immunisation and screening

Health Protection Agency /ˈhelθ prəˈtektʃən æˌθɔrəti/ noun a national organisation for England and Wales, established in 2003, dedicated to the protection of people’s health, especially by reducing the impact of infectious diseases, chemicals, poisons and radiation. It brings together existing sources of expertise in public health, communicable diseases, emergency planning, infection control, poisons and radiation hazards. Abbreviation HPA

health service /ˈhelθ ˈsərvɪs/ noun an organisation which is in charge of providing health care to a particular community

Health Service Commissioner /ˈhelθ ˈsərvɪs kəˌmɪsn/ noun same as Health Service Ombudsman

health service ombudsman /ˈhelθ ˈsərvɪs əˌmʌbdəzmən/ noun in the UK, an official who investigates complaints from the public about the National Health Service

health service manager /ˈhelθ ˈsərvɪs ˈmænədʒər/ noun someone who is responsible for the provision of local health care, through the management of hospital, GP, and community health services

health service planning /ˈhelθ ˈsərvɪs ˈplənɪŋ/ noun the process of deciding what the health care needs of a community are, with the help of statistics, and what resources can be provided for that community

health service reforms /ˈhelθ ˈsərvɪs ˈrɔrəms/ plural noun any of several reforms to the NHS, the most recent package of reforms being that introduced in 2002

health visitor /ˈhelθ ˌvɪzɪtə/ noun a registered nurse with qualifications in midwifery or obstetrics and preventive medicine, who visits mothers and babies and sick people in their homes and advises on treatment

hear /hɪər/ verb to sense sounds with the ears ○ I can’t hear what you’re saying. (NOTE: hearing – heard)

hearing /ˈhɛərɪŋ/ noun the ability to hear, or the function performed by the ear of sensing sounds and sending sound impulses to the brain ○ His hearing is failing. (NOTE: For other terms referring to hearing, see words beginning with audi-, audio-)

hearing aid /ˈhɛərɪŋ eɪd/ noun a small electronic device fitted into or near the ear, to improve someone’s hearing by making the sounds louder

hearing-impaired /ˈhɛərɪŋ ɪmˈpærɪd/ adjective having a degree of hearing loss

hearing loss /ˈhɛərɪŋ lɔs/ noun partial or complete loss of the ability to hear

heart /hɑːrt/ noun the main organ in the body, which maintains the circulation of the blood around the body by its pumping action ○ The doctor listened to his heart. ◇ She has heart trouble. (NOTE: For other terms referring to the heart, see also words beginning with cardi- cardio-)

heart attack /ˈhɑːrt əˈtæk/ noun a condition in which the heart has a reduced blood supply because one of the arteries becomes blocked by a blood clot, causing myocardial ischaemia and myocardial infarction (informal)
heart block /ˈhɑːrt blok/ noun the slowing of the action of the heart because the impulses from the sinoatrial node to the ventricles are delayed or interrupted. There are either longer impulses (first degree block) or missing impulses (second degree block) or no impulses at all (complete heart block), in which case the ventricles continue to beat slowly and independently of the sinoatrial node.

heartburn /ˈhɑːrt bɜːn/ noun indigestion which causes a burning feeling in the stomach and oesophagus, and a flow of acid saliva into the mouth (internal).

heart bypass /ˈhɑːrt bɪˈpæs/ noun a surgical operation to transplant a new heart and lungs into someone.

heart disease /ˈhɑːrt diˈziːz/ noun any disease of the heart in general.

heart failure /ˈhɑːrt feɪlər/ noun the failure of the heart to maintain the output of blood to meet the demands of the body. It may affect the left or right sides of the heart, or both sides.

heart-lung machine /ˈhɑːrt ˈlʌŋ məˈʃɪn/ noun a machine used to pump blood round the body and maintain the supply of oxygen to the blood during heart surgery.

heart massage /ˈhɑːrt məˈsæʒ/ noun a treatment which involves pressing on the chest to make a heart which has stopped beating start working again.

heart murmur /ˈhɑːrt mɜːrəm/ noun an unusual sound made by turbulent blood flow, sometimes as a result of valve disease.

heart rate /ˈhɑːrt rɛt/ noun the number of times the heart beats per minute.

heart sounds /ˈhɑːrt sɔːndz/ plural noun two different sounds made by the heart as it beats, ζ lub-dupp.

heart surgeon /ˈhɑːrt ˈsɜːrdʒən/ noun a surgeon who specialises in operations on the heart.

heart surgery /ˈhɑːrt ˈsɜːrgəri/ noun a surgical operation to remedy a condition of the heart.

heart tamponade /ˈhɑːrt tæmpəˌneɪd/ noun same as cardiac tamponade.

heart transplant /ˈhɑːrt træŋˈspleɪnt/ noun a surgical operation to transplant a heart into someone.

heat rash /ˈhɪt ræʃ/ noun same as miliaria.

heat spots /ˈhɪt spəts/ plural noun little red spots which develop on the face in very hot weather.

heatstroke /ˈhɪtstrəʊk/ noun a condition in which someone becomes too hot and his or her body temperature rises abnormally, leading to headaches, stomach cramps and sometimes loss of consciousness.

heat therapy /ˈhɪt ˈθerəpi/ noun treatment of diseases of the heart by heat.

heavy period /ˈhɛvi ˈpiəriəd/ noun a monthly period during which a woman loses an unusually large amount of blood. It is often painful and sometimes indicates possible health problems, such as fibroids or hypothyroidism.

Heberden’s node /hɪbərˈduːnz ˈnɑʊd/ noun a small bony lump which develops on the end joints of fingers in osteoarthrosis.[Desccribed 1802. After William Heberden (1767–1845), British physi-ician, specialist in rheumatic diseases.]

hebetude /ˈhɪbətjuːd/ noun dullness of the senses during acute fever, which makes the person uninterested in his or her surroundings and unable to respond to stimuli.

hectic /ˈhektrɪk/ adjective recurring regularly.

hectic fever /ˈhektrɪk ˈfərvə/ noun an attack of fever which occurs each day in someone who has tuberculosis.

heel /hɪl/ noun the back part of the foot.

heel bone /ˈhɪl bɔːn/ noun the bone forming the heel, beneath the talus. Also called calcaneus.

Hegar’s sign /ˈheɡər sən/ noun a way of detecting pregnancy, by inserting the fingers into the uterus and pressing with the other hand on the pelvic cavity to feel if the neck of the uterus has become soft.[After Alfred Hegar (1830–1914), Professor of Obstetrics and Gynaecology at Freiburg, Germany.]

Heimlich manoeuvre /ˈhɛmlikt ˈmænərviː/ noun an emergency treatment for choking, in which a strong upward push beneath the breast-bone of a patient clapsed from behind forces the blockage out of the windpipe.

helico-/hel- prefix relating to an ulcer.

helicoplasty /helɪˈkɒspləstɪ/ noun a skin graft to cover an ulcer to aid healing.

Helicobacter pylori /helɪkəˈbɛktrə ˈpɪlə ri/ noun a bacterium found in gastric secretions, strongly associated with duodenal ulcers and gastric carcinoma. Abbreviation H pylori.

helicopter-based emergency medical services /ˌhelɪkəˈspɔrt ˈbiːst/ noun a full form of HEMS.

helio-/hɪliəu- prefix relating to the sun.

heliotrope /helɪəˈtrɔp/ noun a plant which is taken as an aid to health.

helium /ˈhelɪəm/ noun a very light gas used in combination with oxygen, especially to relieve asthma or sickness caused by decompression. (Note: the chemical symbol is He.)
helix /ˈhɛlɪks/ noun the curved outer edge of the ear

Heller's operation /ˈhɛlər ˈoʊpərəʃən/ noun same as cardiomyotomy [After E. Heller (1877–1984), German surgeon.]

Heller's test /ˈhɛlər ˈtes/ noun a test for protein in the urine [After Johann Florenz Heller (1813–71), Austrian physician.]

Hellin's law /ˈhelɪnz ˈlɔː/ noun a finding which states that twins should occur naturally once in 90 live births, triplets once in 8,100 live births, quadruplets once in 729,000 live births (NOTE: Since the 1960s the numbers have changed due to fertility treatment. For example, twins now occur once in only 38 births.)

HELLP syndrome /ˈhelp ˌsɪndrəm/ noun a serious pre-eclamptic disorder which makes it necessary to terminate a pregnancy. Full form haemolysis-elevated liver enzymes–low platelet count syndrome

helminth /ˈhelmɪnt/ noun a parasitic worm, e.g. a tapeworm or fluke

helminthiasis /ˈhelminθəˈsɪs/ noun infestation with parasitic worms

heloma /ˈhɛləmə/ noun same as corn

helper T-cell /ˈhelp ˈtiː ˈsel/ noun a type of white blood cell that stimulates the production of cells that destroy antigens

hemeralopia /ˌhɛmərəˌlɔˈpiə/ noun a usually congenital condition in which someone is able to see better in bad light than in ordinary daylight. Also called day blindness

hemi-/ˈhɛmə/ prefix half

hemianopia /ˈhɛməˌnəʊpiə/ noun a state of partial blindness in which someone has only half the usual field of vision in each eye

hemiarthroplasty /ˌhɛmɪəˌθrəʊˈplæstɪ/ noun an operation to repair a joint which replaces one of its surfaces with an artificial substance, often metal

hemiballismus /ˌhɛmɪbəˈlɪzməs/ noun a sudden movement of the limbs on one side of the body, caused by a disease of the basal ganglia

hemicolectomy /ˌhɛmɪkəˈlɛktəmi/ noun the surgical removal of part of the colon

hemimelia /ˈhɛmɪmɪˈliə/ noun a congenital condition in which someone has an absent or extremely short arm or legs

hemiparesis /ˌhɛmɪpəˈrɛsɪs/ noun slight paralysis of the muscles of one side of the body

hemiplegia /ˌhɛmɪˈplɪdʒə/ noun severe paralysis affecting one side of the body due to damage of the central nervous system. Compare diplegia

hemisphere /ˌhɛmɪˈsfɜːr/ noun half of a sphere

HEMS /ˈhɛmz/ plural noun a system of delivering a paramedic crew to the scene of an accident or medical emergency by helicopter and then transporting patients to the nearest major hospital or specialist unit. Full form helicopter-based emergency medical services

Henderson's model /ˈhendərnz ˈmɒdl/ noun a model of nurse–patient relationships based on 14 basic principles of nursing. The main idea is that "the nurse does for others what they would do for themselves if they had the strength, the will, and the knowledge...but that the nurse makes the patient independent of him or her as soon as possible."

Henle's loop /ˈhɛnlıˈluːp/ noun same as loop of Henle [Described 1862. After Friedrich Gustav Jakob Henle (1809–85), Professor of Anatomy at Göttingen, Germany.]

Henoch-Schönlein purpura /ˌhɛnɔk ˈʃəʊlnˌlın ˈpɜrpərə/ noun a condition in which blood vessels become inflamed and bleed into the skin, causing a rash called purpura and also pain in the stomach and the joints, vomiting and diarrhea. It often occurs after an upper respiratory infection, mostly in children aged two to 11. [Described 1832 by Schönlein and 1865 by Henoch. Eduard Heinrich Henoch (1820–1910), Professor of Paediatrics at Berlin, Germany; Johannes Lukas Schönlein (1793–1864), physiologist and pathologist at Würzburg, Zürich and Berlin.]

heparin /ˈhɛpərɪn/ noun an anticoagulant substance found in the liver and lungs, and also produced artificially for use in the treatment of thrombosis

hepat-/ˈhɛpət/ prefix same as hepato- (used before vowels)

hepatectomy /ˌhɛpəˈtekəmi/ noun the surgical removal of part of the liver

hepatic /ˌhɛpəˈtɪk/ adjective referring to the liver

hepatic artery /ˌhɛpəˈtɪk ˈɑːtərɪ/ noun an artery which takes the blood to the liver

hepatic cell /ˌhɛpəˈtɪk ˈsel/ noun an epithelial cell of the liver acini

hepatic duct /ˌhɛpəˈtɪk ˈdʌkt/ noun a duct which links the liver to the bile duct leading to the duodenum

hepatic flexure /ˌhɛpəˈtɪk ˈfleksʃər/ noun a bend in the colon, where the ascending and transverse colons join

hepaticostomy /ˌhɛpəˈtɪkəˈstəmi/ noun a surgical operation to make an opening in the hepatic duct taking bile from the liver

hepatic portal system /ˌhɛpəˈtɪk ˈpɔrtəl ˈsɪstəm/ noun a group of veins linking to form the portal vein, which brings blood from the pancreas, spleen, gall bladder and the abdominal part of the alimentary canal to the liver
hepatic vein /ˈhepətɪk ˈveɪn/ noun a vein which takes blood from the liver to the inferior vena cava

hepatitis /ˈhepətɪtɪs/ noun inflammation of the liver through disease or drugs

hepatitis A /ˈhepətɪtɪs ˈeɪ/ noun a relatively mild form of viral hepatitis that is transmitted through contaminated food and water

hepatitis A virus /ˈhepətɪtɪs ˈeɪˌvɜːrəs/ noun a virus which causes hepatitis A. Abbreviation: HAV

hepatitis B /ˈhepətɪtɪs ˈbiː/ noun a severe form of viral hepatitis that is transmitted by contact with infected blood or other body fluids

hepatitis B virus /ˈhepətɪtɪs ˈbiːˌvɜːrəs/ noun a virus which causes hepatitis B. Abbreviation: HBV

hepatitis C /ˈhepətɪtɪs ˈsɪ/ noun a form of viral hepatitis that is transmitted by contact with infected blood or other body fluids but is often without symptoms (NOTE: It was formerly called non-A, non-B hepatitis.)

hepatitis C virus /ˈhepətɪtɪs ˈsɪˌvɜːrəs/ noun a virus which causes hepatitis C. Abbreviation: HCV

hepatocyte /ˈhepətəsɪt/ noun referring to the liver

hepatocellular /ˌhepətəˈsɪljəl/ adjective referring to liver cells

hepatocellular jaundice /ˌhepətəˈsɪljəl ˈdʒeɪndɪs/ noun jaundice caused by injury to or disease of the liver cells

hepatocirrhosis /ˌhepətəˈsɪroʊsɪs/ noun same as cirrhosis

hepatocyte /ˌhepətəˈsɪt/ noun a liver cell which synthesises and stores substances, and produces bile

hepatogenous /ˌhepətəˈdʒenəs/ noun referring to or originating in the liver. (hepatogenous jaundice)

hepatolenticular degeneration /ˌhepətəˈlɛŋktələr ɪnˈtɛnʃən/ noun a degenerative disorder of the liver and brain, characterized by tremors and other neurological symptoms

hepatoma /ˌhepətəˈməʊmə/ noun a malignant tumour of the liver formed of mature cells, especially found in people with cirrhosis

hepatomegaly /ˌhepətəˈmεɡəlɪ/ noun a condition in which the liver becomes very large

hepatosplenomegaly /ˌhepətəˌsplɛnəˈmεɡəlɪ/ noun enlargement of both the liver and the spleen, as occurs in leukaemia or lymphoma

hepatotoxic /ˌhepətəˈtɔʊtɪk/ adjective destroying the liver cells

herbalism /ˈhɜːrəlɪzı̅m/ noun herbal medicine

herbalist /ˈhɜːrəlɪst/ noun a person who treats illnesses or disorders with substances extracted from plants

herbal medicine /ˈhɜːrbəl ˈmedəˌsɪs/ noun a system of medical treatment involving the use of substances extracted from plants

herbal remedy /ˈhɜːrbəl ˈremədi/ noun a medicine made from plants, e.g. an infusion made from dried leaves or flowers in hot water

herd immunity /ˈhɜːrd ɪˌmjʊnəˈtɪtɪv/ noun the fact of a group of people being resistant to a specific disease, because many individuals in the group are immune to or immunised against the microorganism which causes it

hereditary /hərəˈdɪtəri/ adjective passed as from parents to children through the genes

hereditary spherocytosis /hərəˈdɪtəri ˈsfərəˌsɪtəsɪs/ noun same as hereditary jaundice

heredity /hərəˈdɪtɪ/ noun the process by which genetically controlled characteristics pass from parents to children

Hering-Breuer reflexes /hərɪŋˈbrjuər ˈreflɛksziz/ plural noun the reflexes which maintain the usual rhythmic inflation and deflation of the lungs

hermaphrodite /ˈhɜːrməˌfroʊdɪt/ noun a person with both male and female characteristics

hermaphroditism /ˌhɜːrməˌfroʊdɪtɪzəm/ noun a condition in which a person has both male and female characteristics

hernia /ˈhɜːrniə/ noun a condition in which an organ bulges through a hole or weakness in the wall which surrounds it. Also called rupture

hernial /ˈhɜːrniəl/ adjective referring to a hernia

hernial sac /ˈhɜːrniəl ˈsæk/ noun a sac formed where a membrane has pushed through a cavity in the body

herniated /ˈhɜːrniətɪd/ adjective referring to an organ which has developed a hernia

herniation /ˈhɜːrniəˈʃən/ noun the development of a hernia

hernio- /hɜːrniəˌ/ prefix relating to a hernia

hernioplasty /ˈhɜːrniəˌplæstɪ/ noun a surgical operation to reduce a hernia

herniorrhaphy /ˌhɜːrniəˈroʊrəfi/ noun a surgical operation to remove a hernia and repair the organ through which it protruded

herniotomy /ˌhɜːrniəˈtɒmɪ/ noun a surgical operation to remove a hernial sac

heroin /ˈhɜːrəʊn/ noun a narcotic drug in the form of a white powder derived from morphine

herpes simplex /ˈhɜːrps ˈsɪmpəklz/ noun a viral infection of the skin or mucous membrane, caused by a virus, where small blisters are formed

herpes simplex /ˈhɜːrps ˈsɪmpəklz/ noun 1. (Type h) a virus that produces a painful blister, called a cold sore, usually on the lips 2. (Type l) a sexually transmitted disease which forms blisters in the genital region. Also called genital herp-
herpesvirus /ˈhɜːpəsvɪrəs/ noun one of a group of viruses which cause herpes and chickenpox (herpesvirus Type I), and genital herpes (herpesvirus Type II)

herpes zoster /ˈhɜːpəs ˈzɔstər/ noun inflammation of a sensory nerve, characterised by pain along the nerve and causing a line of blisters to form on the skin, usually found mainly on the abdomen or back, or on the face. Also called shingles, zona

herpetic /həˈpetɪkl/ adjective referring to herpes

hetero- /hɛtərəʊ-/ prefix different

heterochromia /ˌhɛtəroʊˈkroʊmə/ noun a condition in which the irises of the eyes are different colours

heterogeneous /ˌhɛtərəˈdʒɪnəs/ adjective having different characteristics or qualities (NOTE: Do not confuse with heterogeneous.)

heterogenous /ˌhɛtərəˈdʒɔʊnst̪ər/ adjective coming from a different source (NOTE: Do not confuse with heterogeneous.)

heterograft /ˌhɛtərəˈɡrɑːft/ noun tissue taken from one species and grafted onto an individual of another species. Compare homograft

heterologous /ˌhɛtərəˈloʊgəs/ adjective of a different type

heterophobia /ˌhɛtərəˈfəʊbiə/ noun a condition in which if an eye is covered it tends to squat

heteroplasty /həˈtɛrəplɑːstɪ/ noun same as heterograft

heteropsia /ˌhɛtərəˈpsɪə/ noun a condition in which the two eyes see differently

heterosexual /ˌhɛtərəˈsɛksjuəl/ adjective attracted to people of the opposite sex or relating to relations between males and females. noun a person who is sexually attracted to people of the opposite sex. Compare bisexual, homosexual

heterosexuality /ˌhɛtərəˈsɛksjuələti/ noun sexual attraction towards persons of the opposite sex

heterotopia /ˌhɛtərəˈtəʊpiə/ noun 1. a state where an organ is placed in a different position from usual or is malformed or deformed 2. the development of tissue which is not natural to the part in which it is produced

heterotrophia /ˌhɛtərəˈtroyfɪə/ noun same as strabismus

heterozygous /ˌhɛtərəˈzoʊdʒəs/ adjective having two or more different versions of a specific gene. Compare homozygous

hex-/heks/- prefix same as hexa- (NOTE: used before vowels)

HFEA abbreviation Human Fertilization and Embryology Authority

hGH abbreviation human growth hormone

HGPRT abbreviation hypoxanthine guanine phosphoribosyl transferase. Also HPRT

hiaus /ˈhaɪəs/ noun an opening or space

hiaus hernia /ˈhaɪəs ˈhɜːrniə/ noun a hernia where the stomach bulges through the opening in the diaphragm muscle through which the oesophagus passes

hik/ /ˈhaɪk/ abbreviation Haemophilus influenzae type B

Hib vaccine /ˈhaɪb ,vækˈsɪn/ noun a vaccine used to inculcate against the bacterium Haemophilus influenzae type B that causes meningitis

hiccups /ˈhɪkˌkIPS, ˈhɪkˈkOH/ noun a spasm in the diaphragm which causes a sudden inhalation of breath followed by sudden closure of the glottis which makes a characteristic sound ○ She had an attack of hiccups or had a hiccuping attack or got the hiccups. Also called singultus

Hickman catheter /ˈhɪkkmən ˈkæθərɪtər/ Hickman line /ˈhɪkkmən laɪn/ noun a plastic tube which is put into the large vein above the heart so that drugs can be given and blood samples can be taken easily

hidr-/haidr/- prefix referring to sweat

hidradenitis /ˌhaidrəˈdənətɪs/ noun inflammation of the sweat glands

hidrosis /ˌhaidrəˈrəʊsɪs/ noun sweating, especially when it is excessive

hidrotic /ˈhaidrətɪk/ adjective referring to sweating. noun a substance which makes someone sweat

high-altitude sickness /ˈhaɪ əlˈtətɪdˌsɪkˈnəs/ noun same as altitude sickness

high blood pressure /ˌhaɪ ˈblɔd ,preʃər/ noun same as hypertension

high-calorie diet /ˌhaɪ ˈkæləri ˈdaɪət/ noun a diet containing over 4000 calories per day

high-density lipoprotein /ˌhaɪ ˌdenˈstəti ˈlɪpəʊˌprɔʊtɪn/ noun a lipoprotein with a low percentage of cholesterol. Abbreviation HDL

high-fibre diet /ˌhaɪ ˌfɜːbəz ˈdaɪət/ noun a diet which contains a high percentage of cereals, nuts, fruit and vegetables

high-protein diet /ˌhaɪ ˌprɔˈtrɪnt ˈdaɪət/ noun a diet containing mostly foods high in protein and low in carbohydrates and saturated fat, adopted by people who are trying to lose weight

hilary /ˈhaɪləri/ adjective referring to a hilum

hilum /hɪˈləm/ noun a hollow where blood vessels or nerve fibres enter an organ such as a kidney or lung (NOTE: The plural is hilai.)

hindbrain /ˈhaindbreɪn/ noun the part of the brain of an embryo from which the medulla oblongata, the pons and the cerebellum eventually develop

hindgut /ˈhaindgʌt/ noun part of an embryo which develops into the colon and rectum
histamine test /ˈhistəmɪn/  noun a substance released in response to allergens from mast cells throughout the body. Histamines dilate blood vessels, constrict the cells of smooth muscles and cause an increase in acid secretions in the stomach.

histamine test /ˈhistəmɪn/  noun a test to determine the acidity of gastric juice
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holism /hɔlɪz(ə)m/ noun the theory that all of a person’s physical, mental and social conditions should be considered in the treatment of his or her illness

holistic /ˌhɒlstɪk/ adjective referring to a method of treatment involving all of someone’s mental and family circumstances rather than just dealing with the condition from which he or she is suffering

holistic care /ˌhɒlstɪk ˈkeə/ noun the care and treatment of a whole person rather than just of his or her medical symptoms

holo- /həʊli/ prefix entire, complete

holocrine /ˌhɒləkrɪn/ adjective referring to a gland where the secretions are made up of disintegrated cells of the gland itself

Homan’s sign /ˈhəʊmənz sɛm/ noun pain in the calf when the foot is bent back, a sign of deep vein thrombosis [Described 1941. After John Homans (1877–1954), Professor of Clinical Surgery at Harvard, USA.]

home help /ˈhəʊm ˈhelpt/ noun 1. a person who is paid to carry out ordinary domestic tasks such as cleaning and cooking for people who are unable to carry out these tasks for themselves 2. same as home help service

home help service /ˈhəʊm ˈhelpt ˈsɜ:vɪs/ noun a publicly funded support service provided mainly for elderly and disabled people which offers help with ordinary household tasks of a non-nursing nature, such as cooking and washing to help people in their own homes

homeo- /həʊmiə/ prefix like or similar

homeopathic /ˈhəʊmiəθəpɪk/ adjective 1. referring to homeopathy ○ a homeopathic clinic ○ She is having a course of homeopathic treatment. 2. referring to a drug which is given in very small quantities

homeopathist /ˈhəʊmiəθəpɪst/ adjective a person who practises homeopathy

homeopathy /ˈhəʊmiəθəpɪ/ noun the treatment of a condition by giving the person very small quantities of a substance which, when given to a healthy person, would cause symptoms like those of the condition being treated. Compare allopathy

homeostasis /ˈhəʊmiəsəstəsɪs/ noun the process by which the functions and chemistry of a cell or internal organ are kept stable, even when external conditions vary greatly

homeo- /həʊmiə/ prefix the same

homeo- /həʊmiə/ prefix another spelling of homeo- (used before vowels)

homogenise /ˌhɒməˈdʒənəsaɪz/ homogenize verb to give something a uniform nature

homograft /ˌhɒməˈɡrɑːft/ noun the grafted of an organ or tissue from a donor to a recipient of the same species, e.g. from one person to another. Also called allograft. Compare heterograft

homolateral /ˌhɒməˈlæt(ə)rəl/ adjective same as ipsilateral

homologous /ˌhɒməˈlɒɡəs/ adjective 1. of the same type 2. referring to chromosomes which form a pair

homonymous hemianopia /ˌhɒməˈnɒmɪs ˌhɛməˈnɒpɪə/ noun a condition in which the same half of the field of vision is lost in each eye

homosexual /ˌhɒməˈsoʊʃəl/ adjective referring to homosexuality ▲ noun a person who is sexually attracted to people of the same sex. Compare bisexual. heterosexual (NOTE: Although homosexual can apply to both males and females, it is commonly used for males only, and lesbian is used for females.)

homosexuality /ˌhɒməˈsoʊʃəlɪtɪ/ noun sexual attraction to people of the same sex or sexual relations with people of the same sex

homozygous /ˌhɒməˈzɪdʒəs/ adjective having two identical versions of a specific gene. Compare heterozygous

hookworm /ˈhəʊkwɜːm/ noun a parasitic worm

hookworm disease /ˈhəʊkwɜːm dɪzɪz/ noun an infection of the skin at the base of an eyelash. Also called sty

horizontal fissure /ˌhɔrɪˈzontəl ˈfɪsr/ noun an anatomical horizontal groove between the superior and middle lobes of a lung. See illustration at lungs in Supplement

hormone /ˈhɔrnən/ noun a substance which is produced by one part of the body, especially the endocrine glands and is carried to another part of the body by the bloodstream where it has particular effects or functions

hormone replacement therapy /ˈhɔrnən rɪˈpleɪzmənt ˈθerəpi/ hormone therapy noun 1. treatment for someone whose endocrine glands have been removed 2. treatment to relieve the symptoms of the menopause by supplying oestrogen and reducing the risk of osteoporosis ▶ abbreviation HRT

Horner’s syndrome /ˈhɔrnərz ˈsɪndrəm/ noun a condition caused by paralysis of the sympathetic nerve in one side of the neck, making the eyelids hang down and the pupils contract [Described 1869. After Johann Friedrich Horner (1831–86), Professor of Ophthalmology in Zürich, Switzerland.]

horny /ˈhɔrnɪ/ adjective referring to skin which is very hard (NOTE: For terms referring to horny tissue, see words beginning with kerato-.)
### Hospital Activity Analysis

- **Hospice**: noun a hospital which offers palliative care for terminally ill people
- **Hospital**: noun a place where sick or injured people are looked after
- **Hospital-acquired infection**: noun a disease caused during a stay in hospital
- **Hospital Activity Analysis**: noun a regular detailed report on patients in hospitals, including information about treatment, length of stay and outcome
- **Hospital care**: noun treatment in a hospital
- **Hospital doctor**: noun a doctor who works only in a hospital and does not receive patients in his or her own surgery
- **Hospital gangrene**: noun gangrene caused by insanitary hospital conditions
- **Hospital infection**: noun an infection which someone gets during a hospital visit, or one which develops among hospital staff
  - **COMMENT**: Hospital infection is an increasingly common problem due to growing antimicrobial resistance and inappropriate antibiotic use. Strains of bacteria such as MRSA have evolved which seem to be more easily transmitted between patients and are difficult to treat.
- **Hospitalise**: verb to send someone to hospital
  - **He is so ill that he has had to be hospitalised.**
- **Hospital trust**: noun same as self-governing hospital
- **Host**: noun a person or animal on which a parasite lives
  - **Hot**/adjective: very warm or having a high temperature
  - **Hot flush**/noun: a condition in menopausal women, in which the woman becomes hot and sweats, and which is often accompanied by redness of the skin
  - **Hot pack**: noun a cloth bag or a pad filled with gel or grains which can be heated and applied to the skin to relieve pain or stiffness
  - **Hourglass contraction**: noun a condition in which the stomach is constricted in the centre
  - **Hourglass stomach**: noun a condition in which the wall of the stomach is pulled in so that it is divided into two cavities, cardiac and pyloric

### Other Medical Terms

- **Horseshoe kidney**: noun a congenital condition of the kidney, where sometimes the upper but usually the lower parts of both kidneys are joined together
- **Horton's syndrome**: noun a severe headache, often with constant pain around one eye, which starts usually within a few hours of going to sleep. It is caused by the release of histamine in the body.[Alfred Bayard Taylor Horton (1865–1980), US physician.]
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- **Hourglass stomach**: noun a condition in which the wall of the stomach is pulled in so that it is divided into two cavities, cardiac and pyloric
- **Houseman**: noun same as house officer
- **House officer**: noun a doctor who works in a hospital as a house surgeon or house physician during the final year of training before registration by the General Medical Council
- **HPA**: abbreviation Health Protection Agency
- **HPRT**: abbreviation hypoxanthine phosphoribosyl transferase
- **HPV**: abbreviation human papillomavirus
- **H pylori**: abbreviation Helicobacter pylori
- **HRT**: abbreviation hormone replacement therapy
- **Human**: noun referring to any man, woman or child
  - **noun a person.**
  - **Most animals are afraid of humans.**
- **Human anatomy**: noun the structure, shape and functions of the human body
- **Human being**: noun a person
- **Human chorionic gonadotrophin**: noun a hormone produced by the placenta, which suppresses the mother’s usual menstrual cycle during pregnancy. It is found in the urine during pregnancy, and can be given by injection to encourage ovulation and help a woman to become pregnant.
- **Abbreviation hCG**: noun
- **Human crutch**: noun a method of helping an injured person to walk, where they rest one arm over the shoulders of the person helping
- **Human immunodeficiency virus**: noun any of the system of antigens on the surface of cells which need to be histocompatible to allow transplants to take place.
  - **Abbreviation HLA.**
- **HIV**: abbreviation human immunodeficiency virus
- **Human leucocyte antigen**: noun any of the system of antigens on the surface of cells which need to be histocompatible to allow transplants to take place.
  - **Abbreviation HLA.**
- **HLA system**: noun the general behavioural characteristics of human beings
- **Human papillomavirus**: noun a virus that causes genital warts in humans.
- **Humectant**: noun a substance that can absorb or retain moisture, e.g. a skin lotion
humeroulnar joint

humeroulnar joint /ˌhjʊə(m)əˈlɔːnər/ noun part of the elbow joint, where the trochlea of the humerus and the trochlear notch of the ulna move next to each other

humerus /ˈhjʊərəs/ noun the top bone in the arm, running from the shoulder to the elbow (NOTE: The plural is humeri.)

humeral /ˌhjʊəˈmərəl/ adjective relating to human body fluids, in particular blood serum

humour /ˈhjʊərəm/ noun a fluid in the body

hunchback /ˈhʌntʃbæk/ noun kyphosis

hunger /ˈhʌŋɡər/ noun a need to eat

hunger pains /ˈhʌŋɡər ˈpɛns/ plural noun pains in the abdomen when a person feels hungry, sometimes a sign of a duodenal ulcer

Hunter’s syndrome /ˈhʌntərz ˈsɪndrəʊm/ noun an inherited disorder caused by an enzyme deficiency, which leads to learning difficulties

Huntington’s chorea /ˈhʌntɪŋtənz ˈkɔːriə/ noun a progressive hereditary disease which affects adults, where the outer layer of the brain degenerates and the person makes involuntary jerky movements and develops progressive dementia (Described 1872. After George Sumner Huntington (1850–1916), US physician.)

Hurler’s syndrome /ˈhɜːlərz ˈsɪndrəʊm/ noun a progressive hereditary disease which results in a mass of cysts shaped like a bunch of grapes

hurt /hɜːt/ noun 1. emotional pain 2. a painful area (used by children) a. She has a hurt on her knee. ■ verb to have pain b. He’s hurt his hand.

■ adjective 1. feeling physical pain c. He was slightly hurt in the car crash. d. Two players got hurt in the football game. 2. feeling emotional pain e. Her parents’ divorce hurt her deeply.

Hutchinson’s teeth /hʌtʃɪnˈsiz təθ/ noun teeth which are narrower than usual and have a crescent-shaped notch at the biting edge. They are seen especially in children with congenital syphilis, but can also occur naturally. (NOTE: takes either a singular or a plural verb)

hyal- /haɪəl/ prefix like glass (used before vowels)

hyaline /haɪəlɪn/ noun a transparent substance produced from collagen and deposited around blood vessels and scars when some tissues degenerate

hyaline /haɪəlɪn/ adjective nearly transparent like glass

hyaline cartilage /haɪəlɪn ˈkɑːrtɪlidʒ/ noun a type of cartilage found in the nose, larynx and joints. It forms most of the skeleton of the fetus. See illustration at CARTILAGINOUS JOINT in Supplement

hyaline membrane disease /haɪəlɪn ˈmembrən ˈdiːzər/ noun same as respiratory distress syndrome

hyalitis /ˌhəʊləˈlɪtɪs/ noun inflammation of the vitreal humour or the hyaloid membrane in the eye. Also called vitritis

hyaloid membrane /haɪəlɔɪd ˈmembərn/ noun a transparent membrane round the vitreous humour in the eye

hydatid disease /ˌhaɪdətɪd ˈdɪzi/ noun an infection, usually in the lungs or liver, caused by expanding hydatid cysts that destroy the tissues of the infected organ

hydatid mole /ˌhaɪdətɪd ˈmɔʊl/ noun an abnormal pregnancy from a pathologic ovum, resulting in a mass of cysts shaped like a bunch of grapes

hydr- /haɪdər/ prefix same as hydro- (used before vowels)

hydræmia /haɪdəˈrɪmɪə/ noun an excess of water in the blood

hydralazine /haɪdraləˈziːn/ noun a drug that lowers blood pressure. People usually receive it in combination with other drugs that increase the output of urine

hydramnios /haɪdramˈnɪəs/ noun an unusually large amount of amniotic fluid surrounding the fetus

hydraphorous /haɪdrəˈrəʊsəs/ noun swelling caused by excess synovial liquid at a joint

hydrate /ˈhaɪdrət/ verb to give water to someone as to re-establish or maintain fluid balance

■ noun a chemical compound containing water molecules that can usually be driven off by heat without altering the compound’s structure

hydro- /haɪdrə/ prefix referring to water

hydröa /haɪdɾəˈrɪəs/ noun an eruption of small itchy blisters, e.g. those caused by sunlight

hydrococcus /haɪdɾəˈkɒsɪs/ noun same as caliectasis

hydrocele /haɪdɾəˈsɛl/ noun the collection of watery liquid found in a cavity such as the scrotum

hydrocerephalus /haɪdɾəˈsɛrəˈfələs/ noun an excessive quantity of cerebrospinal fluid in the brain

hydrochloric acid /haɪdɾəˈklaʊrɪk/ noun an acid found in the gastric juices which helps to break apart the food

hydrocortisone /haɪdɾəˈkɔrtəsən/ noun a steroid hormone secreted by the adrenal cortex of animals and produced synthetically, used in the treatment of
hydrogen /ˈhaɪdɹɒdʒɪn/ noun a chemical element, a gas which combines with oxygen to form water, and with other elements to form acids, and is present in all animal tissue (NOTE: The chemical symbol is H.)

hydrogen peroxide /ˈhaɪdɹɒdʒɪn ˈpɜːrəksaɪd/ noun a solution used as a disinfectant

hydrolysis /ˈhaɪdɹɒləsɪs/ noun the breaking down of a chemical compound when it reacts with water to produce two or more different compounds, as in the conversion of starch to glucose

hydropericardium /ˌhaɪdɹɒprɪˈkaːrdjúm/ noun a condition in which fluid swell the central canal of the spinal cord

hydropericarditis /ˌhaɪdɹɒprɪˈkaːrdɪtɪs/ noun an accumulation of liquid round the heart

hydroperitoneum /ˌhaɪdɹɒpərɪˈtəʊnɪəm/ noun a build-up of fluid in the peritoneal cavity (NOTE: The plural is hydroperitoneums or hydroperitoneons.)

hydrophobia /ˌhaɪdɹɒfəˈbɪə/ noun same as rabies

hydropernephoritoneum /ˌhaɪdɹɒpərɪnɪˈnepθərɪənəm/ noun a condition in which watery fluid and gas collect in the peritoneal cavity

hydropernephrosis /ˌhaɪdɹɒpərɪnɪˈnɛfərəsɪs/ noun a condition in which watery fluid and gas collect in the pleural cavity (NOTE: The plural is hydropernephroses or hydropernephrotheses.)

hydrodrops /ˈhaɪdɹɒdρrəʊps/ noun same as oedema (NOTE: The plural is hydrodropses.)

hydrospalinx /ˌhaɪdɹɒsˈpælɪŋks/ noun an occasion when watery fluid collects in one or both of the Fallopian tubes, causing swelling (NOTE: The plural is hydrosalpinges.)

hydrotherapy /ˌhaɪdɹɒθrəˈterapi/ noun a type of physiotherapy involving treatment in water, where people are put in hot baths or are encouraged to swim

hydrothorax /ˌhaɪdɹɒθərɔks/ noun the collection of liquid in the pleural cavity

hydrothorax /ˌhaɪdɹɒθərɔks/ noun an act of putting a fluid through the neck of the uterus and the Fallopian tubes under pressure to check whether the tubes are blocked

hydrothorax /ˌhaɪdɹɒθərɔks/ noun a condition in which water or urine collect in the ureter because it is blocked

hydrotherapy /ˌhaɪdɹɒθrəˈterapi/ noun a type of physiotherapy involving treatment in water, where people are put in hot baths or are encouraged to swim

hydrotherapy /ˌhaɪdɹɒθrəˈterapi/ noun a type of physiotherapy involving treatment in water, where people are put in hot baths or are encouraged to swim

hygienist /ˌhaɪdɹɪdʒɪnɪst/ noun a person who specialises in hygiene and its application

hygro-/ -an adjective relating to the hyoid bone

hygro-/ -noun a membrane which partially covers the vaginal passage in a female who has never had sexual intercourse

hymenotomy /ˌhaɪmənəʊnˈtɒmi/ noun 1. the surgical removal of the hymen, or an operation to increase the size of the opening of the hymen, 2. the surgical removal of any membrane

hymenotomy /ˌhaɪmənəʊnˈtɒmi/ noun an incision of the hymen during surgery

hyp- /haɪp-/ prefix relating to the hyoid bone

hygromass /ˌhaɪɡrəˈmæs/ noun a muscle which is attached to the hyoid bone and depresses the tongue

hyoid /haɪɔd/ noun a U-shaped bone at the base of the tongue

hyoid bone /haɪɔd bɔːn/ noun a small U-shaped bone at the base of the tongue

hyoscine /ˌhaɪəskɪn/ noun a drug used as a sedative, in particular for treatment of motion sickness

hyp- /haɪp-/ prefix same as hypo- (used before vowels)

hynalgiesia /ˌhaɪnəlˈgɪziə/ noun low sensitivity to pain

hyper-/haɪpər-/ prefix higher or too much. Opposite hypo-

hyperactivity /ˌhaɪpəræktɪv/ adjective very or unusually active

hyperactivity /ˌhaɪpəræktɪv/ adjective very or unusually active

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hyperadrenalism /ˌhaɪpərædˈrɛnlɪzəm/ noun a disorder in which too many adrenal hormones are produced, e.g. because of pituitary gland malfunction, a tumour of the adrenal gland or high doses of steroids

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hydroureter /ˌhaɪdɹəˈruːtər/ noun a condition in which water or urine collect in the ureter because it is blocked

hygiene /ˌhaɪdɹɪジn/ noun the procedures and principles designed to keep things clean and to keep conditions healthy ○ Nurses have to maintain a strict personal hygiene.

hygienist /ˌhaɪdɹɪdʒɪnɪst/ noun a person who specialises in hygiene and its application
hypersensitivity /haip'sensiti'viti/ noun a condition in which someone reacts very strongly to something such as an allergic substance ○ her hypersensitivity to dust ○ Anaphylactic shock shows hypersensitivity to an injection.

hypersplenism /haip'splenizə'm/ noun a condition in which too many red blood cells are destroyed by the spleen, which is often enlarged

hypertelorism /haip'telərɪzə'm/ noun a condition in which there is too much space between two organs or parts of the body

hypertension /haip'tenʃən/ noun arterial blood pressure that is higher than the usual range for gender and age. Also called high blood pressure, hyperpiesia. Compare hypotension

hypertensive headache /haip'ten'ativ/ adjective referring to high blood pressure

hypertensive hypnotherapy /haip'ten'ativ hɪpnəθə'pɪəri/ noun treatment by hypnosis, used in treating some addictions

hypnotic /hɪp'notɪk/ adjective 1. relating to hypnosis and hypnotism 2. referring to a state which is like sleep but which is caused artificially 3. referring to a drug which causes sleep

hypnotism /hɪp'nɔtɪzəm/ noun the techniques used to induce hypnosis

hyper - /haip'ær/ prefix less, too little or beneath

hypoaesthesia /haip'əæsthsə/ noun a condition in which someone has a diminished sense of touch

hypocalcaemia /haip'kælkə'siəm/ noun an unusually low amount of calcium in the blood, which can cause tetany

hypocapnia /haip'səkæpniə/ noun a condition in which there is not enough carbon dioxide in the blood

hypochloraeemia /haip'kloərə'siəm/ noun a condition in which there are not enough chlorine ions in the blood

hypochlorhydria /haip'kloə'haɪdrɪə/ noun a condition in which there is not enough hydrochloric acid in the stomach

hypochondria /haip'kəndriə/ noun a condition in which a person is too worried about his or her own health and believes he or she is ill

hypochondriac /haip'kəndriək/ noun a person who worries about his or her health too much

hypochondriac region /haip'kəndriə'rejn/ noun one of two parts of the upper abdomen, on either side of the epigastrium below the floating ribs

hypochondrium /haip'kəndriəm/ noun one of the two hypochondriac regions in the upper part of the abdomen

hypochromic /haip'kəroʊmɪk/ adjective referring to blood cells or body tissue which do not have the usual amount of pigment ○ hypochromic scars

hypodermic /haip'dərmɪk/ adjective beneath the skin ○ a hypodermic syringe, needle or injection (informal)

hypodermic injection /haip'dərmɪk in'ʃekʃən/ noun an injection of a liquid, e.g. a painkilling drug, beneath the skin. Also called subcutaneous injection

hypodermic needle /haip'dərmɪk 'niːdl/ noun a needle for injecting liquid under the skin.
hypodermic syringe /ˌhaʊpəˈdɜrmɪk/ noun a syringe fitted with a hypodermic needle for injecting liquid under the skin

hypofibrinogenaeemia /ˌhaʊpəˈfɜːrɪnəʊdʒəˈeɪmɪə/ noun a condition in which there is not enough fibrinogen in the blood, e.g. because of several blood transfusions or as an inherited condition

hypogammaglobulinaemia /ˌhaʊpəˈgæməɡləˈbjuːliːnəˈeɪmɪə/ noun an unusually low concentration of gamma globulin in the blood that causes an immune deficiency. It may be present from birth or acquired later in life.

hypogastrium /ˌhaʊpəˈɡæstrɪəm/ noun the part of the abdomen beneath the stomach

hypoglossal /ˌhaʊpəˈɡlɒsəl/ adjective 1. underneath or on the lower side of the tongue 2. relating to the hypoglossal nerve

hypoglossal nerve /ˌhaʊpəˈɡlɒsəl/ noun the twelfth cranial nerve which governs the muscles of the tongue

hypoglycaemia /ˌhaʊpəˈɡləʊsɪəˈmeɪə/ noun a low concentration of glucose in the blood

hypoglycaemic /ˌhaʊpəˈɡləʊsɪəˈmɪk/ adjective having hypoglycaemia

hypoglycaemic coma /ˌhaʊpəˈɡləʊsɪəˈkɒmə/ noun a state of unconsciousness affecting diabetics after taking an overdose of insulin

hypoglycaemia /ˌhaʊpəˈɡləʊsɪəˈmeɪə/ noun a condition in which someone produces too little sweat

hypoinsulinism /ˌhaʊpəˈɪnsjʊlɪnɪzəˈɪm/ noun a condition in which the body does not have enough insulin, often because of a problem with the pancreas

hypokalaemia /ˌhaʊpəˈkæləˈeɪmɪə/ noun a deficiency of potassium in the blood

hypomania /ˌhaʊpəˈmeɪniə/ noun a state of mild mania or overexcitement, especially when part of a manic-depressive cycle

hypometropia /ˌhaʊpəˈmɛtroʊpiə/ noun same as myopia

hyponatraemia /ˌhaʊpəˈnætrəˈeɪmɪə/ noun a lack of sodium in the body

hypoparathyroidism /ˌhaʊpəˈpærəˈθɜːrɪdɪzəˈɪm/ noun a condition in which the parathyroid glands do not secrete enough parathyroid hormone, leading to low blood calcium and muscle spasms

hypopharynx /ˌhaʊpəˈfærəŋks/ noun the part of the pharynx between the hyoid bone and the bottom of the cricoid cartilage (NOTE: The plural is hypopharynxes or hypopharynges.)

hypophysial /ˌhaʊpəˈfɪziəl/ adjective referring to the pituitary gland

hypophysectomy /ˌhaʊpəˈfɪsɛktəmɪ/ noun the surgical removal of the pituitary gland

hypophysis cerebri /ˌhaʊpəˈfɪsɪs ˈserɛbrɪ/ noun same as pituitary gland

hypopiesis /ˌhaʊpəˈpiːsɪs/ noun a condition in which the blood pressure is too low

hypopituitarism /ˌhaʊpəˈpɪtjuːətəˈrɪzəm/ noun a condition in which the pituitary gland is underactive

hypoplasia /ˌhaʊpəˈpleɪsɪə/ noun a lack of development or incorrect formation of a body tissue or an organ

hypoplastic left heart /ˌhaʊpəˈpleɪstɪk left "hɑːt/ noun a serious heart disorder in which the left side of the heart does not develop properly, leading to death within six weeks of birth unless surgery is performed

hypoproteinæmia /ˌhaʊpəˈprɔtɪnəˈmeɪə/ noun a condition in which there is not enough protein in the blood

hypoprothrombinaemia /ˌhaʊpəˈprɔθrəʊmbɪnəˈeɪmɪə/ noun a condition in which there is not enough prothrombin in the blood, so that the person bleeds and bruises easily

hypopyon /ˌhaʊpəˈpɒɪɒn/ noun an accumulation of pus in the aqueous humour in the front chamber of the eye

hyposensitive /ˌhaʊpəˈsɛnsɪtɪv/ adjective being less sensitive than usual

hypospadias /ˌhaʊpəˈspædɪəs/ noun a congenital condition of the wall of the male urethra or the vagina, so that the opening occurs on the under side of the penis or in the vagina. Compare epispadias

hypostasis /ˌhaʊpəˈstæsɪs/ noun a condition in which fluid accumulates in part of the body because of poor circulation

hypostatic /ˌhaʊpəˈstætɪk/ adjective referring to hypostasis

hypostatic eczema /ˌhaʊpəˈstætɪk ˈɛksɪmə/ noun same as varicose eczema

hypostatic pneumonia /ˌhaʊpəˈstætɪk ˈnjuːmə/ noun pneumonia caused by fluid accumulating in the lungs of a bedridden person with a weak heart

hyposthenna /ˌhaʊpəˈθɛnɪə/ noun a condition of unusual bodily weakness

hypotension /ˌhaʊpəˈtenʃən/ noun a condition in which the pressure of the blood is unusually low. Also called low blood pressure. Compare hypertension

hypotensive /ˌhaʊpəˈtɛnsɪv/ adjective having low blood pressure

hypothalamic /ˌhaʊpəˈθæləmɪk/ adjective referring to the hypothalamus

hypothalamic hormone /ˌhaʊpəˈθæləmɪk ˈhɑːmən/ noun same as releasing hormone

hypothalamicus /ˌhaʊpəˈθæləməs/ noun the part of the brain above the pituitary gland, which controls the production of hormones by the pituit-
tary gland and regulates important bodily functions such as hunger, thirst and sleep. See illustration of brain in Supplement.

**hypothalamus** /haɪˈθələməs/ noun same as hypothalmus (NOTE: The plural is hypothalma
d**hypothalma**

**hypo**

**hypothenar eminence** /hɑɪˈθɛnər/ 'emɪnəns/ noun a lump on the palm beneath the little finger.

**hypothenar**

**hypothermia** /haɪˈθɜːriːmə/ noun a reduction in body temperature below normal, for medical purposes taken to be below 35°C.

**hypothesis** /haɪˈθɛsɪs/ noun a suggested explanation for an observation or experimental result, which is then refined or disproved by further investigation.

**hypothyroidism** /haɪˈθɔɪrɔɪdɪzəm/ noun underactivity of the thyroid gland.

**hypotonia** /haɪˈpɑːtənіə/ noun reduced tone of the skeletal muscles.

**hypotonic** /hɑɪˈpɑːtɒnɪk/ adjective 1. showing hypotonia. 2. referring to a solution with a lower osmotic pressure than plasma.

**hypotrichosis** /haɪˈpɔtrɪkrɒsɪs/ noun a condition in which less hair develops than usual. Compare alopecia (NOTE: The plural is hypotri
coses.)

**hypotrophia** /hɑɪˈpɑːtroʊpiə/ noun a form of squint where one eye looks downwards.

**hypoventilation** /haɪpəˈventɪˈleɪʃən/ noun very slow breathing.

**hypovitaminosis** /haɪˈpɒvɪtəmɪnəsɪs/ noun a lack of vitamins.

**hypoxemia** /haɪˈpɒksɪmɪə/ noun an inadequate supply of oxygen in the arterial blood.

**hypoxantine phosphoribosyl transferase** /haɪˈpɒksantɪn ˈfɜːrɪˌrɪbəsɪl ˈtrɪfɜːrəˌseɪs/ noun full form of **HPRT**.

**hypoxia** /hɑɪˈpɒksیə/ noun 1. an inadequate supply of oxygen to tissue as a result of a lack of oxygen in the arterial blood 2. same as hypoxama.

**hyster-** /hɪstər-/ prefix same as **hystero-** (used before vowels)

**hysteralgia** /hɪstəˈrældʒə/ noun pain in the uterus.

**hysterec
tomy** /hɪstə'retəmɪ/ noun the surgical removal of the uterus, often either to treat cancer or because of the presence of fibroids.

**hysteria** /hɪstəˈriə/ noun a term formerly used in psychiatry, but now informally used for a condition in which the person appears unstable, and may scream and wave their arms about, but also is repressed, and may be slow to react to outside stimuli (dated).

**hysterical** /hɪstəˈrikləl/ adjective referring to a reaction showing **hysteria** (informal).

**hysteries** /hɪstəˈriəz/ noun an attack of **hysteria** (dated).

**hystero-/hɪstər-** prefix referring to the uterus.

**hystero-ophorectomy** /hɪstəˈroʊ ˈɔpərɛktəmɪ/ noun the surgical removal of the uterus, the uterine tubes and the ovaries.

**hysteroptosis** /hɪstəˈrɑːpətɒsɪs/ noun prolapse of the uterus.

**hysterosalpingo-contrast sonography** /hɪstəˈsɔlˌpɪŋgləʊ ˈkɒntræst səˈnəʊɡrɑːfi/ noun an X-ray examination of the uterus and Fallopian tubes by ultrasound. Abbreviation **HYCOSY**.

**hysterosalpingography** /hɪstəˈsɔlˌpɪŋgləˈɡrɑːfi/ noun an X-ray examination of the uterus and Fallopian tubes following injection of radio-opaque material. Also called **uterosalpingography**.

**hysterosalpingosonography** /hɪstəˈsɔlˌpɪŋgləˈsɒŋɡrɑːfi/ noun examination of the uterus and Fallopian tubes by ultrasound.

**hysterosalpingostomy** /hɪstəˈsɔlˌpɪŋgləˈstəmɪ/ noun an operation to remake an open
ing between the uterine tube and the uterus, to help with infertility problems.

**hysteroscope** /hɪstəˈrɒskəp/ noun a tube for inspecting the inside of the uterus.

**hysteroscopy** /hɪstəˈrɒskəpi/ noun an examination of the uterine cavity using a hysteroscope or fibroscope.

**hysterotomy** /hɪstəˈrotəmɪ/ noun a surgical incision into the uterus, as in caesarean section or for some types of abortion.

**hysterotrichorrhaphy** /hɪstəˈtrɪkərəˈfæpi/ noun an operation to repair a tear in the cervix.
-iasis /əˈsɪs/ suffix disease caused by something
iatro- /ɪˈtrəʊ/ prefix relating to medicine or doctors
iatrogenesis /ɪəˌtrəˈdʒenəsɪs/ noun any condition caused by the actions of doctors or other healthcare professionals
iatrogenic /ɪəˌtrəˈdʒenɪk/ adjective referring to a condition which is caused by a doctor’s treatment for another disease or condition or an iatrogenic infection
ICSH abbreviation International Council of Nurses
ICRC abbreviation the International Committee of the Red Cross
ICSH abbreviation International Council of Nurses 2. infection control nurse
ICP abbreviation intracranial pressure
ICRC abbreviation International Committee of the Red Cross
ICSH abbreviation interstitial cell stimulating hormone
icteric /ɪkˈterɪk/ adjective referring to someone with jaundice
icterus /ɪkˈtrəs/ noun same as jaundice
icterus gravis neonatorum /ɪkˈtrəs ˈɡrævɪs ˈnɛnətəˈɔːrəm/ noun jaundice associated with erythroblastosis fetalis
ictus /ɪkˈtʌs/ noun a stroke or fit
ICU abbreviation intensive care unit
id /ɪd/ noun (in Freudian psychology) the basic unconscious drives which exist in hidden forms in a person
ideation /ɪˈdeɪʃən/ noun the act or process of imagining or forming thoughts and ideas
identical twins /ɪdəˈtɛntɪkl/ ‘twins/ plural noun twins who are exactly the same in appearance because they developed from the same ovum. Also called monozygotic twins, uniovular twins
identification /ɪdəˈtɛntɪfɪkeɪʃən/ noun the act of discovering or stating who someone is or what something is
ideo- /ɪˈdɪəʊ/ prefix involving ideas
idi- /ɪˈdɪə/ prefix referring to one particular person
idiopathic /ɪdɪˈpæθɪk/ adjective referring to idiopathy
idiopathic epilepsy /ɪdɪˈpæθɪk ˈɛpɪˌlɛpsi/ noun epilepsy not caused by a brain disorder, beginning during childhood or adolescence
idiopathy /ɪdɪˈpæθi/ noun a condition which develops without any known cause
idiosyncrasy /ɪdiˈɒsɪŋkrəsɪ/ noun a way of behaving which is particular to one person
idiot savant /ɪdɪət ˈsævənt/ noun a person with learning difficulties who also possesses a single particular mental ability, such as the ability to play music by ear, to draw remembered objects or to do mental calculations, which is very highly developed
idioventricular /ˌɪdɪˌɒvərˈtrɪŋkjʊlər/ adjective relating to the ventricles of the heart
idioventricular rhythm /ˌɪdɪˌɒvərˌtrɪŋkjʊlə ˈrɪthm/ noun a slow natural rhythm in the ventricles of the heart, but not in the atria
IDK abbreviation internal derangement of the knee
Ig abbreviation immunoglobulin
Ig A antiendomysial antibody /aɪ ˈæntɪˌendəmɪs, ˈmeɪsɪ(ə)l/ noun a serological screening test for coeliac disease
IHD abbreviation ischaemic heart disease
IL-1 abbreviation interleukin-1
IL-2 abbreviation interleukin-2
ileal pouch /iˈleɪəl pʌʃ/ noun a part of the small intestine which is made into a new rectum in a surgical operation, freeing someone from the need for an ileostomy after their colon is removed
ileectomy /ˈiəliːkətmi/ noun the surgical removal of all or part of the ileum
ileitis /iˈleɪətɪs/ noun inflammation of the ileum
ileitis /iˈleɪətɪs/ noun inflammation of both the ileum and the colon
ileoacaeal /iˈleɪəʊəˌsɪkəʊl/ adjective referring to the ileum and the caecum
ileoacaeal orifice /iˈleɪəʊəˌsɪkəʊl əˈtɜrfɪs/ noun an opening where the small intestine joins the large intestine
ileoacaeal valve /iˈleɪəʊəˌsɪkəʊl ˈvælv/ noun a valve at the end of the ileum, which allows food to pass from the ileum into the caecum
ileoaecocystoplasty /iˌlɪəʊəˌsɪkəʊˌsɪstəʊlɪeɪəʊəˌkɪsˈtɔpləstɪ/ noun an operation to reconstruct the bladder using a piece of the combined ileum and caecum
ileocolic /iˈleɪəʊəˌsɪkəʊlɪk/ adjective referring to both the ileum and the colon
ileocolic artery /iˈleɪəʊəˌsɪkəʊlɪk ˈætəri/ noun a branch of the superior mesenteric artery
ileocolitis /iˌlɪəʊəˌsɪkəʊˈlɪtɪs/ noun inflammation of both the ileum and the colon
ileocolostomy /iˈlɪəʊəˌkɒləˌstɒmə/ noun a surgical operation to make a link directly between the ileum and the colon
ileocolostomy /iˌlɪəʊəˌkɒləˌstɒməˌtɜ/ noun a surgical operation to create a link between the ileum and the rectum
ileorectal /iˌlɪəʊəˌrɛktəl/ adjective referring to both the ileum and the rectum
ileosigmoidostomy /iˌlɪəʊəˌsɪɡməʊdəˌstɒməˌtɜ/ noun a surgical operation to create a link between the ileum and the sigmoid colon
ileostomy /iˈlɪəʊəˌstɒmə/ noun a surgical operation to make an opening between the ileum and the abdominal wall to act as an artificial opening for excretion of faeces
ileostomy bag /iˌlɪəʊəˌstɒmə ˈbæɡ/ noun a bag attached to the opening made by an ileostomy, to collect faeces as they are passed out of the body
ileum /iˈlɪəm/ noun the lower part of the small intestine, between the jejunum and the caecum. Compare ilium. See illustration at DIGESTIVE SYSTEM in Supplement (Note: The plural is ilea.)
ileus /iˈlɪəs/ noun obstruction of the intestine, usually distension caused by loss of muscular action in the bowel. Paralytic ileus

Note: The plural is ilei.

1. If you feel very ill you ought to see a doctor.
2. A type of disease. Scarlet fever is no longer considered to be a very serious illness. He is in hospital with an infectious tropical illness.

Imagination /ɪˌmædʒəˈneɪʃən/ noun the ability to see or invent things in your mind. In her imagination she saw herself sitting on a beach in the sun.

Imagine /ˈɪmædʒən/ verb to see, hear or feel something in your mind. Imagine yourself sitting on the beach in the sun.
immunocompromised /imju:nɔʊkəmprəˈmɔːzd/ adjective not able to offer resistance to infection

immunodeficiency /imju:nɔsdɪˈfɪʃ(ə)n/ noun a lack of immunity to a disease

immunodeficiency virus /imju:nɔsdɪˈfɪʃ(ə)n vərəʊs/ noun a retrovirus which attacks the immune system

immunodeficient /imju:nɔsdɪˈfɪʃ(ə)n/ adjective lacking immunity to a disease ○ This form of meningitis occurs in persons who are immunodeficient.

immunogenic /imju:nɔdʒɪŋ/ adjective producing an immune response

immunogenicity /imju:nɔdʒɪˈnəti/ noun the property which makes a substance able to produce an immune response in an organism

immunoglobulin /imju:nɔsəʊˈgləʊbəlin/ noun an antibody, a protein produced in blood plasma as protection against infection, the commonest being gamma globulin. Abbreviation Ig (NOTE: The five main classes are called: immunoglobulin G, A, D, E and M or IgG, IgA, IgD, IgE and IgM.)

immunological /imju:nɔdʒəˈlɒjɪk(ə)/ adjective referring to immunology

immunologist /imju:nəʊləˈdʒɪst/ noun a specialist in immunology

immunology /imju:nəʊləˈdʒɪ/ noun the study of immunity and immunisation

immunosuppressant /imju:nəʊsəˈprɛsnt/ noun a drug used to counteract the response of the immune system to reject a transplanted organ

immunosuppression /imju:nəʊsəˈprɛʃən/ noun the suppression of the body’s natural immune system so that it will not reject a transplanted organ

immunosuppressive /imju:nəʊsəˈprɛsɪv/ adjective countering the immune system

immunotherapy /imju:nəʊθəˈrɛpi/ noun adoptive immunotherapy

immunotransfusion /imju:nəʊtrænʃən/ noun a transfusion of blood, serum or plasma containing immune bodies

Imodium /iːməˈdɔɪd/ a trade name for loperamide hydrochloride

impacted /imˈpæktid/ adjective tightly pressed or firmly lodged against something

impacted faeces /imˈpæktid ˈfeɪsɪs/ plural noun extremely hard dry faeces which cannot pass through the anus and have to be surgically removed

impacted fracture /imˈpæktid ˈfræktʃə/ noun a fracture where the broken parts of the bones are pushed into each other
impacted tooth /ɪmˈpæktd/ noun a tooth which is held against another tooth and so cannot grow normally

impacted ureteric calculus /ɪmˈpæktd ʌrəˈtrɪk/ noun a small hard mass of mineral salts which is lodged in a ureter

impaction /ɪmˈpækʃən/ noun a condition in which things are closely pressed together and cannot develop or move normally

impair /ɪmˈpɛər/ verb to harm a sense or function so that it does not work properly

impaired hearing /ɪmˈpɛərd hɪərɪŋ/ noun hearing which is not clear and sharp

impaired vision /ɪmˈpɛərd viʒən/ noun eye-sight which is not fully clear

impermeable /ɪmˈpɜːrmɪəbl/ adjective not allowing liquids or gases to pass through

impetigo /ɪmˈpɛtɪɡoʊ/ noun an irritating and very contagious skin disease caused by staphylococci, which spreads rapidly and is easily passed from one child to another, but can be treated with antibiotics

implant noun /ɪmplænt/ something grafted or inserted into a person, e.g. tissue, a drug, inert material or a device such as a pacemaker

implantation /ɪmplæntəˈʃən/ noun 1. the act of grafting or inserting tissue, a drug, inert material or a device such as a pacemaker

implant site /ɪmplænt saɪt/ noun a place in or on the body where an implant is positioned

implusion /ɪmpljuːzən/ noun the violent inward collapse of a hollow structure. It happens when the pressure outside the structure is greater than the pressure inside it.

incapacitated /ɪnˈkæpsətətɪd/ adjective not able to act or work

incidence rate /ɪnˈsɪdəns rɛt/ noun the number of new cases of a disease during a period of time, per thousand of population

incendium /ɪnˈsɛntjəm/ noun an act of sexual intercourse or other sexual activity with so close a relative, that it is illegal or culturally not allowed

incendium /ɪnˈsɛntjəm/ noun the number of times something happens in a specific population over a period of time

incidence /ɪnˈsɪdəns/ noun the number of new cases of a disease during a given period, per thousand of population
inci \varepsilon nt /ɪnˈspɪrənt/ adjective just beginning or in its early stages. He has an incipient appendicitis. The tests detected incipient diabetes mellitus.

inci \varepsilon \varepsilon n /ɪnˈsɪsən/ noun a cut in a person’s body made by a surgeon using a scalpel, or any cut made with a sharp knife or razor. The first incision is made two millimetres below the second rib. Compare excision

inci \varepsilon \varepsilon \varepsilon n /ɪnˈsɪsən/ adjective referring to an incision

inci \varepsilon \varepsilon \varepsilon n \varepsilon r /ɪnˈsɪsənər/ noun a hernia which breaks through the abdominal wall at a place where a surgical incision was made during an operation

inci \varepsilon \varepsilon \varepsilon n /ɪnˈsɪsən/ noun one of the front teeth, of which there are four each in the upper and lower jaws, which are used to cut off pieces of food. See illustration at teeth in Supplement

inci \varepsilon \varepsilon \varepsilon n /ɪnˈsɪsən/ noun something enclosed inside something else

inci \varepsilon \varepsilon \varepsilon n /ɪnˈsɪsən/ noun very small particles found in cells infected by a virus

inci \varepsilon \varepsilon \varepsilon n \varepsilon l /ɪnˈsɪsəl/ adjective (of health services) provided whether or not someone has a disability or special needs

inci \varepsilon \varepsilon \varepsilon n \varepsilon t\varepsilon \varepsilon /ɪnˈsɪsətɪl/ noun the fact of being incompatible or the incompatibility of the donor’s blood with that of the patient

inci \varepsilon \varepsilon \varepsilon n /ɪnˈsɪsən/ adjective 1. referring to something which does not go together with something else 2. referring to drugs which must not be used together because they undergo chemical change and the therapeutic effect is lost or changed to something undesirable 3. referring to tissue which is genetically different from other tissue, making it impossible to transplant into that tissue

inci \varepsilon \varepsilon \varepsilon n /ɪnˈsɪsən/ blood from a donor that does not match the blood of the person receiving the transfusion

inci \varepsilon \varepsilon \varepsilon n /ɪnˈsɪsən/ noun the inability to do a particular act, especially a lack of knowledge or skill which makes a person unable to do particular job

inci \varepsilon \varepsilon \varepsilon n /ɪnˈsɪsən/ cervix (3) of the uterus which is often the cause of spontaneous abortions and premature births and can be remedied by purse-string stitching

inci \varepsilon \varepsilon \varepsilon n /ɪnˈsɪsən/ noun an abortion where part of the contents of the uterus is not expelled

inci \varepsilon \varepsilon \varepsilon n /ɪnˈsɪsən/ noun the inability to control the discharge of urine or faeces (NOTE: Single incontinence is the inability to control the bladder. Double incontinence is the inability to control both the bladder and the bowels.)

inci \varepsilon \varepsilon \varepsilon n /ɪnˈsɪsən/ pad (3) of the buttocks pad a pad of material to absorb urine

inci \varepsilon \varepsilon \varepsilon n /ɪnˈsɪsən/ noun unable to control the discharge of urine or faeces

inci \varepsilon \varepsilon \varepsilon n /ɪnˈsɪsən/ noun a situation in which the muscles in various parts of the body do not act together, making it impossible to carry out some actions

inci \varepsilon \varepsilon \varepsilon n /ɪnˈsɪsən/ period /ɪnˈsɪsən pɪədərɪ/ noun the time during which a virus or bacterium develops in the body after contamination or infection, before the appearance of the symptoms of the disease. Also called stadi um invasion

inci \varepsilon \varepsilon \varepsilon n /ɪnˈsɪsən/ noun 1. an apparatus for growing bacterial cultures 2. an enclosed container in which a premature baby can be kept, within which conditions such as temperature and oxygen levels can be controlled

inci \varepsilon \varepsilon \varepsilon n /ɪnˈsɪsən/ nurse for incurables. He is suffering from an incurable disease of the blood.

inci \varepsilon \varepsilon \varepsilon n /ɪnˈsɪsən/ noun a patient who will never be cured. She has been admitted to a hospital for incurables.

inci \varepsilon \varepsilon \varepsilon n /ɪnˈsɪsən/ noun one of the three ossicles in the middle ear, shaped like an anvil. See illustration at ear in Supplement

inci \varepsilon \varepsilon \varepsilon n /ɪnˈsɪsən/ independent /ɪnˈsɪsən/ dependent /ɪnˈsɪsən/ not controlled by someone or something else

inci \varepsilon \varepsilon \varepsilon n /ɪnˈsɪsən/ independent nursing function /ɪnˈsɪsən /nɪndɪpendɪnt/ (3) of the nurse’s job for which the nurse takes full responsibility

inci \varepsilon \varepsilon \varepsilon n /ɪnˈsɪsən/ index finger /ɪnˈdɛks/ fɪŋgər/ noun the first finger next to the thumb

inci \varepsilon \varepsilon \varepsilon n /ɪnˈsɪsən/ indication /ɪnˈsɪsən/ noun a situation or sign which suggests that a specific treatment should be given or that a condition has a particular cause. Sulpha drugs have been replaced by antibiotics in many indications. Contraindication indication /ɪnˈdɪkəntɪkeɪʃən/ noun 1. a substance which shows something, e.g. a substance secreted in body fluids which shows which blood group a person belongs to 2. something that serves as a warning or guide

inci \varepsilon \varepsilon \varepsilon n /ɪnˈsɪsən/ indigenous /ɪnˈdɪdʒənəs/ adjective 1. natural or inborn 2. native to or representative of a country or region

inci \varepsilon \varepsilon \varepsilon n /ɪnˈsɪsən/ indigestion /ɪnˈdɪdʒɛʃən/ noun a disturbance of the normal process of digestion, where
the person experiences pain or discomfort in the stomach. He is taking indigestion tablets. dyspepsia

indigo carmine /in'dajgou 'kərnənt/noun a blue dye which is injected into a person to test how well their kidneys are working

indirect contact /'indəkənt/noun the fact of catching a disease by inhaling germs or by being in contact with a vector

individualise /'individjuəlaiz/v, individualize verb to provide something that matches the needs of a specific person or situation. individualised nursing care /'individjuəlaid 'nɔːsɪŋ keə/noun care which is designed to provide exactly what one particular patient needs. The home’s staff are specially trained to provide individualised nursing care.

Indocid /'indɔsɪd/ a trade name for indomethacin

indolent /'indələnt/ adjective 1. causing little pain. 2. referring to an ulcer which develops slowly and does not heal

indomethacin /'indɔmɛθəsɪn/noun a drug that reduces pain, fever and inflammation, especially that caused by arthritis

indrawn /'ɪndraʊn/ adjective pulled inside

induce /'ɪndjuːs/v, verb to make something happen

induced abortion /'ɪndjuːstəb'ɑːʃən/noun an abortion which is deliberately caused by drugs or by surgery

induction /'ɪndʌkʃən/noun 1. the process of starting or speeding up the birth of a baby. 2. the stimulation of an enzyme’s production when the substance on which it acts increases in concentration. 3. a process by which one part of an embryo influences another part’s development. 4. information and support given to new employees in an organisation

induction of labour /'ɪndʌkʃən və 'leɪbru/noun the action of starting childbirth artificially

induration /'ɪndjʊərəʃən/noun the hardening of tissue or of an artery because of pathobiological change

industrial disease /'ɪndjʊstrɪəl 'drəɪzəl/noun a disease which is caused by the type of work done by a worker or by the conditions in which he or she works, e.g. by dust produced or chemicals used in the factory

inembrit /'ɪnəmˈbrit/ noun a state where a person is drunk, especially habitually drunk

inertia /'inəsɪə/noun a lack of activity in the body mind

in extremis /'ɪn ɪks'trɪmɪs/ adverb at the moment of death

infant /'ɪnfænt/noun a child under two years of age

infanticide /'ɪnfæntɪsəd/ a child under two years of age

infant 2. a person who kills an infant

infantile /'ɪnfæntɪl/ adjective referring to small children

infantile convulsions /'ɪnfæntɪl kənˈvʌlsʃənz/noun a condition in which a person keeps some characteristics of an infant when he or she becomes an adult

infant mortality rate /'ɪnfænt 'mɔːrɪtəri tə'tɪti/noun the number of infants who die per thousand births

infarct /'ɪnˈfɜːkt/noun an area of tissue which is killed when the blood supply is cut off by the blockage of an artery

infarction /'ɪnfərʃən/noun a condition in which tissue is killed by the cutting off of the blood supply

infect /'ɪnʃekt/v, verb to contaminate someone or something with microorganisms that cause disease or toxins. The disease infected her liver. The whole arm soon became infected.

injected wound /'ɪnʃektəd 'wʌnd/noun a wound into which bacteria have entered

infection /'ɪnʃekʃən/noun 1. the entry or introduction into the body of microorganisms, which then multiply. As a carrier he was spreading infection to other people in the office. 2. an illness which is caused by the entry of microbes into the body. She is susceptible to minor infections.

infectious /'ɪnʃektəs/ adjective referring to a disease which is caused by microorganisms and can be transmitted to other persons by direct means. This strain of flu is highly infectious. Her measles is at the infectious stage.

infectious disease /'ɪnʃektəs 'djʊərəs/noun a disease caused by microorganisms such as bacteria, viruses or fungi. Communicable disease, contagious disease

infectious mononucleosis /'ɪnʃektəs 'mʌnənjuːkələsɪs/noun an infectious disease where the body has an excessive number of white blood cells. Also called glandular fever

infectious parotitis /'ɪnʃektəs 'pærətətɪtɪs/noun same as mumps

infective /'ɪnʃektɪv/ adjective referring to a disease caused by a microorganism, which can be caught from another person but which may not always be directly transmitted

inferior /'ɪnʃɪərər/ adjective referring to a lower part of the body. Opposite superior

inferior aspect /'ɪnʃɪərər əspekt/noun a view of the body from below
inflammation /ɪnˈflæmən/ noun a condition caused by irritation of the tissues of the body by an irritant such as a drug, or the reaction of the body to an injury or irritation.

infiltrate /ɪnˈfɪlrət/ verb to fill or occupy in large numbers; to spread slowly beneath the skin.

infertility /ɪnfɜːraˈti/ noun the absence of the ability to reproduce.

infestation /ɪnˈfɛstəʃən/ noun the presence of parasites or other external agents within a body.

inflated /ɪnˈflæt/ adjective air-filled, distended.

inflame /ɪnˈflæm/ verb to cause inflammation.

inflammatory bowel disease /ɪnˈflæmat(ə)ri/ noun a condition affecting the digestive tract, characterized by inflammation of the intestinal lining.

inflammatory response /ɪnˈflæmat(ə)ri/ noun an increase in the number of white blood cells.

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infected /ɪnfəkt/ adjective having an infection.

infarct /ɪnfərk/ noun a dead area of tissue resulting from an obstruction to the blood supply.

infra- /ɪnˈfɪrə/ prefix below.

infra-red /ɪnˈfɜːrəd/ adjective relating to infrared radiation.

infundibulum /ɪnˈfʌndɪbjuːləm/ noun a part of the body shaped like a funnel, especially the upper part of the uterus in the female.

infirm /ɪnˈfɜːrm/ adjective physical and weak.

infirmary /ɪnˈfɜːrmary/ noun a place where people can go if they are ill.

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injection /ɪnˈdʒɛkʃən/ noun 1. the act of introducing a liquid into the body 2. a liquid introduced into the body
injury /ˈɪndʒəri/ noun damage or a wound caused to a person’s body □ His injuries required hospital treatment. □ He received severe facial injuries in the accident.
injection scoring system /ɪnˈdʒɛkʃənˈskaːrɪŋˌsɪstəm/ noun any system used for deciding how severe an injury is □ a standard lung injury scoring system Abbreviation ISS
inlay /ˈɪnleɪ/ noun (in dentistry) a type of filling for teeth
inlet /ˈɪnleɪt/ noun a passage or opening through which a cavity can be entered
innate /ˈɪnət/ adjective inherited, which is present in a body from birth
inner pleura /ˈɪnər ploʊrə/ noun same as visceral pleura
innervation /ɪnəˈnɜːrəʃən/ noun the nerve supply to an organ, including both motor nerves and sensory nerves
innominate artery /ɪnəˈnɒmɪnət/ noun the largest branch of the arch of the aorta, which continues as the right common carotid and right subclavian arteries
innominate bone /ɪnəˈmɒnɪmət/ noun same as hip bone
innominate vein /ɪnəˈmɒnɪmət/ noun same as brachiocephalic vein
inoculate /ɪnəˈkjuːleɪt/ verb to introduce vaccine into a person’s body in order to make the body create its own antibodies, so making the person immune to the disease □ The baby was inoculated against diphtheria. (NOTE: You inoculate someone with or against a disease.)
inoculation /ɪnəˈkjuːleɪʃən/ noun the action of inoculating someone □ Has the baby had a diphtheria inoculation?
inoculum /ɪnəˈkjʊlmən/ noun a substance used for inoculation, e.g. a vaccine (NOTE: The plural is inocula.)
inoperable /ɪnəˈpɜːrəbəl/ adjective referring to a condition which cannot be operated on □ The surgeon decided that the cancer was inoperable.
inorganic /ɪnˌɔrɡənɪk/ adjective referring to a substance which is not made from animal or vegetable sources
inorganic acid /ˌɪnɔrɡənɪk ˈæsɪd/ noun an acid which comes from minerals, used in dilute form to help indigestion
inotropic /ɪnˌɔtrəpɪk/ adjective affecting the way muscles contract, especially those of the heart
inpatient /ɪnˈpeɪʃənt/ noun someone who stays overnight or for some time in a hospital for treatment or observation. Compare outpatient
instellation

insufficiency

inquests /ɪnˈkwест/ noun an inquiry by a coroner into the cause of a death

insanity /ɪnˈsanəti/ noun a psychotic mental disorder or illness

insect /ˈɪnsekt/ noun a small animal with six legs and a body in three parts

insect bite /ˈɪnsekt bайt/ noun a sting caused by an insect which punctures the skin to suck blood, and in so doing introduces irritants

insensibility /ɪnˈsɛnsɪbɪlɪtی/ noun the state of being unaware of or not being able to respond to a stimulus

insensitive /ɪnˈsɛnsɪtіv/ adjective 1. lacking feeling or consciousness 2. not aware of or responding to a stimulus 3. too slight to be perceived by the senses

insertion /ɪnˈsɜːʃən/ noun the point of attachment of a muscle to a bone

insidious /ɪnˈsɪdiəs/ adjective causing harm without showing any obvious signs

insidious disease /ɪnˈsidіəs dіˈzіz/ noun a disease which causes damage before being detected

insight /ˈɪnsайт/ noun the ability of a person to realise that he or she is ill or has particular problems or characteristics

in situ /ɪnˈsɪtə/ adverb in place

insoluble /ɪnˈsɔljuəbəl/ adjective not able to be dissolved in liquid

insoluble fibre /ɪnˌsɔljuəb(ə)l/ noun the fibre in bread and cereals, which is not digested but which swells inside the intestine

insomnia /ɪnˈsɔmniə/ noun the inability to sleep ő She experiences insomnia. ő What does the doctor give you for your insomnia? Also called sleeplessness

insomniaic /ɪnˈsɔmniəık/ noun a person who has insomnia

inspiration /ɪnˈspɪrəʃən/ noun the act of taking air into the lungs. Opposite expiration

instep /ˈɪnstɛp/ noun an arched top part of the foot

instillation /ɪnˈstɪləʃən/ noun 1. the process of putting a liquid in drop by drop 2. a liquid put in drop by drop

instinct /ˈɪnstɪŋkt/ noun a tendency or ability which the body has from birth and does not need to learn ő The body has a natural instinct to protect itself from danger.

institution /ˌɪnstɪˈʃjən/ noun a place where people are cared for, e.g. a hospital or clinic, especially a psychiatric hospital or children’s home

institutionalisation /ˌɪnstɪˌʃjənəlɪˈzeɪʃən/ noun the process of becoming adapted to life in an institution that it is impossible for him or her to live outside it

instrument /ɪnˈstrəmənt/ noun a piece of equipment or a tool ő The doctor had a box of surgical instruments.

instrumental delivery /ˌɪnˈstrəməntəl dɪˈlɛvrі/ noun childbirth where the doctor uses forceps to help the baby out of the mother’s uterus

insufficiency /ˌɪnˈsʌfɪʃənsi/ noun the fact of not being strong or large enough to perform usual functions ő The patient is suffering from a renal insufficiency.

insufflation /ˌɪnˈsʌfləʃən/ noun the act of blowing gas, vapour or powder into the lungs or another body cavity as a treatment

insulin /ˈɪnsjʊlіn/ noun a hormone produced by the islets of Langerhans in the pancreas

insulinase /ˈɪnsjʊlіnəz/ noun an enzyme which breaks down insulin

insulin dependence /ˌɪnsjʊlіn dɪˈpendəns/ noun the fact of being dependent on insulin injections

insulin-dependent diabetes /ˌɪnsjʊlіn dɪˈpendənt dіˈbіtіs/ noun same as Type I diabetes mellitus

insulinoma /ˌɪnsjʊlіnəʊmə/ noun a tumour in the islets of Langerhans

insulin-resistant /ˌɪnsjʊlіn rɪˈzɛstənt/ adjective referring to a condition in which the muscle and other tissue cells respond inadequately to insulin, as in Type II diabetes

insuloma /ˌɪnsjʊləmə/ noun same as insulinoma

insult /ˈɪnsəlt/ noun 1. a physical injury or trauma 2. something that causes a physical injury or trauma

Intal /ˈɪntəl/ a trade name for a preparation of cromolyn sodium

integrated service /ˌɪntɪgretəd ˈsəvərɪs/ noun a broad care service provided by health and social agencies acting together

integrative medicine /ˌɪntɪgretɪv ˈmɛdɪkəl/ noun the combination of mainstream therapies and those complementary or alternative therapies for which there is scientific evidence of efficacy and safety

integument /ɪnˈteɡjʊment/ noun a covering layer, e.g. the skin

intellect /ɪnˈtelɛkt/ noun a person’s ability to think, reason and understand
intelligence /ɪnˈtelɪdʒəns/ noun the ability to learn and understand quickly

intensity /ɪnˈtenstɪəl/ noun the strength of e.g. pain

intercostal /ɪntəˈkɒstəl/ adjective

intercostal muscle /ɪntəˈkɒstəl ˈmʌskəl/ noun one of the muscles between the ribs making the thorax expand and contract the thorax, so changing the pressure in the thorax and making the person breathe in or out. There are three layers of intercostal muscle: external, internal and innermost or intercostalis intimus.

intercurrent disease /ɪntəˈkɜːrnt ˈdɪzɪz/ noun a disease or infection which affects someone who has another disease

intercostal /ɪntəˈkɒstəl/ adjective referring to the space between the fingers or toes

intercostal /ɪntəˈkɒstəl/ adjective

intercostal muscle /ɪntəˈkɒstəl ˈmʌskəl/ noun one of the muscles between the ribs

intercostal artery /ɪntəˈkɒstəl ˈeətrɪəl/ noun an artery running towards the cortex on each side of the renal pyramid

intestinal /ɪntəˈstjuːnl/ adjective between lobules

interlobular /ɪntəˈlɒbjʊlər/ adjective between lobules

interlobular artery /ɪntəˈlɒbjʊlər ˈeətrɪəl/ noun one of the arteries running to the glomeruli of the kidneys

intermediate care /ɪntəˈmɪdɪət/ noun a special section of a hospital which cares for patients who are extremely ill with chronic severe illness. Abbreviation ICU

intermediate /ɪntəˈmɪdɪət/ adjective

interleukin-1 /ɪntəˈlɪklɪn-1/ noun a protein which stimulates T-cell production, used in the treatment of cancer. Abbreviation IL-1

interleukin-2 /ɪntəˈlɪklɪn-2/ noun a protein produced by the body's immune system

interleukin-1 /ɪntəˈlɪklɪn-1/ noun a protein which causes high temperature. Abbreviation IL-1

interleukin-2 /ɪntəˈlɪklɪn-2/ noun a protein which stimulates T-cell production, used in the treatment of cancer. Abbreviation IL-2

interlobular /ɪntəˈlɒbjʊlər/ adjective

interlobular artery /ɪntəˈlɒbjʊlər ˈeətrɪəl/ noun one of the arteries running to the glomeruli of the kidneys

intermittent /ɪntəˈmɪrənt/ adjective

intermittent fever /ɪntəˈmɪrənt ˈfɪvr/ noun fever which rises and falls regularly, as in malaria

intermittent claudication /ɪntəˈmɪrənt kluˈdeɪkeɪʃən/ noun a condition of the arteries causing severe pain in the legs which makes the person limp after having walked a short distance (NOTE: The symptoms increase with walking, stop after a short rest and recur when the person walks again.)

intermittent cardio pulmonary resuscitation /ɪntəˈmɪrənt ˈsɛlf-kætəhəterɪzəʃən/ noun a procedure in which someone puts a catheter through the urethra into their own bladder from time to time to empty out the urine. Abbreviation ISC

internal /ɪnˈtɜːrnl/ adjective inside the body or a body part

internal cardiac massage /ɪnˈtɜːrnl ˈkærɪədʒ ˈmeɪʃərɪ/ noun a method of making the heart start beating again by pressing on the heart itself

internal carotid /ɪnˈtɜːrnl ˈkærətɪd/ noun an artery in the neck, behind the external carotid, which gives off the ophthalmic artery and ends by dividing into the anterior and middle cerebral arteries

internal carotid /ɪnˈtɜːrnl ˈkærətɪd/ noun
internal derangement of the knee

interparietal bone /ɪntəˈpærɪtəl bʌn/ noun a triangular bone in the back of the skull, rarely present in humans

interparietal bone /ɪntəˈpærɪtəl bʌn/ noun a triangular bone in the back of the skull, rarely present in humans

interphalangeal joint /ɪntəˈfælænɡiəl diˈzɔːnt/ noun a joint between the phalanges. Also called IP joint

interphase /ɪntəˈfaɪz/ noun a stage of a cell between divisions

intraocular /ɪnˈtrəʊkərəl/ adjective referring to tissue located in the spaces between parts of something, especially between the active tissues in an organ

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internal derangement of the knee /ɪnˌtrənəl dɛrɪˈmɛntʃən ʌv ɪn dɪˈzɔːnt/ noun a condition in which the knee cannot function properly because of a torn meniscus. Abbreviation IDK

internal ear /ɪnˌtrənəl ɪər/ noun the part of the ear inside the head, behind the eardrum, containing the semicircular canals, the vestibule and the cochlea

internal haemorrhage /ɪnˌtrənəl həˈməːrərɪdʒ/ noun a haemorrhage which takes place inside the body

internal haemorrhoids /ɪnˌtrənəl həˈməːrərɪdʒz/ plural noun swollen veins inside the anus

internal iliac artery /ɪnˌtrənəl iəˌleɪk/ noun an artery which branches from the aorta in the abdomen and leads to the pelvis

internal injury /ɪnˌtrənəl ɪnˈdʒɔːri/ noun damage to one of the internal organs

internal jugular /ɪnˌtrənəl dʒʊˈɡɜːrl/ noun the largest jugular vein in the neck, leading to the brachiocephalic veins

internal nares /ɪnˌtrənəl ˈneɪrɪz/ plural noun the two openings shaped like funnels leading from the nasal cavity to the pharynx. Also called posterior nares

internal oblique /ɪnˌtrənəl əˈblɪk/ noun the middle layer of muscle covering the abdomen, beneath the external oblique

internal respiration /ɪnˌtrənəl rɪˈspɪrəʃən/ noun the part of respiration concerned with the passage of oxygen from the blood to the tissues, and the passage of carbon dioxide from the tissues to the blood

International Committee of the Red Cross /ɪntəˈrɛstʃəl kəˌmɪtʃən ʌv ɪntrəˈnəl ˈkærətɪstəs/ noun an international organisation which provides mainly emergency medical help, but also relief to victims of earthquakes, floods and other disasters, or to prisoners of war. Abbreviation ICRC

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International Council of Nurses /ɪnˌtrənəl ˌkjʊnəs/ noun an organisation founded in 1929 which now represents nurses in more than 120 countries. Its aims are to bring nurses together, to advance nursing worldwide and to influence health policies. Abbreviation ICN

International Council of Nurses /ɪnˌtrənəl ˌkjʊnəs/ noun an organisation founded in 1929 which now represents nurses in more than 120 countries. Its aims are to bring nurses together, to advance nursing worldwide and to influence health policies. Abbreviation ICN

international /ɪntrəˈnɪʃənəl/ adjective an internationally agreed standard used in pharmacy as a measure of a substance such as a drug or hormone. Abbreviation IU

国际 /ɪntəˈnɪʃənəl/ adjective between two nodes

interosseous /ɪntrəˈəʊsəs/ adjective between bones

interparietal /ɪntəˈpærɪtəl/ adjective between parietal parts, especially between the parietal bones

interparietal bone /ɪntəˈpærɪtəl bʌn/ noun a triangular bone in the back of the skull, rarely present in humans

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internal /ɪntrəˈnɪʃənəl/ adjective stimulating hormone /ɪntəˈnɪʃənəl ˈstɪmljʊətɪŋ həˈmɔːrən/ noun a hormone produced by the pituitary gland which stimulates the formation of corpus luteum in females and testosterone in males. Abbreviation ICSH. Also called luteinising hormone

interstitial cystitis /ɪntəˈstɪʃəl kəˈstɪtɪs/ noun a persistent nonbacterial condition in which someone has bladder pain and wants to pass urine frequently. It is often associated with Hunner’s ulcer

intertrigo /ɪntəˈtrɪɡu/ noun an irritation which occurs when two skin surfaces rub against each other, as in the armpit or between the buttocks

intertubercular plane /ˌɪntəˈtjuːbərkjʊlər pliːn/ noun same as transverse plane

interventricular /ˌɪntəˈvɛntrɪkjʊlər/ adjective between ventricles in the heart or brain

interventricular foramen /ˌɪntəˈvɛntrɪkjʊlər fəˈrəʊmən/ noun an opening in the brain between the lateral ventricle and the third ventricle, through which the cerebrospinal fluid passes
intracranial /ın'trækrənəl/ adjective inside the skull
intracranial pressure /ın'trækrənəl/presʒə/ noun the pressure of the subarachnoid fluid, which fills the space between the skull and the brain. Abbreviation ICP
intratable /ın'træktəb(ə)r/ adjective not able to be controlled or an operation to relieve intractable pain
intracutaneous /ın'trækju'tiːnəs/ adjective inside layers of skin tissue
intracutaneous injection /ın'trækju'ʃən/ noun an injection of a liquid into the layers of the skin, as for a test for an allergy
intradermal /ın'trə'dərməl/ adjective inside the dura mater
intramedullary /ın'trə'medələrɪ/ adjective inside the bone marrow or spinal cord
intramuscular /ın'trə'mjuːskjʊər/ adjective inside a muscle
intramuscular injection /ın'trækju'skjʊər/ noun an artificial lens implanted inside the eye. Abbreviation IOL
intracranial pressure /ın'trækju'skjʊər/presʃə/ noun the pressure inside the eyeball. (NOTE: If the pressure is too high, it causes glaucoma.)
intracranial pressure /ın'trækju'skjʊər/ noun high-resolution imaging used in surgery. Abbreviation IOUS
intracranial hemorrhage /ın'trækju'skjʊər/ noun a blood clot inside the cerebral hemisphere
intracerebral /ın'trə'siːbrəl/ adjective inside the brain
intracerebral haematoma /ın'trə'siːbrəl hiːməˈtəʊmə/ noun a blood clot inside the cerebral hemisphere
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intraoperative ultrasound /ın'trapəˈreɪtəv rəˈsəʊnd/ noun high-resolution imaging used in surgery. Abbreviation IOUS
intraorbital /ın'trəˌɔːrbətəl/ adjective within the orbit of the eye
intracranial /ın'trækju'skjʊər/ adjective inside a bone
intracranial /ın'trækju'skjʊər/ adjective inside a bone, especially inside the intradural or subarachnoid space
intratracheal /ın'trətrəˈkeɪl/ adjective inside the trachea. Also called endotracheal
intravenous /ın'trəˈvɛnəs/ adjective inside the veins
intravenous contraceptive device /ın'trəˌvɛnəs ˈkɒntrəˌseptɪv dɪˌvæs/, /ıˈtron/ noun a device placed in the body to prevent pregnancy.
intravascular device /ɪntrəˈvæksjərəm dɪˈvæs/ noun a plastic coil placed inside the uterus to prevent pregnancy. Abbreviation IUCD, IUD
intravascular /ɪntrəˈvæskʃəl/ adjective inside the blood vessels
intravenous /ɪntrəˈvɪznəs/ adjective into a vein. Abbreviation IV
intravenous drip /ɪntrəˈvɪznəs dɪrp/ noun a thin tube that is inserted into a vein and is used to very gradually give a person fluids, either for rehydration, feeding or medication purposes
intravenous feeding /ɪntrəˈvɪznəs ˈfiːdɪŋ/ noun the procedure of giving someone liquid food by means of a tube inserted into a vein
intravenous injection /ɪntrəˈvɪznəs ɪnˈdʒɛktʃən/ noun an injection of liquid into a vein, e.g. for the fast release of a drug
intravenously /ɪntrəˈvɪznəsli/ adverb into a vein or a fluid given intravenously
intravenous pyelogram /ɪntrəˈvɪznəs ˌpaɪələˈɡrɑːm/ noun an X-ray examination of the urinary tract after opaque liquid has been injected intravenously into the body and taken by the blood into the kidneys
intraventricular /ɪntrəˈvɛntrɪklər/ adjective inside or placed into a ventricle in the heart or the brain
intrinsic /ɪnˈtrɛsɪnık/ adjective belonging to the essential nature of an organism, or entirely within an organ or part
intrinsic factor /ɪnˈtrɛsɪnɪk ˈfæktər/ noun a protein produced in the gastric glands which reacts with the extrinsic factor, and which, if lacking, causes pernicous anaemia
intrinsic ligament /ɪnˈtrɛsɪnɪk ˈlɪgəmənt/ noun a ligament which forms part of the capsule surrounding a joint
intrinsic muscle /ɪnˈtrɛsɪnɪk ˈmjuːsəl/ noun a muscle lying completely inside the part or segment, especially of a limb, which it moves
intro-/ɪntrəʊ/ prefix inward
introitus /ɪntrəˈtjuːtəs/ noun an opening into any hollow organ or canal
introduction /ɪntrəˈdʒekʃən/ noun a person’s unconscious adoption of the attitudes or values of another person whom he or she wants to impress
introspection /ɪntrəˈspɛkʃən/ noun a detailed and sometimes obsessive mental self-examination of feelings, thoughts and motives
introduction /ɪntrəˈdʒekʃən/ noun a condition in which a person is excessively interested in himself or herself and his or her own mental state. Compare extroversion
introvert /ɪntrəˈvɜːrt/ noun a person who thinks only about himself or herself and his or her own mental state. Compare extrovert
intubate /ɪnˈtjuːbət/ verb to insert a tube into any organ or part of the body. Also called catheterise
intubation /ɪntjuːˈbeɪʃən/ noun the therapeutic insertion of a tube into the larynx through the glottis to allow the passage of air. Also called catheterisation
intumescence /ɪntjuːˈmɛsəns/ noun the swelling of an organ
intussusception /ɪntəˈsəsepʃən/ noun a condition in which part of the gastrointestinal tract becomes folded down inside the part beneath it, causing an obstruction and strangulation of the folded part
inunction /ɪnˈnʌŋkʃən/ noun 1. the act of rubbing an ointment into the skin so that the medicine in it is absorbed 2. an ointment which is rubbed into the skin
invagination /ɪnˌvægəˈneɪʃən/ noun same as intussusception
invalid /ɪnˈvælid/ (dated) noun someone who has had an illness and has not fully recovered from it or who has been permanently disabled. adjective weak or disabled
invasion /ɪnˈvɑːʒən/ noun the entry of bacteria into a body, or the first attack of a disease
invasive /ɪnˈvɛsɪv/ adjective 1. referring to cancer which tends to spread throughout the body 2. referring to an inspection or treatment which involves entering the body by making an incision. adjective non-invasive
inverse care law /ɪnˈvɛrs/ ˈkɛə ˈlɔːr noun the idea that the people who need most care and services are least likely or able to access them
inversion /ɪnˈvɜːrʃən/ noun the fact of being turned towards the inside. inversion of the foot See illustration in ANATOMICAL TERMS in Supplement
investigative surgery /ɪnˌvestɪgətɪv ˈsɜːdʒərɪ/ noun surgery to investigate the cause of a condition
in vitro /ɪnˈvɪtroʊ/ adjective, adverb a Latin phrase meaning ‘in a glass’, i.e. in a test tube or similar container used in a laboratory
in vitro fertilisation /ɪnˌvɪtroʊ ˈfɜːrlɪˌzaʃən/ noun the fertilisation of an ovum in the laboratory. Abbreviation IVF
in vivo adjective, adverb a Latin phrase meaning ‘in living tissue’, i.e. referring to an experiment which takes place on the living body
in vivo experiment /ɪn ˈvɪvəʊ ɪkˈspɜːrɪmənt/ noun an experiment on a living body, e.g. that of an animal
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noun are called anions.)

noun called cations and those with a negative charge

drug which helps to relax muscles in the airways, ipratropium

IPPV

ipecacuanha ventilation.

when an electric current passes through it

ioniser an atom supplied by the autonomic nervous system, and therefore not under voluntary control, e.g. the muscle which activates a vital organ such as the heart

ionisation, ionizer, ionize verb to give an atom an electric charge (NOTE: ions with a positive charge are called cations and those with a negative charge are called anions.)

ionise, ionizer, ionize noun a machine that increases the amount of negative ions in the atmosphere of a room, so counteracting the effect of positive ions

iontophoresis, iontophoresis noun the movement of ions through a biological material when an electric current passes through it

IONUS abbreviation intraoperative ultrasound

IPAV abbreviation intermittent positive airway ventilation.

Ipecacuanha /ɪˈpɛkəkwənha/ noun a drug made from the root of an American plant, used as a treatment for coughs, and also as an emetic

IP joint /juː ˈpɪk ˈdʒɒnt/ noun same as interphalangeal joint

IPPV abbreviation intermittent positive pressure ventilation.

Ipratropium /ɪˈprætrətrəpiəm/, Ipratropium bromide /ɪˈprætrətrəpiəm ˈbremədaɪd/ noun a drug which helps to relax muscles in the airways, used in the treatment of conditions such as asthma, bronchitis and emphysema

ipsilateral /ɪpsɪˈlætərəl/ adjective located on or affecting the same side of the body. Also called homolateral. Opposite contralateral

IQ abbreviation intelligence quotient

IRDS abbreviation infant respiratory distress syndrome

irid- /ɪrɪd-/ prefix referring to the iris

iridectomy /ɪrɪdˈdɛktəmi/ noun the surgical removal of part of the iris

iridocycitis /ɪrɪdəˈsɪksɪtɪs/ noun inflammation of the iris and the tissues which surround it

iridodialysis /ɪrɪdədəˈlaɪəsɪs/ noun the separation of the iris from its insertion

iridoplegia /ɪrɪdəˈplɛdʒɪə/ noun paralysis of the iris

iridoptosis /ɪrɪdəˈpɒtəsoʊsɪs/ noun the pushing forward of the iris through a wound in the cornea

iridotomy /ɪrɪdəˈtɒmə/ noun a surgical incision into the iris

iris /ˈaɪrɪs/ noun a coloured ring in the eye, with the pupil at its centre. See illustration at EYE in Supplement

COMMENT: The iris acts like the aperture in a camera shutter, opening and closing to allow more or less light through the pupil into the eye.

iritis /ɪrɪtɪs/ noun inflammation of the iris

iron /ˈaɪrən/ noun 1, a chemical element essential to the body, present in foods such as liver and eggs 2, a common grey metal (NOTE: The chemical symbol is Fe.)

iron-deficiency anaemia /aɪrən dɪˈfɪʃənsiˈænəmiə/ noun anaemia caused by a lack of iron in red blood cells

iron lung /ˌaɪrən lʌŋ/ noun same as Drinker respirator

irradiation /ɪrɪˈreɪʃən/ noun 1, the process of spreading from a centre, as e.g., nerve impulses do 2, the use of radiation to treat people or to kill bacteria in food

irreducible hernia /ˌɪrɪs.dʒuːˈsɛblə/ ‘hæmɪə/ noun a hernia where the organ cannot be returned to its usual position

irrigation /ˈɪrɪɡeɪʃən/ noun the washing out of a cavity in the body

irritability /ˌɪrɪtəˈbɪlɪti/ noun the state of being irritable

irritable /ˌɪrɪtəˈbɪlə/ adjective 1, easily able to become inflamed and painful 2, feeling annoyed and impatient

irritable bowel syndrome /ˌɪrɪtəˈbɜːləʊ ˈsɜːndrəʊm/ noun mucus colitis. Abbreviation IBS

irritable hip /ˌɪrɪtəˈbɜːlə/ ‘hɪp/ noun a condition of pain in the hip which is caused by swelling of
the synovium. Treatment involves bed rest, traction and anti-inflammatory drugs.

irritant /ɪrɪˈtænt/ noun a substance which can irritate

irritant dermatitis /ɪrɪˈtænt dəˈmætərətɪs/ noun same as contact dermatitis

irritate /ɪrɪˈteɪt/ verb to cause a painful reaction in part of the body, especially to make it inflamed

O Some types of wool can irritate the skin.

irritation /ɪrɪˈteɪʃən/ noun a feeling of being irritated or an irritation caused by the ointment

ISC abbreviation intermittent self-catheterisation

isch- /ˈɪsk-/ prefix too little

ischaemia /aɪˈskeɪmɪə/ noun a deficient blood supply to a part of the body

ischaemic /aɪˈskiːmɪk/ adjective lacking in blood

ischi- /ˈɪski/ prefix same as isch- (used before vowels)

ischia /ˈɪskiə/ plural of ischium

ischial /aɪˈskiəl/ adjective referring to the ischium or hip joint

ischial tuberosity /ˈɪskiəl tjuːboʊˈrʊstɪ/ noun a lump of bone forming the ring of the ischium

ischio- /ˈɪskioʊ/ prefix referring to the ischium

ischiorectal /aɪˈskiəʊrɛkt(ə)l/ adjective referring to both the ischium and the rectum

ischiorectal abscess /aɪˈskiəʊrɛkt(ə)l ˈæbss/ noun an abscess which forms in fat cells between the anus and the ischium

ischiorectal fossa /aɪˈskiəʊrɛkt(ə)l ˈfəʊsə/ noun a space on either side of the lower end of the rectum and anal canal

ischium /ˈɪskjuəm/ noun the lower part of the hip bone in the pelvis. See illustration at PELVIS in Supplement (Note: The plural is ischia.)

Ishihara colour charts /ɪʃiˈhɑːrə kɑːts/ noun charts used in a test for colour vision in which numbers or letters are shown in dots of primary colours with dots of other colours around them. People with normal colour vision can see them, but people who are colour-blind cannot.

islets of Langerhans /aɪˈlɛts əv ˈlæŋɡərznz/ island(s) of Langerhans /aɪˈlændz əv ˈlæŋɡərznz, ˈlæŋɡərznz, ˈlɛɪst ˈsɛlz/ plural noun groups of cells in the pancreas which secrete the hormones glucagon, insulin and gastrin [Described 1869. After Paul Langerhans (1847–88), Professor of Pathological Anatomy at Freiburg, Germany].

iso- /aɪsəʊ/ prefix equal

isograft /aɪsəʊɡrɑːft/ noun a graft of tissue from an identical twin. Also called syngraft

isoinmunisation /aɪsɪˌmjuːnəˈzeɪʃən/ noun immunisation of a person with antigens derived from another person

isolation /aɪsəˈleɪʃən/ noun the separation of a person, especially one with an infectious disease, from others

isolation ward /aɪsəˈleɪʃən wɔːd/ noun a special ward where people who have dangerous infectious diseases can be kept isolated from others

isolator /aɪsəˈleɪtər/ noun 1. a large clear plastic bag in which a person can be nursed, or operated on, in a sterile environment 2. a room or piece of equipment which keeps people or substances separated from others which may contaminate them

O an isolator stretcher O an isolator cabinet

isoleucine /aɪsəˈluːsɪn/ noun an essential amino acid

isometric /aɪsəˈmɪtrɪk/ adjective 1. involving equal measurement O an isometric view of the system 2. referring to muscle contraction in which tension is put with very little shortening of muscle fibres 3. referring to exercises in which the muscles are put under tension but not contracted

isometrics /aɪsəˈmɪtrɪks/ plural noun exercises to strengthen the muscles, in which the muscles contract but do not shorten

isoprenaline /aɪsəˌprɛnəˈlɪn/, isopretene /aɪsəˈprɛtən/ noun a drug that relieves asthma by widening the bronchial tubes in the lungs

isosorbide dinitrate /aɪsəˈsoʊbɪd dəˈnɪtrət/ noun a compound which causes widening or relaxation of the blood vessels, used in the treatment of angina pectoris

isotonic /aɪsəˈtɒnɪk/ adjective referring to a solution, e.g. a saline drip, which has the same osmotic pressure as blood serum and which can therefore be passed directly into the body. Compare hypertonic, hypotonic

isotonic solution /aɪsəˈtɒnɪk səˈluːʃən/ noun a solution which has the same osmotic pressure as blood serum, or as another liquid it is compared with

isotope /aɪsəˈtəʊp/ noun a form of a chemical element which has the same chemical properties as other forms but a different atomic mass

isotretinoin /aɪsəˌtreɪˈtɪnoʊn/ noun a drug used in the treatment of severe acne and several other skin diseases

ispaghula /ipsəˈɡwələ, ɪspəˈɡwələ hɔsk/ noun a natural dietary fibre used to treat constipation, diverticulitis and irritable bowel syndrome

ISS abbreviation injury scoring system

isthmus /ɪsˈθməs/ noun a short narrow canal or cavity

itch /ɪtʃ/ noun an irritated place on the skin which makes a person want to scratch

O verb to produce an irritating sensation, making someone want to scratch
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<td>itchy /'ɪtʃi/</td>
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<tr>
<td>ITU</td>
<td>abbreviation intensive therapy unit</td>
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<tr>
<td>IU</td>
<td>abbreviation international unit</td>
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<td>IUCD</td>
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<td>IVU</td>
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jejunal ulcer /ˈdʒiːnjʊəl ʌlkər/ noun an ulcer in the jejunum
jejunectomy /ˈdʒiːnjʊənɛktəmi/ noun a surgical operation to remove all or part of the jejunum (NOTE: The plural is jejunectomies.)
jejuno-/ˈdʒiːnjʊən/ prefix referring to the jejunum
jejunoileostomy /ˈdʒiːnjʊəˌaɪləʊˈstɒmi/ noun a surgical operation to make an artificial link between the jejunum and the ileum (NOTE: The plural is jejunoileostomies.)
jejunostomy /ˈdʒiːnjʊənəʊˈstɒmi/ noun a surgical operation to cut into the jejunum (NOTE: The plural is jejunostomies.)
jejunum /ˈdʒiːnjʊən/ noun the part of the small intestine between the duodenum and the ileum, about 2 metres long. See illustration at DIGESTIVE SYSTEM in Supplement
jet lag /ˈdʒet læg/ noun a condition suffered by people who travel long distances in planes, caused by rapid changes in time zones which interfere with the body's metabolism. We had jet lag when we flew from Australia.
jet-lagged /ˈdʒet lægd/ adjective experiencing jet lag. We were jet-lagged for a week.
joint /dʒɔɪnt/ noun a structure at a point where two or more bones join, especially one which allows movement of the bones. The elbow is a joint in the arm. Arthritis is accompanied by stiffness in the joints. Charcot's joint (NOTE: For other terms referring to joints, see words beginning with arthr-, arthro-.)
joint capsule /ˈdʒɔɪnt, ˈkæpsjʊl/ noun white fibrous tissue which surrounds and holds a joint together. See illustration at SYNOVIAL JOINT in Supplement
**Joint investment plan** /dʒɔɪnt in'vestment plæn/ noun a plan that health and social services draw up together for specific areas of care.

**Joint mouse** /dʒɔɪnt maʊs/ plural noun a loose piece of bone or cartilage in the knee joint, making the joint lock.

**Joule** /dʒuːl/ noun the SI unit of measurement of work or energy. 4.184 joules equals one calorie. Symbol J

**Jugular** /dʒuːɡələr/ adjective referring to the throat or neck. ■ noun same as jugular vein

**Jugular nerve** /dʒuːɡələr 'nɜːv/ noun one of the nerves in the neck.

**Jugular trunk** /dʒuːɡələr trʌŋk/ noun a terminal lymph vessel in the neck, draining into the subclavian vein.

**Jugular vein** /dʒuːɡələr vɛin/ noun one of the veins which pass down either side of the neck. Also called jugular

**Jumper's knee** /dʒʌmpəz 'kni:/ noun a painful condition suffered by athletes and dancers in which inflammation develops in the knee joint.

**Junction** /dʒʌŋkʃən/ noun a joining point.

**Junior doctor** /dʒuːnɪər 'dɒktə/ noun a doctor who is completing his or her training in hospital.

**Junk food** /dʒʌŋk fjuːd/ noun food of little nutritional value, e.g. high-fat processed snacks, eaten between or instead of meals.

**Juvenile** /dʒuːvənəl/ adjective relating to or affecting children or adolescents.

**Juxta** /dʒʌktə/ prefix beside or near

**Juxta-articular** /dʒʌktə-ɑːrtɪkjələr/ adjective occurring near a joint.

**Juxtaposition** /dʒʌkstəpəzən/ noun the placing of two or more things side by side so as to make their similarities or differences more obvious.
K

k symbol kilo-

kala-azar /ˈkala əˈzār/ noun an often fatal form of leishmaniasis caused by the infection of the intestines and internal organs by a parasite, Leishmania, spread by flies. Symptoms are fever, anaemia, general wasting of the body and swelling of the spleen and liver.

Keller's operation /ˈkelərər/ noun a surgical operation on the big toe to remove a bunion or to correct an ankylosed joint.

Kaposi's sarcoma /ˈkɑːpsoʊz səˈkɑːmə/ noun a cancer which takes the form of many haemorrhagic nodes affecting the skin, especially on the extremities [Described 1872. After Moritz Kohn Kaposi (1837–1902), Professor of Dermatology at Vienna, Austria.]

Kartagener's syndrome /ˈkɑːrteɪɡərər/ noun a hereditary condition in which all the organs in the chest and abdomen are positioned on the opposite side from the usual one, i.e. the heart and stomach are on the right.

karyo- /ˈkærɪər/ prefix relating to a cell nucleus.

karyotype /ˈkærɪətəʊp/ noun the chromosome complement of a cell, shown as a diagram or as a set of letters and numbers.

Kawasaki disease /ˈkæwəskeɪk dɪˌzɪz/ noun a retrovirus infection that often occurs in small children and causes a high temperature, rash, reddened eyes, peeling skin and swollen lymph nodes.

Kayser-Fleischer ring /ˈkeɪsər ˈflɪskər/ noun a brown ring on the outer edge of the cornea, which is a diagnostic sign of hepatolenticular degeneration [Described 1902 by Kayser, 1903 by Fleischer. Bernard Kayser (1869–1954), German ophthalmologist; Bruno Richard Fleischer (1848–1904), German physician.]

kcal abbreviation kilocalorie

Kegel exercises /ˈkɛɡəl ˈɛksəzəz/ plural noun exercises which strengthen the muscles of the pelvic floor in women and help to prevent any accidental leakage of urine when they cough, sneeze or lift things.

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keloid /ˈkɛlɔɪd/ noun an excessive amount of scar tissue at the site of a skin injury.

kerat- /ˈkɛrət/ prefix same as kerato- (used before vowels)

keratectasia /ˈkɛrətɛktəˈzeɪə/ noun a condition in which the cornea bulges.

keratectomy /ˈkɛrətɛktəmɪ/ noun a surgical operation to remove the whole or part of the cornea (NOTE: The plural is keratectomies.)

keratic /ˈkɛrətɪk/ adjective 1. relating to horny tissue or to keratin 2. relating to the cornea.

keratin /ˈkɛrətɪn/ noun a protein found in horny tissue such as fingernails, hair or the outer surface of the skin.

keratinisation /ˈkɛrətɪnəˈzeɪʃən, ˈkɛrətɪnəˈzeɪʃən/ noun or keratinization the appearance of horny characteristics in tissue. Also called cornification.

keratinise /ˈkɛrətɪnɪs/ verb to convert something into keratin or into horny tissue (NOTE: keratinising — keratinised).

keratinocyte /ˈkɛrətɪnəˌsɪt/ noun a cell which produces keratin.

keratitis /ˈkɛrətətɪs/ noun inflammation of the cornea.

kerato- /ˈkɛrətəʊ/ prefix referring to horn, horny tissue or the cornea.

keratoconjunctivitis /ˌkɛrətəˌkɒŋˈʃʌŋktɪtɪs, ˌkɛrətəˌkɒŋˈʃʌŋktɪtɪs/ noun inflammation of the cornea with conjunctivitis.

keratoma /ˈkɛrətərəʊmə/ noun a hard thickened growth due to hypertrophy of the horny zone of the skin (NOTE: The plural is keratomas or keratomata.)

keratomalacia /ˌkɛrətəˈmæləsɪə/ noun a softening of the cornea frequently caused by Vitamin A deficiency.

keratome /ˈkɛrətəm/ noun a surgical knife used for operations on the cornea.

keratometer /ˈkɛrətəmətər/ noun an instrument for measuring the curvature of the cornea.

keratopathy /ˈkɛrətəpəθi/ noun any non-inflammatory disorder of the cornea (NOTE: The plural is keratopathies.)
keratoplasty /ˈkɛrətɒpləstɪ/ noun a surgical operation to graft corneal tissue from a donor in place of diseased tissue (NOTE: The plural is keratoplasties.)
keratoprosthesis /ˈkɛrətəprɔrəθiːs/ noun 1, a surgical operation to replace the central area of the cornea, and 2, a piece of clear plastic put into the cornea to see if it has an unusual curvature. Also called Placido’s disc
keratosis /ˈkɛrətəsəs/ noun a lesion of the skin (NOTE: The plural is keratoses.)
keratotomy /ˈkɛrətətəməʊ/ noun a surgical operation to make a cut in the cornea, the first step in many intraocular operations (NOTE: The plural is keratometies.)
kerton /ˈkɛrətən/ noun a painful soft mass, usually on the scalp, caused by ringworm
keratinosis /ˈkɛrətənəsɪs/ noun yellow pigmentation of the basal ganglia and other nerve cells in the spinal cord and brain, found in children with icterus
Kernig’s sign /ˈkɛrnɪŋɡ zən/ noun a symptom of meningitis in which the knee cannot be straightened if the person is lying down with the thigh brought up against the abdomen [Described 1882. After Vladimir Mikhailovich Kernig (1840–1917), Russian neurologist.]
ketamine /ˈkɛtəməni/ noun a white crystalline powder that is a general anaesthetic, used in human and veterinary medicine
ketacidosis /ˈkɛtəkədosɪs/ noun an accumulation of ketone bodies in tissue in diabetes, causing acidosis
ketonacozole /ˈkɛtənaʊkəˈnəʊsəl/ noun a drug which is effective against a wide range of fungal infections such as cryptococcosis and thrush
ketogenesis /ˈkɛtədʒənəsɪs/ noun the production of ketone bodies
ketogenic /ˈkɛtədʒənɪk/ adjective forming ketone bodies
ketogenic diet /ˈkɛtədʒəˈdɛɪt/ noun a diet with a high fat content, producing ketosis
ketonemia /ˈkɛtənəmɪə/ noun a morbid state in which ketone bodies exist in the blood
ketone /ˈkɛtən/ noun a chemical compound produced when glucose is unavailable for use as energy, as in untreated diabetes, and fats are used instead, leading to ketosis
ketone bodies /ˈkɛtənbədɪz/ plural noun ketone compounds formed from fatty acids
ketone group /ˈkɛtən grʊp/ noun a chemical group characteristic of ketones, with carbon atoms doubly bonded to an oxygen atom and to the carbon atoms of two other organic groups
ketonuria /ˈkɛtənʊərəriə/ noun a state in which ketone bodies are excreted in the urine
ketoprofen /ˈkɛtəprəˈfəʊn/ noun an anti-inflammatory drug used in the treatment of rheumatoid arthritis and osteoarthritis
ketosis /ˈkɛtəsəs/ noun a state in which ketone bodies such as acetone and acetic acid accumulate in the tissues, a late complication of Type I diabetes mellitus
ketosteroid /ˈkɛtəstərəʊd/ noun a steroid such as cortisone which contains a ketone group
keyhole surgery /ˈkɛɪkləʊl ˈsɜːdʒəri/ noun surgery carried out by inserting tiny surgical instruments through an endoscope (informal) Also called laparoscopic surgery
kg abbreviation kilogram
kidney /ˈkiːdnɪ/ noun either of two organs situated in the lower part of the back on either side of the spine behind the abdomen, whose function is to maintain the usual concentrations of the main constituents of blood, passing the waste matter into the urine. See illustration at kidney in Supplement
kidney dialysis /ˈkiːdnɪ ˈdælɪsɪs/ noun the process of removing waste matter from blood by passing it through a kidney machine. Also called haemodialysis
kidney donor /ˈkiːdnɪ ˈdɔːnər/ noun a person who gives one of his or her kidneys as a transplant
kidney failure /ˈkiːdnɪ ˈfeɪlər/ noun a situation in which the kidneys do not function properly
kidney machine /ˈkiːdnɪ məˈʃɪn/ noun an apparatus through which blood is passed to be cleaned by dialysis if the person’s kidneys have failed
kidney stone /ˈkiːdnɪ stʌn/ noun a hard mass of calcium like a little piece of stone which forms in the kidney
kidney transplant /ˈkiːdnɪ trænsˈplænt/ noun a surgical operation to give someone with a diseased or damaged kidney a kidney from another person
killer cell /ˈkɪla ˈsɛl/, killer T cell /ˈkɪla ˈtiː, ˈsɛl/ noun a type of immune cell that recognizes and destroys cells that have specific antigens on their surface, e.g. virus-infected or cancerous cells
kilo- /ˈkiːloʊ/ prefix one thousand (10³). Symbol k
kilogram /ˈkɪləɡræm/ noun an SI unit of measurement of weight equal to 1000 grams. Symbol kg
kilogram /ˈkɪləɡræm/ noun an SI unit of measurement of energy or heat equal to 1000 joules. Symbol kJ
kilopascal /ˈkɪləpæskəl/ noun an SI unit of measurement of pressure equal to 1000 pascals. Symbol kPa
Kimmelstiel-Wilson disease /ˈkɪməlstrəl ˈwɪlsən dɪznəl/ noun a kidney disease characterized by the presence of non-protein-bound urea in the blood and urine, and by the presence of maternal antibodies to fetal red cells, leading to the destruction of fetal red blood cells, resulting in hemolytic disease of the newborn.
Kinase /ˈkɛɪnəs/ noun an enzyme belonging to a large family of related substances that bind to the energy-providing molecule ATP and regulate functions such as cell division and signalling between cells

Kinesiology /ˈkaɪnəsələdʒi/ noun the study of human movements, particularly with regard to their use in treatment

Kinesis /ˈkɛɪnəsɪs/ noun the movement of a cell in response to a stimulus. Compare taxis

Kinesiology /ˈkaɪnəsələdʒi/ noun the science of movement, especially of body movements (NOTE: Also spelled cinematics.)

Kinetics /ˈkɛɪnetɪks/ prefix movement

Kinetoplasty /ˈkɪnɛtɔplæstɪ/ noun an amputation in which the muscles of the stump of the amputated limb are used to operate an artificial limb (NOTE: Also spelled cineplasty. The plural is kinetoplasties.)

Kinesiology /ˈkaɪnəsələdʒi/ noun the study of human movements, particularly with regard to their use in treatment

King's Fund /ˈkɪŋz fʌnd/ noun a major independent health charity in London

King's model /ˈkɪŋz ˈmédləʊ/ noun a model of nurse–patient relationships based on ten principles: interaction, perception, communication, transaction, role, stress, growth and development, time, self and space. Through an exchange of information nurses and patients work together to help individuals and groups attain, maintain and restore health.

Kinin /ˈkɪnɪn/ noun a polypeptide that makes blood vessels widen and smooth muscles contract

Kirschner wire /ˈkɪʃnər waiər/ noun a wire attached to a bone and tightened to provide traction to a fracture (Described 1909. After Martin Kirschner (1879–1942), Professor of Surgery at Heidelberg, Germany.)

Kiss of life /ˈkɪs av ˈlʌf/ noun same as cardiopulmonary resuscitation (informal)

KJ abbreviation kilojoule

Klebsiella /ˈklɛbsiələ/ noun a Gram-negative bacterium, one form of which, Klebsiella pneumoniae, can cause pneumonia

Klebs-Loeffler bacillus /ˈklebɛz ˈloflɛr bəˈsɪləs/ noun the bacterium which causes diphtheria. Corynebacterium diphtheriae (After Theodor Albrecht Klebs (1834–1913), bacteriologist in Zürich, Switzerland, and Chicago, USA; Friedrich August Loeffler (1852–1915), bacteriologist in Berlin, Germany.)

Kliehauer test /ˈklɛhauər tɛst/ noun a test used to check whether there has been any blood loss from a fetus to the mother across the placenta. It is usually done immediately after delivery.

Klepto-/klept- prefix stealing or theft

Kleptomania /ˈklɛptəˈməniə/ noun a form of mental disorder in which someone has a compulsive desire to steal things, even things of little value

Kleptomaniac /ˈklɛptəˈməniək/ noun a person who has a compulsive desire to steal

Klinefelter's syndrome /ˈklainfeltərz ˈsɪndɾəm/ noun a genetic disorder in which a male has an extra female chromosome, making an XXY set, giving sterility and reduced male characteristics (Described 1942. After Harry Fitch Klinefelter Jr. (b. 1912), Associate Professor of Medicine, Johns Hopkins Medical School, Baltimore, USA.)

Klumpke's paralysis /ˈklʌmpkəz ˈpærəlis/ noun a form of paralysis due to an injury during birth, affecting the forearm and hand. Also called Déjerine-Klumpke's syndrome (Described 1885. After Augusta Klumppke (Madame Djerine-Klumpke) (1859–1937), French neurologist, one of the first women to qualify in Paris in 1888.)

Knee /niː/ noun a joint in the middle of the leg, joining the femur and the tibia (NOTE: For other terms referring to the knee, see genu.)

Kneecap /ˈniːkæp/ noun same as patella

Knee jerk /ˈniː dʒɜːk/ noun same as patellar reflex

Knee joint /ˈniː dʒɔint/ noun a joint where the femur and the tibia are joined, covered by the kneecap

Knock-knee, knock /nɒk ˈniː/ noun a state in which the knees touch and the ankles are apart when a
person is standing straight. Also called genu valgum.

knock-kneed /nek’/n/kned/ adjective referring to a person whose knees touch when he or she stands straight with feet slightly apart

knock out /nek’/ out/ verb to hit someone so hard that he or she is no longer conscious ○ He was knocked out by a blow on the head.

knowledge and skills framework /noldj/ ens’ skilz/ noun full form of KSF

Kocher manoeuvre /ko’kər manu’vər/ noun a method for realigning a dislocated shoulder in which the arm is raised and a sudden change is made between inward and outward rotation of the head of the joint

Koch’s bacillus /ko’ks bə’siləs/ noun the bacterium which causes tuberculosis, Mycobacterium tuberculosis [Described 1882. After Robert Koch (1843–1910), Professor of Hygiene in Berlin, Germany, later Director of the Institute for Infectious Diseases. (Nobel Prize 1905.).]

Köhler’s disease /ko’lər di’siz/ noun a degeneration of the navicular bone in children. Also called scaphooiditis [Described 1908 and 1926. After Alban Köhler (1874–1947), German radiologist.]

koilonychia /ko’slə ni’kəs/ noun a condition in which the fingernails are brittle and concave, caused by iron-deficiency anaemia

Koplik’s spots /ko’plık’z spotz/ plural noun small white spots with a blue tinge surrounded by a red areola, found in the mouth in the early stages of measles [Described 1896. After Henry Koplik (1856–1927), US paediatrician.]

Korotkoff’s method /ko’rətkəfz’ məthəd/ noun a method of finding a person’s blood pressure by inflating a cuff around his or her upper arm to a pressure well above the systolic blood pressure and then gradually decreasing it

Korsakoff’s syndrome /kɔsəkɔf’z/ noun a condition in which a deficiency of vitamin B, in which a person’s memory fails and he or she invents things which have not happened and is confused [Described 1887. After Sergei Sergeyevich Korsakoff (1854–1900), Russian psychiatrist.]

kraurosis vulvae /krəu’səs vəl’və/ noun a condition in which the vulva becomes thin and dry due to lack of oestrogen, found usually in elderly women

Krause corpuscles /kraʊs, krəspəs/ plural noun encapsulated nerve endings in the mucous membrane of the mouth, nose, eyes and genitals [Described 1860. After Wilhelm Johann Friedrich Krause (1833–1910), German anatomist.]

Krebs cycle /krebs, ka’bəs/ noun same as citric acid cycle [Described 1937. After Sir Hans Adolf Krebs (1900–81), German biochemist who emigrated to England in 1934. Shared the Nobel prize for Medicine 1953 with F.A. Lipmann.]

KSF /ki’ si f/ noun a document setting out the knowledge and skills required in a particular healthcare post, giving guidance on professional development, and setting out the pay progression. Full form knowledge and skills framework

Kuntscher nail /kənts’ər ni’l/ noun a long steel nail used in operations to pin fractures of long bones, especially the femur, through the bone marrow [Described 1940. After Gerhard Kuntscher (1900–72), German surgeon.]

Kupffer’s cells /ku’pfəz selz/ noun large specialised liver cells which break down haemoglobin into bile [Described 1876. After Karl Wilhelm von Kupffer (1829–1902), German anatomist.]

Kveim test /kvi’em/ noun a skin test to confirm the presence of sarcoidosis [After Morten Ansgar Kveim (1892–1966), Swedish physician.]

kwashiorkor /kwə’shərkər/ noun malnutrition of small children, mostly in tropical countries, causing anaemia, wasting of the body and swollen liver

kypho-/ka’fəpə/ prefix a hump

kyphoscoliosis /ka’fi’òskəlu’siəs/ noun a condition in which someone has both backward and lateral curvature of the spine

kyphosis /ka’fi’siəs/ noun an excessive backward curvature of the top part of the spine (NOTE: The plural is kyphoses.)

kyphotic /ka’fətik/ adjective referring to kyphosis
muscles of the uterus contract during childbirth

labour pains /ˈleɪbrəʊ/ plural noun the pains felt at regular intervals by a woman as the muscles of the uterus contract during childbirth

laboured breathing /ˈleɪbrəd/ adjective difficult breathing, which can be due to various causes such as asthma

laboured /ˈleɪbrəd/ adjective describing something that is laboured

labrum /ˈleɪbrəm/ noun a ring of cartilage around the rim of a joint (NOTE: The plural is labra.)

labyrinth /ˈleɪbrənt/ noun a series of interconnecting tubes, especially those in the inside of the ear

labyrinthectomy /ˌleɪbrəntəˈmɛktəmi/ noun a surgical operation to remove the labyrinth of the inner ear (NOTE: The plural is labyrinthectomies.)

lactation /ˈleɪkʃən/ noun 1. a wound which has been cut or torn with rough edges, and is not the result of stabbing or pricking 2. the act of tearing tissue

lacrymal /ˈlækərəməl/ adjective same as lacrimal

lacrimal apparatus /ˈlækərəməl əˈpɔrətəs/ noun the arrangement of glands and ducts which produce and drain tears. Also called lacrimal system

lacrimal bone /ˈlækərəməl ˈbɔrn/ noun one of two little bones which join with others to form the orbits

lacrimal canaliculus /ˈlækərəməl ˈkæniˈkɔləs/ noun a small canal draining tears into the lacrimal sac

lacrimal caruncle /ˈlækərəməl ˈkærəŋkəl/ noun a small red point at the inner corner of each eye

lacrimal duct /ˈlækərəməl dʌkt/ noun a small duct leading from the lacrimal gland. Also called tear duct

lacrimal gland /ˈlækərəməl ˈɡlænd/ noun a gland beneath the upper eyelid which secretes tears. Also called tear gland

lacrimal puncta /ˈlækərəməl ˈpʌŋktə/ plural noun small openings of the lacrimal canaliculus at the corners of the eyes through which tears drain into the nose
lacrim sac /ˈlækrmər/ıə / sæk/ noun a sac at the upper end of the nasolacrimal duct, linking it with the lacrimal canalicus
lacrimonal system /ˈlækrmər/ıə /sɪstərm/ noun same as lacrimal apparatus
lacrimation /ˈlækrmər/ıə /fon/ noun the production of tears
lacrimator /ˈlækrmətər/ noun a substance which irritates the eye and makes tears flow
lacrymal /ˈlækrmər/ıə, / ləkrərməl /ˈlækrməl/ıə adjective same as lacrimonal
lact- /ˈlækkt/ prefix same as lacto- (used before vowel)
lactase /ˈlækktəz/ noun an enzyme, secreted in the small intestine, which converts milk sugar into glucose and galactose
lactate /ˈlækktet/ verbal to produce milk in the body (NOTE: lactating – lactated)
lactation /ˈlækten/ıə /fon/ noun the production of milk in the body
lacteal /ˈlækktəl/ıə adjective referring to milk
 lact /ˈlækkt/ıə /fon/ noun a lymph vessel in a villus which helps the digestive process in the small intestine by absorbing fat
lactic /ˈlækktɪk/ıə / fon adjective relating to milk
lactic acid /ˈlæktktɪk /ˈskeɪd/ıə / fon a sugar which forms in cells and tissue, and also in sour milk, cheese and yoghurt
lactiferous /ˈlækktəfərəs/ıə /fon adjective producing, secreting or carrying milk
lactiferous duct /ˈlækktəfərəs /ˈdakt/ıə / fon a duct in the breast which carries milk
lactiferous sinus /ˈlækktəfərəs /ˈsænəs/ıə / fon a dilatation of the lactiferous duct at the base of the nipple
lacto- /ˈlækktəʊ/ıə / fon prefix referring to milk
Lactobacillus /ˈlækktəbækələs/ıə / fon a genus of Gram-positive bacteria which produces lactic acid from glucose and may be found in the digestive tract and the vagina
lactogenic hormone /ˈlækktəgən/ıə /dʒənɪk /hərməʊn/ıə / fon same as prolactin
lactose /ˈlækktəs/ıə / fon noun a type of sugar found in milk
lactose intolerance /ˈlækktəs ɪnˌtrələrs/ıə / fon a condition in which a person cannot digest lactose because lactase is absent in the intestine or because of an allergy to milk, causing diarrhoea
lactosuria /ˈlækktəsərɪə/ıə / fon the excretion of lactose in the urine
lactulose /ˈlækktələsə/ıə / fon an artificially produced sugar used as a laxative
lacuna /ˈlækktənə/ıə / fon a small hollow or cavity (NOTE: The plural is lacunae.)
Laënnec’s cirrhosis /lɛ̃nɛks /sə/ˈroʊkəs/ıə / fon the commonest form of alcoholic cirrhosis of the liver [Described 1819. After René Théophile Hyacinthe Laennec (1781–1826), Professor of medicine at the Collège de France, and inventor of the stethoscope.]
-lalia /ˈlɛlələ/ıə / fon suffix speech or a speech disorder
lambda /ˈlæmlə/ıə / fon 1, the 11th letter of the Greek alphabet 2, the point at the back of the skull where the sagittal suture and lambdoidal suture meet
lambo/ˈlæmləʊ/ıə / fon adjective shaped like the capital Greek letter lambda, like an upside down Y or y
lambdoidal suture /ˈlæmləʊˌdɔl/ıə / sʊtʃər/ıə / fon a horizontal joint across the back of the skull between the parietal and occipital bones
lambilisation /ˈlæmləˌbɪləsən/ıə / fon same as giardiasis
lam /ˈlæm/ıə / fon adjective not able to walk easily because of pain, stiffness or damage in a leg or foot (NOTE: This term is regarded as offensive.) lamella /ˈlæmlələ/ıə / fon a thin sheet of tissue (NOTE: The plural is lamellae.)
lamina /ˈlæmənə/ıə / fon a thin membrane
laminpropr /ˈlæməpropr/ıə / fon noun the connective tissue of mucous membranes containing, e.g., blood vessels and lymphatic tissues
laminectomy /ˈlæmənkətəm/ıə / fon a surgical operation to cut through the lamina of a vertebra in the spine to get to the spinal cord. Also called rachiotomy (NOTE: The plural is laminectomies.)
lamotrigine /ˈlæmətɹɪdʒɪn/ıə / fon a drug that helps to control petit mal epilepsy
lance /ˈlæns/ıə / fon verbal to make a cut in a boil or abscess to remove the pus
lancet /ˈlænts/ıə / fon 1, a sharp two-edged pointed knife formerly used in surgery 2, a small pointed implement used to take a small capillary blood sample, e.g. to measure blood glucose levels
lancinate /ˈlænsɪnət/ıə / fon to lacerate or cut some thing (NOTE: lancinating – lancinated)
lancinating /ˈlænsɪnətɪŋ/ıə / fon adjective referring to pain which is sharp and cutting
Landsteiner’s classification /ˈlændstɪnəz /klɛsɪfər/ıə / fon same as ABO system
Langerhans’ cells /ˈlɑŋɡərənz /sɛlz/ıə / fon plural noun cells on the outer layers of the skin
Langer’s lines /ˈlɑŋɡərz /lɛnz/ıə / fon plural noun the arrangement of collagen protein fibres which causes the usual skin creases. Cuts made along these lines sever fewer fibres and heal better than other cuts. Also called cleavage lines
lanolin /ˈlænəln/ıə / fon grease from sheep’s wool which absorbs water and is used to rub on to dried skin, or in the preparation of cosmetics
lanugo /ˈlænəgəʊ/ıə / fon 1, soft hair on the body of a fetus or new born baby 2, soft hair on the...
body of an adult, except on the palms of the hands, the soles of the feet and the parts where long hair grows

**laryngoscope** /lə'rɪŋgəskəʊp/ noun a surgical instrument which is inserted through a hole in the abdominal wall to allow a surgeon to examine the inside of the abdominal cavity. Also called peritoneoscope

**laryngeal surgery** /lə'rɪŋgl ə'naʊ/ noun the study of diseases of the larynx, throat and vocal cords

**laryngomalacia** /lə'rɪŋgəmələ'ʃə/ noun a condition in which breathing is made difficult by softness of the larynx, occurring mainly in children under the age of two

**laryngopharyngeal** /lə'rɪŋgəfərəndʒiəl/ adjective referring to both the larynx and the pharynx

**laryngoscopy** /lə'rɪŋgəskəʊp/ noun an instrument for examining the inside of the larynx using a light and mirrors

**laryngoscopies (plural)** /lə'rɪŋgəskəʊpi/ noun an examination of the larynx with a laryngoscope

**laryngitis** /lə'rɪŋgɪtɪs/ noun inflammation of the larynx, throat and vocal cords

**laryngismus** /lə'rɪŋgɪzməs/ noun a spasm of the throat muscles with a sharp intake of breath which occurs when the larynx is irritated, as in children who have croup

**laryngitis** /lə'rɪŋgədʒətɪs/ noun inflammation of the larynx

**laryngo-** /lə'rɪŋgəʊ/ prefix larynx

**laryngology** /lə'rɪŋɡələ'je/ noun the study of diseases of the larynx, throat and vocal cords

**Lassa fever** /ˈlæsə fɜːvə/ noun a highly infectious and often fatal virus disease found in Central and West Africa, causing high fever, pains, and ulcers in the mouth [After a village in northern Nigeria where the fever was first reported.]

**Lasix** /ˈleɪzɪks/ a trade name for frusemide

**larynx** /lə'reɪŋks/ noun the organ in the throat which produces sound. Also called voice box

**laser** /ˈleɪzər/ noun an instrument which produces a highly concentrated beam of light which can be used to cut or attach tissue, as in operations for a detached retina

**laryngectomy** /lə'rɪŋgɛktəmi/ noun a surgical operation to remove the larynx, usually as treatment for throat cancer [NOTE: The plural is laryngectomies]

**laryngoscopy** /lə'rɪŋgəskəʊp/ noun the study of the larynx, throat and vocal cords

**laryngospasm** /lə'rɪŋgɔsəpəsm/ noun a muscular spasm which suddenly closes the larynx

**laryngostomies** /lə'rɪŋgɔstəmɪs/ noun narrowing of the lumen of the larynx

**laryngotracheal** /lə'rɪŋgəʊ'trækʃəl/ adjective relating to both the larynx and the trachea ○ laryngotracheal stenosis

**laryngotracheobronchitis** /lə'rɪŋgəʊ'trækʃəbərəŋk'tɪtɪs/ noun inflammation of the larynx, trachea and bronchi, as in croup

**Lassa fever** /ˈlæsə fɜːvə/ noun a highly infectious and often fatal virus disease found in Central and West Africa, causing high fever, pains, and ulcers in the mouth [After a village in northern Nigeria where the fever was first reported.]

**laxative** /ˈleɪstɪv/ noun a state where a person does not want to do anything, sometimes because he or she is depressed

**lateral** /ˈleɪtərəl/ adjective further away from the midline of the body
lateral aspect /\lætərəl ˈæspekt/ noun a view of the side of part of the body. Also called lateral view. See illustration at ANATOMICAL TERMS in Supplement

lateral epicondyle /\lætərəl ˈɛpɪkəndail/ lateral epicondyle of the humerus /\lætərəl ˈɛpɪkəndail əv ˈhjuːmərəs/ noun a lateral projection on the rounded end of the humerus at the elbow joint

lateral epicondylitis /\lætərəl ˈɛpɪkəndi/ˈlɪtɪtɪs/ noun same as tennis elbow

laterally /\lætərəlɪ/ adverb towards or on the side of the body. See illustration at ANATOMICAL TERMS in Supplement

lateral malleolus /\lætərəl ˈmælələʊls/ noun the part of the fibula which protrudes on the outside of the ankle

lateral view /\lætərəl ˈvjuː/ noun same as lateral aspect

lateroverision /\lætərəvəˈrisən/ noun a condition in which an organ is turned to one side

lateralisimus dorsi /ˈlɛtəraləˌziˌməsˈdɔːrəsi/ noun a large flat triangular muscle covering the lumbar region and the lower part of the chest

laudanum /ˈlɔʊdənəm/ noun a solution of opium in alcohol that was formerly in widespread use for pain relief

laughing gas /ˈlɔːθɪŋ ɡæs/ noun same as nitrous oxide (informal)

lavage /ˈlævæʒ/ noun the act of washing out or irrigating an organ such as the stomach

lavative /ˈlævətɪv/ adjective causing a bowel movement; noun a medicine which causes a bowel movement, e.g. bisacodyl, which stimulates intestinal motility, or lactulose which alters fluid retention in the bowel; also called (informal) purgative

lazy eye /ˈleɪzɪ ˈaɪ/ noun an eye which does not focus properly without an obvious cause (informal); amblyopia

LD abbreviation lethal dose

LDL abbreviation low-density lipoprotein

L-dopa /elˈdeʊpə/ noun same as levodopa

LE abbreviation lupus erythematosus

lead /liːd/ noun a very heavy soft metallic element, which is poisonous in compounds (NOTE: The chemical symbol is Pb.)

lead poisoning /liːdˌpoʊˈzɪŋ/ noun poisoning caused by taking in lead salts. Also called plumbism, saturnism

learning /ˈlɛrnɪŋ/ noun the act of gaining knowledge or of how to do something

learning disability /ˈlɛrnɪŋ dɪˈsælɪbɪlɪtē/ noun same as learning difficulty

LE cells /el ˈleɪz/ plural noun white blood cells which show that someone has lupus erythematosus

lecithin /ˈleɪsɪθɪn/ noun a chemical which is a constituent of all animal and plant cells and is involved in the transport and absorption of fats

leech /ˈlɪtʃ/ noun a blood-sucking parasitic worm which lives in water, occasionally used in specialist procedures

leg /ˈleɡ/ noun a part of the body with which a person or animal walks and stands

Legg-Calvé disease /ˈleg ˈkælvi ˈdiːˌziːz/ Legg-Calvé-Perthes disease /ˈleg ˈkælviˌpɜːrθi ˈdiːˌziːz/ noun degeneration of the upper end of the thighbone in young boys, which prevents the bone growing properly and can result in a permanent limp [Described 1910 separately by all three workers. Arthur Thornton Legg (1874–1938), American orthopaedic surgeon; Jacques Calvé (1875–1954), French orthopaedic surgeon; Georg Clemens Perthes (1869–1927), German surgeon.]

Legionnaires’ disease /ˈliʒənərriəz ˈdiːz/ noun a bacterial disease similar to pneumonia

leio-/ˈleɪəʊ-/ prefix smooth or smoothness

leiomyoma /ˈleɪəʊməˈmeɪəma/ noun a tumour of smooth muscle, especially the smooth muscle coating the uterus (NOTE: The plural is leiomyomas or leiomyomata.)

leiomyosarcoma /ˈleɪəʊˌmeɪəsərˈkɑːmə/ noun a sarcoma in which large bundles of smooth muscle are found (NOTE: The plural is leiomyosarcomas or leiomyosarcomata.)

leishmaniasis /ˈliːʃməˌneɪʃəs/ noun a disease caused by the parasite Leishmania, one form of which causes disfiguring ulcers, while another attacks the liver and bone marrow

Lembert’s suture /ˈlɛmbərtz ˈsʊtʃər/ noun a suture used to close a wound in the intestine which includes all the coats of the intestine [Described 1826. After Antoine Lembert (1802–51), French surgeon.]

lens /lenz/ noun 1. the part of the eye behind the iris and pupil, which focuses light coming from the cornea onto the retina. See illustration at EYE in Supplement 2. a piece of shaped glass or plastic which forms part of a pair of spectacles or microscope 3. same as contact lens

lens implant /ˈlenzˌɪmpləmənt/ noun an artificial lens implanted in the eye when the natural lens is removed, as in the case of cataract

lenticular /ˈlenˌtɪk.jʊlər/ adjective referring to or like a lens

lentigo /ˈlɛntɪgɔː/ noun a small brown spot on the skin often caused by exposure to sunlight. Also called freckle (NOTE: The plural is lentigines.)
leontiasis /ˈlɛntəˌnæsɪs/ noun a rare disorder in which the skull bones become enlarged and may give the appearance of a lion's head. It occurs if Paget's disease is not treated.

leptosy /lɛptəˈsaɪ/ noun an infectious bacterial disease of skin and peripheral nerves caused by *Mycobacterium leprae*, which destroys the tissues and causes severe disfigurement if left untreated. Also called *Hansen's disease*

leptin /ˈlɛptɪn/ noun a hormone produced by fat cells that signals the body's level of hunger to the hypothalamus of the brain

leptocyte /ˈlɛptəsaɪt/ noun a thin red blood cell found in anaemia

leptomeninges /ˈlɛptəˈmɛnɪdʒɪz/ plural noun the two inner membranes, the pia mater and arachnoid

leptomeningitis /ˈlɛptəˌmɛnɪnətɪs/ noun inflammation of the leptomeninges

leptospira /ˈlɛptəˌspərə/ noun a genus of bacteria excreted continuously in the urine of rats and many domestic animals. It can infect humans, causing leptospirosis or Weil's disease.

leptospirosis /ˈlɛptəˌspərəˈrɒsɪs/ noun an infectious disease caused by the spirochaete *Leptospira*, transmitted to humans from rat urine, causing jaundice and kidney damage. Also called *Weil's disease*

lesbianism /ˈlezbiənɪzm/ noun sexual attraction in one woman for another. Compare *homosexuality*

Lesch-Nyan disease /ˈlezʃˌnaɪn dɪˈzɪz/.

Lesch-Nyan syndrome /ˈlezʃˌnaɪn ˌsɪndrəʊm/ noun a rare genetic disorder in boys caused by a lack of the enzyme HPRT. Symptoms include uncontrolled muscle movements and learning disabilities, and life expectancy is 20–25.

lesion /ˈleʒən/ noun a wound, sore or damage to the body (NOTE: *Lesion* is used to refer to any damage to the body, from the fracture of a bone to a cut on the skin.)

lesser /ˈleʃər/ adjective smaller

lesser circulation /ˈleʃər ˌsɜːkjuˈleʃər/ noun same as pulmonary circulation

lesser trochanter /ˈleʃər trəˈkæntər/ noun a projection on the femur which is the insertion of the psoas major muscle

lesser vestibular gland /ˈleʃər vɛˈstɪbjuˈlær ɡlænd/ noun the more anterior of the vestibular glands

lethal /ˈlɛθəl/ adjective killing or able to kill ○ These fumes are lethal if inhaled.

lethal dose /ˈlɛθəl ˈdoʊs/ noun the amount of a drug or other substance which will kill the person who takes it ○ She took a lethal dose of aspirin. Abbreviation LD

leukacytoksisis /ˌlɛukəˈsɪtəˌkɔsɪsəs/ noun an increase in the number of leucocytes in the blood above the usual upper limit, in order to fight an infection

leukoderma /ˌlɛukəˈdɜrmə/ noun same as vitiligo

leukolysin /ˌlɛukəˌlɪsɪn/ noun a protein which destroys white blood cells

leukocytoysis /ˌlɛukəˌsɪtəˌtɒlɪsɪs/ noun the removal of leucocytes

leukopenia /ˌlɛukəˌpɪnɪə/ noun a condition in which white patches form on mucous membranes, e.g. on the tongue or inside of the mouth

leukoplakia /ˌlɛukəˌplækɪə/ noun a condition in which white patches form on mucous membranes, e.g. on the tongue or inside of the mouth

leukorrhoea /ˌlɛukəˈrɪə/ noun an excessive discharge of white mucus from the vagina. Also called *whites* (NOTE: The US spelling is leukorrhoea.)

leukokariosis /ˌlɛukəˌkærəˌtɒsɪs/ noun any of several malignant diseases where an unusual number of leucocytes form in the blood (NOTE: The US spelling is leukemia.)

leuko- /ˌlɛukəʊ/ prefix same as leuco-

leucorhoea /ˌlɛukəˌrɪə/ noun a condition in which white patches form on mucous membranes, e.g. on the tongue or inside of the mouth

level of care /ˈlevl əv ˈkeər/ noun any of the planned divisions within the system of health care which is offered by a particular organisation ○
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Our care homes offer six different levels of care to allow the greatest independence possible.

level one bed /lɛv(ə)l/ 'bed/ noun a bed occupied by a patient whose needs can be managed in a ward but who has an increased requirement for nursing support, e.g. a post-operative patient with fluctuating vital signs

level two bed /lɛv(ə)l/ 'bed/ noun a bed occupied by a patient whose needs would not normally be managed in a ward, e.g. a patient intubated following a cardiac arrest

level three bed /lɛv(ə)l/ 'bed/ noun a bed occupied by a patient whose needs would not be managed in a ward, e.g. a patient with a deteriorating condition awaiting transfer to a high-dependency unit

levodopa /ˈli.də.də.pə/ noun a natural chemical that stimulates the production of dopamine in the brain and is used to treat Parkinson's disease

levonorgestrel /ˈli.də.və.nɔrˌɡe.strəl/ noun an artificially produced female sex hormone, used mostly in birth control pills or capsules

Leydig cells /ˈli.dʒɪd/ 'selz/ plural noun testosterone-producing cells between the tubules in the testes. Also called interstitial cells [Described 1850. After Franz von Leydig (1821–1908), Professor of Histology at Würzburg, Tübingen and then Bonn, Germany.]

Leydig tumour /ˈli.dʒɪd/ 'juːmər/ noun a tumour of the Leydig cells of the testis. It often releases testosterone, which makes young boys show early signs of maturing.

I.g.v. abbreviation lymphogranuloma venereum

LH abbreviation luteinising hormone

libido /ˈli.bɪ.dəʊ/ noun 1. the sexual urge 2. (in psychology) a force which drives the unconscious mind

Librium /ˈli.briəm/ a trade name for chlor diazepoxide

lice /laɪs/ plural of louse

lichen /ˈlaɪkən/ noun a type of skin disease with thick skin and small lesions

lichenification /ˈlaɪ.kən.ɪˈfɪ.ʃən/ noun a thickening of the skin at the site of a lesion

lichen planus /ˈlaɪ.kən ˈplænəs/ noun a skin disease where itchy purple spots appear on the arms and thighs

lid /laɪd/ noun the top which covers a container  

lidocaine /ˈlaɪd.ə.kən/ noun US a drug used as a local anaesthetic. Also called lignocaine

lie /laɪ/ noun same as lie of fetus verb to be in a flat position  

Lieberkühn's glands /ˈlaɪbər.kʊn/ plural noun same as crypts of Lieberkühn

light adaptation /laɪt ədəp.tən/ noun changes in the eye to adapt to an unusually bright or dim light or to adapt to light after being in darkness.
lightening /ˈlaɪtɪnɪŋ/ noun a late stage in pregnancy where the fetus goes down into the pelvic cavity
lightening pains /ˈlaɪtɪnɪŋ peɪnz/ plural noun sharp pains in the legs in someone who has tabes dorsalis
light reflex /ˈlaɪt ˈrɪflɛks/ noun same as pupillary reaction
light therapy /ˈlaɪt ˌθerəpi/, light treatment /ˈlaɪt ˌriːtrɪmt/ noun the treatment of a disorder by exposing the person to light such as sunlight or infrared light
linguine /ˈlɪŋgəˌnaɪn/ noun one of the legs or arms
limbus /ˈlɪmbəs/ noun an edge, especially the edge of the cornea where it joins the sclera (NOTE: The plural is limbi.)
lipoma /ˈlɪpəmə/ noun a sweet cough medicine
linea nigra /ˈlaɪnə ˈnaɪgərə/ noun a dark line on the skin from the navel to the pubis which appears during the later months of pregnancy (NOTE: The plural is lineae nigrae.)
linear /ˈlaɪnər/ adjective 1. long and narrow in shape 2. able to be represented by a straight line
lingual /ˈlɪŋgwəl/ adjective referring to the tongue
lingual tonsil /ˈlɪŋgwɔl ˈtɒnsɪl/ noun a mass of lymphoid tissue on the top surface of the back of the tongue
lingula /ˈlɪŋgəˌluːə/ noun a long thin piece of bone or other tissue ○ the lingula of the left lung (NOTE: The plural is lingulae.)
lingular /ˈlɪŋgjuːəl/ adjective relating to a lingula
liniment /ˈlaɪnəmənt/ noun an oily liquid rubbed on the skin to ease the pain or stiffness of a sprain or bruise by acting as a vasodilator or counterirritant. Also called embrocation
lining /ˈlaɪnɪŋ/ noun a substance or tissue on the inside of an organ ○ the thick lining of the aorta
link /link/ verb 1. to join things together ○ The ankle bone links the bones of the lower leg to the calcaneous. 2. to be related to or associated with something ○ Health is linked to diet.
linkage /ˈlɪŋkɪdʒ/ noun (of genes) the fact of being close together on a chromosome, and therefore likely to be inherited together
linoleic acid /ˈlɪnələɪk/ˈeɪsɪd/ noun one of the essential fatty acids, found in grains and seeds
linolenic acid /ˈlɪnəlnɛk/ˈeɪsɪd/ noun one of the essential fatty acids, found in linseed and other natural oils
lint /lɪnt/ noun thick flat cotton wadding, used as part of a surgical dressing
lip /lɪp/ noun 1. each of two fleshy muscular parts round the edge of the mouth ○ Her lips were dry and cracked. 2. same as labium
lipase /ˈlɪpəz/ noun an enzyme which breaks down fats in the intestine. Also called lipolytic enzyme
lipid /ˈlɪpɪd/ noun an organic compound which is insoluble in water, e.g. a fat, oil or wax
lipid metabolism /ˈlɪpɪd ˈməʊtəˌməlɪˌbɜːləzɪˌm/ noun the series of chemical changes by which lipids are broken down into fatty acids
lipidosis /ˈlɪpɪdəʊsɪs/ noun a disorder of lipid metabolism in which subcutaneous fat is not present in some parts of the body
lipochondrodytostrophy /ˌlɪpəˌkɒndrəˈdɪstrəfɪ/ noun a congenital disorder affecting lipid metabolism, the bones and the main organs, causing learning difficulties and physical deformity
lipoedystrophy /ˌlɪpəˌdɪstrəfɪ/ noun a disorder of lipid metabolism
lipogenesis /ˌlɪpəˈdʒenəsɪs/ noun the production or making of deposits of fat
lipoid /ˈlɪpɔɪd/ noun a compound lipid, or a fatty substance such as cholesterol which is like a lipid
lipolytic /ˈlɪpəlɪtɪk/ noun the process of breaking down fat by lipase
lipolytic enzyme /ˌlɪpəˌlɪtɪk ˈɛnəzəm/ noun same as lipase
lipoma /ˈlɪpəmə/ noun a benign tumour formed of fatty tissue (NOTE: The plural is lipomas or lipomata.)
lipoprotein /ˈlɪpəprəʊtətɪn/ noun a protein which combines with lipids and carries them in the bloodstream and lymph system (NOTE: Lipoproteins are classified according to the percentage of protein which they carry.)

liposuction /ˈlɪpəsʌkʃən/ noun the surgical removal of fatty tissue for cosmetic reasons

lipping /ˈlɪptɪŋ/ noun a condition in which bone tissue grows over other bones

lip salve /ˈlɪp sɔːl/ noun an ointment, usually sold as a soft stick, used to rub on lips to prevent them cracking

liquid diet /ˈlɪkwaɪd dɑːt/ noun a diet consisting only of liquids ○ The clear liquid diet is a temporary diet used in preparation for surgery.

liquid paraffin /ˈlɪkwaɪd ˈpærəfɪn/ noun an oil used as a laxative

liquor /ˈlɪkʃər/ (in pharmacy) a solution, usually aqueous, of a pure substance

lisp /lɪsp/ noun a speech condition in which someone replaces ‘s sounds with ‘θ’ sounds with the verb to talk with a lisp

Listeria /ˈlɪstrɪə/ noun a genus of bacteria found in domestic animals and in unpasteurised milk products which can cause uterine infection or meningitis

listeriosis /ˈlɪstrɪəsɪəs/ noun an infectious disease transmitted from animals to humans by the bacterium Listeria

listlessness /ˈlɪstləns/ noun the fact of being generally weak and tired

liter /ˈlɪtər/ noun US spelling of litre

lith- /lɪθ-/ prefix same as litho- (used before vowel)

lithagogue /ˈlɪθəgəʊ/ noun a drug which helps to remove stones from the urine

lithiasis /ˈlɪθɪəsɪs/ noun the formation of stones in an organ

lithium /ˈlɪθiəm/ noun a soft silver-white metallic element that forms compounds, used as a medical treatment for bipolar disorder

litho- /lɪθəʊ-/ prefix referring to a calculus

litholapaxy /ˈlɪθələpæksɪ/ noun the evacuation of pieces of a stone in the bladder after crushing it with a lithotrite. Also called lithotomy

lithonephrotomy /ˌlɪθənəfroʊˈtɒmi/ noun a surgical operation to remove a stone in the kidney (NOTE: The plural is lithonephrotomies.)

lithotomy /ˈlɪθətəmi/ noun a surgical operation to remove a stone from the bladder (NOTE: The plural is lithotomies.)

lithotomy position /ˈlɪθətəmi pəˈziʃən/ noun a position for some medical examinations in which the person lies on his or her back with the legs flexed and the thighs against the abdomen

lithotripsy /ˌlɪθətrɪpsɪ/ noun the process of breaking up kidney or gall bladder stones into small fragments that the body can eliminate them unaided.

lithotrite /ˈlɪθətrɪt/ noun a surgical instrument which crushes a stone in the bladder

lithotritry /lɪθətrɪtrɪ/ noun same as litholapaxy

lithuresis /ˌlɪθərəˈrizɪs/ noun the passage of small stones from the bladder during urination

lithmus /ˈlɪθməs/ noun a substance which turns red in acid and blue in alkali

lithmus paper /ˈlɪθməs ˈpeɪpər/ noun a small piece of paper impregnated with linitmus, used to test for acidity or alkalinity

literate /ˈlɪtətʃər/ noun a unit of measurement of liquids equal to 1.76 pints. Abbreviation I, L (NOTE: With figures, usually written I or L: 2.5L, but it can be written in full to avoid confusion with the numeral 1. The US spelling is liter.)

Little’s area /ˈlɪtəlz əˈrɛə/ noun an area of blood vessels in the nasal septum

Little’s disease /ˈlɪtəlz ˈdɪzləz/ noun same as spastic diplegia [Described 1843. After William John Little (1810–94), physician at the London Hospital, UK]

liver /ˈlɪvər/ noun a large gland in the upper part of the abdomen. See illustration at DIGESTIVE SYSTEM in Supplement (NOTE: For other terms referring to the liver, see words beginning with hepato-)

liver fluke /ˈlɪvər flʌk/ noun a parasitic flatworm which can infest the liver

liver spot /ˈlɪvər spɔt/ noun a small brown patch on the skin of the backs of the hands, attributed to sun damage (NOTE: Liver spots are unconnected with any liver disorder.)

liver transplant /ˈlɪvər trænzplænt/ noun a surgical operation to give a person the liver of another person who has died

livid /ˈlɪvɪd/ adjective referring to skin with a blue colour because of being bruised or because of asphyxiation

living will /ˈlɪvɪŋ ˈwɪl/ noun a document signed by a person while in good health to specify the decisions he or she wishes to be taken about medical treatment if he or she becomes incapable of making or communicating them

LMC abbreviation local medical committee

lobar /ˈlɒbər/ adjective referring to a lobe

lobar bronchi /ˈlɒbrər ˈbrɒŋkki/ plural noun air passages supplying a lobe of a lung. Also called secondary bronchi

lobar pneumonia /ˈlɒbər ˈpɛnoʊməniə/ noun pneumonia which affects one or more lobes of the lung

lobe /ˈlɒb/ noun a rounded section of an organ such as the brain, lung or liver. See illustration at LUNGS in Supplement
lobectomy /bəʊˈbɛktəmi/ noun a surgical operation to remove one of the lobes of an organ such as the lung. The plural is lobectomies.

labour /ˈləbər/ noun the physical effort involved in giving birth to a child

locomotion /ˌloʊkəˌmənən/ noun the act or manner of moving about or the ability to do so

lockjaw /ˈlɔkˌdʒɔ/ noun a condition caused by a disorder of the nervous system

locked knee /ˈlɔkkt/ noun a knee that is not bendable

lids /lɪdz/ noun the upper and lower pieces of skin and muscle that cover the eyes

lock /lɔk/ verb to fasten or secure something

lock-in syndrome /ˌlɔkɪn ˈsɪndrəm/ noun a condition in which a person becomes fixed in a particular posture or behavior

lockout /ˈlɔkət/ noun a method of preventing people from accessing a facility

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lumbar nerve /ləmbə/ plural /ləmbəz/ noun a nerve that relieves severe diarrhea by slowing down the movements of the intestine

lumbar plexus /ləmbər ˈplɛksəs/ noun a network of nerves in the lower back

lumbar vertebra /ləmbər ˈvɜːtɪbrə/ plural noun each of the five vertebrae between the thoracic vertebrae and the sacrum

lumbar region /ləmbər ˈrizən/ noun the two parts of the abdomen on each side of the umbilical region

lumbago /ˈlʌmbəʊ/ noun a mild tranquilliser that people often receive before surgery to lessen anxiety

lomotil /ˈlɒmətɪl/ noun an antiperistaltic drug

lordosis /ˈlɔːrdəsɪs/ noun excessive forward curvature of the lower part of the spine. Also called kyphosis

lordotic /ˈlɔːrdətɪk/ adjective referring to lordosis

lotion /ˈlʊtən/ noun a medicated liquid used to rub on the skin or a mild antiseptic lotion

louse /laʊz/ noun a small insect of the Pediculus genus, which sucks blood and lives on the skin as a parasite on animals and humans (NOTE: The plural is lice.)

low-density lipoprotein /ˈləʊdɛn.dətɪs ˈlɪpəprəʊˈtɑːn/ noun a lipoprotein with a large percentage of cholesterol which deposits fats in muscles and arteries. Abbreviation LDL

low back /ˈləʊbæk/ adjective referring to the lower part of the spine

low-density lipoprotein /ˈləʊdɛn.dətɪs ˈlɪpəprəʊˈtɑːn/ noun a lipoprotein with a large percentage of cholesterol which deposits fats in muscles and arteries. Abbreviation LDL

lump /lʌmp/ noun a mass of hard tissue which rises on the surface or under the surface of the skin. He has a lump where he hit his head on the low door. She noticed a lump in her right breast and went to see the doctor.

lumpectomy /ˈlʌmpkətəmi/ noun a surgical operation to remove a hard mass of tissue such as a breast tumour, leaving the surrounding tissue intact (NOTE: The plural is lumpectomies.)

lunate /ˈljuːniːt/ noun one of the eight small carpal bones in the wrist. See illustration at hand in Supplement

lung /lʌŋ/ noun one of two organs of respiration in the body into which air is sucked when a person breathes (NOTE: For other terms referring to the lungs, see words beginning with bronch- , broncho- , pneumo- , pneumono-, pneumon- , pneumon- , pulmonary- )

lunula /lʊnˈjuːlə/ noun a curved white mark at the base of a fingernail (NOTE: The plural is lunulae.)

lupus /ˈljuːpəs/ noun a persistent skin disease, of which there are several unrelated types

lupus erythematosus /ˈljuːpəs əˈrɪθəˌmətəsəs/ noun an inflammatory disease of connective tissue of which the more serious, systemic, form affects the heart, joints and blood vessels. Abbreviation LE

lutein /ˈljuːtɪn/ noun a yellow pigment in the corpus luteum

luteinising hormone /ˈljuːtɪnɪzaɪnɪŋ ˈhəʊmən/ noun a hormone produced by the pituitary gland, which stimulates the formation of the corpus luteum in females and of testosterone in males. Abbreviation LH
The plural is **benign tumour formed of lymph tissues**.

**Lymphangioma**

**lymphangiography**

**Lymphangioplasty**

**Lymphangitis**

**Lymphatic capillary**

**Lymphatic nodules**

**Lymphatic system**

**Lymphatic vessel**

**Lymph node**

**Lympho-**

**Lyme disease**

**Lymph fluid**

**Lymphadenectomy**

**Lymphadenitis**

**Lymphadenoma**

**Lymphadenopathy**

**Lymphangiectasis**

**Lymphangiography**

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**Lymphangitis**

**Lymphatic capillary**

**Lymphatic nodules**

**Lymphatic system**

**Lymphatic vessel**

**Lymph node**

**Lympho-**

**Lyme disease**
lymphogranuloma venereum /ˌlimfogrəˈnələmə ˈvɛnərəm/ noun a sexually transmitted bacterial infection that causes swelling of the genital lymph nodes, and, especially in men, a genital ulcer. Abbreviation L.G.V.

lymphoid tissue /ˌlimfɔɪd ˈtjuːs/ noun tissue in the lymph nodes, the tonsils and the spleen where masses of lymphocytes are supported by a network of reticular fibres and cells.

lymphokine /ˌlimfɔˈkain/ noun a protein produced by lymphocytes that has an effect on other cells in the immune system. ∘ cytokine

lymphoma /ˌlimfəˈmoʊmə/ noun a malignant tumour arising from lymphoid tissue. Also called lymphadenoma. (NOTE: The plural is lymphomas or lymphomatous.)

lymphopenia /ˌlimfəˈpiːniə/ noun a reduction in the number of lymphocytes in the blood. Also called lymphocytopenia.

lymphopoiesis /ˌlimfəˈpɒiəsɪs/ noun the production of lymphocytes or lymphoid tissue.

lymph vessel /ˌlimf ˈvɛs(ə)l/ noun one of the tubes which carry lymph round the body from the tissues to the veins.

lyophilisation /ˌlaɪəfəˈliːʃən/ noun the act of preserving tissue, plasma or serum by freeze-drying it in a vacuum.

lysergic acid diethylamide /ˌlaɪsərɡ əˈdɪθɪləməd/ noun a powerful hallucinogenic drug which can cause psychosis. Abbreviation LSD.

lysin /ˈlaɪsɪn/ noun 1. a protein in the blood which destroys the cell against which it is directed 2. a toxin which causes the lysis of cells.

lysine /ˈlaɪsɪn/ noun an essential amino acid.

lysis /ˈlaɪsɪs/ noun 1. the destruction of a cell by a lysin, in which the membrane of the cell is destroyed 2. a reduction in a fever or disease slowly over a period of time. ∘-lysis /-lɪsɪs/ suffix referring to processes which involve breaking up or decaying, or to objects which are doing this ∘ haemolysis.

lysosome /ˈlaɪsəˌsəʊm/ noun a particle in a cell which contains enzymes which break down substances such as bacteria which enter the cell.

lysozyme /ˈlaɪsəˈzaɪm/ noun an enzyme found in the whites of eggs and in tears, which destroys specific bacteria.
condition of having an unusually large tongue
macroglossia
high molecular weight, which serves as an anti-macroglobulin
called:
mi
vert/superior
macrocyaemia
macrocyst
macrocheilia
macrocephaly
mackenrodt's ligaments
/mackenrodtz
ligament/ plural noun same as cardinal ligaments
Macmillan nurse
/mak'milәn nәts/ noun a nurse who specializes in cancer care and is employed by the organization Macmillan Cancer Relief
macro-/mak'kraʊ/ prefix large. Opposite micro-
macrobioptic 
/mak'kraʊbɪo'tɪk/ adjective referring to food which has been produced naturally without artificial additives or preservatives
macrocephaly
/mak'kraʊ'kɛfəli/ noun the condition of having an unusually large head
macrochelitis
/mak'kraʊ'kɛlɪtis/ noun the condition of having large lips
macrocyte
/mak'kraʊsɛt/ noun an unusually large red blood cell found in people who have pernicious anaemia
macrocyst
/mak'kraʊst/ noun same as macrocystosis
macrocystic 
/mak'kraʊ'stɪk/ adjective referring to macrocytes
macrocystic anaemia
/mak'kraʊsɪstɪk ər'nɪtɪmɪə/ noun anaemia in which someone has unusually large red blood cells
macrocystosis
/mak'kraʊsɪstəsɪs/ noun the condition of having macrocytes in the blood. Also called macrocythaemia
macroadactyly
/mak'kraʊ'dæktɪli/ noun a condition in which a person has unusually large or long fingers or toes
macroglobulin
/mak'kraʊ'ɡləbjʊlɪn/ noun a class of immunoglobulin, a globulin protein of high molecular weight, which serves as an antibody
macroglossia
/mak'kraʊ'ɡləssɪə/ noun the condition of having an unusually large tongue
macroglossia
/macraʊ'glaʃə/ noun a condition in which the jaw is larger than usual
macromastia
/macraʊ'mæstɪə/ noun over-development of the breasts
macronutrient
/macraʊ'njuːtrɪənt/ noun a substance which an organism needs in large amounts for normal growth and development, e.g. nitrogen, carbon or potassium. Compare micronutrient
macrophage
/mak'kraʊfədʒ/ noun any of several large cells which destroy inflammatory tissue, found in connective tissue, wounds, lymph nodes and other parts
macrophagic
/mak'kraʊfədʒɪk/ adjective able to be seen with the naked eye
macrosomia
/macraʊ'sɒmɪə/ noun a condition in which the body grows too much
macrostomia
/macraʊ'stəʊmɪə/ noun a condition in which the mouth is too wide because the bones of the upper and lower jaw have not fused, either on one or on both sides
macula
/mak'jʊlə/ noun 1. same as macule 2. a small coloured area, e.g. a macula lutea
macula lutea
/mak'jʊləlʊt'eɪə/ noun a yellow spot on the retina, surrounding the fovea, the part of the eye which sees most clearly. Also called yellow spot
macular
/mak'jʊlər/ adjective referring to a macula
macular degeneration
/mak'jʊlə dɪˈdʒɛnərəʃən/ noun an eye disorder in elderly people in which fluid leaks into the retina and destroys cones and rods, reducing central vision
macule
/mak'jʊlə/ noun a small flat coloured spot on the skin. Compare papule
maculopapular
/mak'jʊləpəˈpæplər/ adjective made up of both macules and papules ○ maculo-papular rash
mad cow disease
/ˈmeɪd koʊ ˈdɛɪz/ noun same as bovine spongiform encephalopathy (informal)
Magendie's foramen
/maɪ ˈdʒɛndɪz ˌfoʊrəmən/ noun an opening in the fourth ventricle of the brain which allows cerebrospinal fluid to flow [Described 1828. After François Magendie]
malarial /məˈleəriəl/ adjective referring to malaria
malarial parasite /məˈleəriəl pərəˈsət/ noun a parasite transmitted into the human bloodstream by the bite of the female anopheles mosquito
malarial therapy /məˈleəriəl ˈθɛəri/ noun a treatment in which a person is given a form of malaria in the belief that the high fevers they experience can stimulate the immune system to fight off serious diseases such as syphilis and HIV
male menopause /meɪl ˈmɛnəpəʊz/ noun a period in middle age when a man may feel insecure and anxious about the fact that his physical powers are declining (informal)
malformation /meɪl ˈfɔːmərəʃən/ noun an unusual variation in the shape, structure or development of something
malfunction /meɪl ˈfʌŋkʃən/ noun a situation in which a particular organ does not work in the usual way © Her loss of consciousness was due to a malfunction of the kidneys or to a kidney malfunction.
malignancy /meɪl ˈlɪgnənsi/ noun 1. the state of being malignant © The tests confirmed the malignancy of the growth. 2. a cancerous growth (NOTE: The plural is malignancies.)
malignant /meɪl ˈlɪgnənt/ adjective likely to cause death or serious disability if not properly treated
malignant hypertension /meɪl ˈlɪgnənt hæŋˈtəpstrəʊʃən/ noun dangerously high blood pressure
malignant melanoma /meɪl ˈlɪgnənt ˈmelmənə/ noun a dark tumour which develops on the skin from a mole, caused by exposure to strong sunlight
malignant pustule /meɪl ˈpʌst jʊtəl/ noun a pus-filled swelling that results from infection of the skin with anthrax
malignant tumour /meɪl ˈlɪgnənt təmˈɔːr/ noun a tumour which is cancerous and can grow again or spread into other parts of the body, even if removed surgically. Opposite benign tumour
malingerer /meɪl ˈɪŋɡərə/ noun a person who pretends to be ill
malingering /meɪl ˈɪŋɡərɪŋ/ adjective the act of pretending to be ill
malleolar /meɪlələr/ adjective referring to a malleus
malleolus /meɪləˈləʊləs/ noun one of two bony prominences at each side of the ankle (NOTE: The plural is malleoli.)
mallet finger /meɪlət ˈfɪŋər/ noun a finger which cannot be straightened because the tendon attaching the top joint has been torn
malleus /meɪləs/ noun the largest of the three ossicles in the middle ear, shaped like a hammer. See illustration at EAR in Supplement
Mallory bodies

Mallory bodies /ˈmæləri /ˈbodiz/ plural noun large irregular masses which occur in the cytoplasm of damaged liver cells, often a sign of an alcohol-related disease

Mallory-Weiss syndrome /ˌmæləri ˈvaɪz ˈsɪndrəm/ Mallory-Weiss tear /ˌmæləri ˈvaɪz ˈtɛə/ noun a condition in which there is a tearing in the mucous membrane where the stomach and oesophagus join, e.g. because of strain on them due to vomiting [Described 1929. After G. Kenneth Mallory (1900–86), Professor of Pathology, Boston University, USA; Konrad Weiss (1898–1942) US physician.]

malnourished /məlˈnərəd/ adjective not having enough to eat or having only poor-quality food, leading to ill-health

malnutrition /məlˈnjuːtrəʃən/ noun a lack of food or of good-quality food, leading to ill-health

malocclusion /ˌmæləˈkləkʃən/ noun a condition in which the teeth in the upper and lower jaws do not meet properly when the person’s mouth is closed

malodorous /ˈmælədərəs/ adjective with a strong unpleasant smell

Malpighian body /ˌmælˈpɪʃən ˈbɒdi/, Malpighian corpuscle /ˌmælˈpɪʃən ˈkɔrprəskəl/ noun same as renal corpuscle [Described 1666. After Marcello Malpighi (1628–94), anatomist and physiologist in Rome and Bologna, Italy.]

Malpighian glomerulus /ˌmælˈpɪʃən ɡlərˈmoʊrələs/ noun a form of treatment that involves moving or rubbing

manipulation /ˈmæniˈpjuːləʃən/ noun an unusual or unexpected position of something such as a fetus in the uterus or fractured bone

malpractice /ˌmælprəˈklaɪs/ noun illegal, unethical, negligent or immoral behaviour by a professional person, especially a healthcare professional. The surgeon was found guilty of malpractice.

malpresentation /ˌmælprəˈzɛntəʃən/ noun an unusual position of a fetus in the uterus just before it is ready to be born

Malta fever /mɔɻtə ˈfɛvər/ noun same as brucellosis

maltase /ˈmæltəs/ noun an enzyme in the small intestine which converts maltose into glucose

maltose /ˈmɔltəs/ noun a sugar formed by digesting starch or glycogen

malunion /ˈmɔljuːnən/ noun a bad join of the pieces of a broken bone

mammilla /ˌmæmələ/ noun another spelling of mammilla

mammillary /ˌmæmələrəl/ adjective another spelling of mammillary

mamm- /ˈmæmə/ prefix same as mamm/o- (used before vowels)

mamma /ˈmæmə/ noun same as breast (NOTE: The plural is mammæ.)

mammary /ˈmæmərə/ adjective referring to the breast

mammary gland /ˈmæmərər ˈɡlænd/ noun a gland in female mammals which produces milk

mammilla /ˌmæmələ/ mammilla noun the protruding part in the centre of the breast, containing the milk ducts through which the milk flows. Also called nipple

mammillary /ˌmæmələrəl/ adjective referring to the nipple

mammo/o- /ˈmæməʊə/ prefix referring to breasts

mammogram /ˈmæməɡrəm/ noun a picture of a breast made using a special X-ray technique

mammography /ˈmæməɡrəfɪ/ noun examination of the breast using a special X-ray technique

mammoplasty /ˈmæməplæstə/ noun plastic surgery to alter the shape or size of the breasts

Manchester operation /ˈmæntʃər əˈpɜːrən/ noun a surgical operation to correct downward movement of the uterus, involving removal of the cervix

mandible /ˈmændəbl/ noun the lower bone in the jaw. Also called lower jaw

mandibular /ˈmændəblər/ adjective referring to the lower jaw

mane /ˈmeɪn/ adverb (used on prescriptions) during the daytime. Opposite nocte

manganese /ˈmæŋɡəniːts/ noun a metallic trace element (NOTE: The chemical symbol is Mn.)

mania /ˈmeɪniə/ noun a state of bipolar disorder in which the person is excited, very sure of his or her own abilities and has increased energy

manic /ˈmænɪk/ adjective referring to mania

manic-depressive /ˌmænɪk dɪˈprɛsəv/ adjective relating to bipolar disorder. noun a person with bipolar disorder

manic-depressive illness /ˌmænɪk dɪˈprɛsəv ɪlˈnəs/ manic-depressive psychosis /ˌmænɪk dɪˈprɛsəv ˈsaɪkələsɪs/ noun same as bipolar disorder

manifestation /ˌmænɪˈfɛstəʃən/ noun a sign, indication or symptom of a disease

manipulation /ˌmænɪˈpjuːleɪʃən/ noun a form of treatment that involves moving or rubbing

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manipulation /ˌmænɪˈpjuːleɪʃən/ noun a form of treatment that involves moving or rubbing
parts of the body with the hands, e.g. to treat a disorder of a joint

manometer /ˈmænəmətərn/ noun an instrument for comparing pressures

manometry /ˈmænəmətri/ noun the measurement of pressures within organs of the body which contain gases or liquids, e.g. the oesophagus or parts of the brain

Mantoux test /ˈmæntʌx/ test/ noun a test for tuberculosis, in which a person is given an intracutaneous injection of tuberculin.  ⟨See Heaf test [Described 1908. After Charles Mantoux (1877–1947), French physician.]

manual /ˈmænjuəl/ adjective done by hand

manubrium sterni /ˈmænəbrɪəm ˈstɜrnə/ noun the upper part of the sternum

MAO abbreviation monoamine oxidase

MAOI abbreviation monoamine oxidase inhibitor

MAO inhibitor /ˈmæo ɪnˈhibitər/ noun same as monoamine oxidase inhibitor

maple syrup urine disease /ˌmæpl ˈsjuərɪp əˈdɪzi/ noun an inherited enzyme which helps the body to deal with amino acid. The urine smells like maple syrup. It can be fatal if not treated.

marijuana /ˌmɑːriˈjaʊənə/ noun a hereditary condition in which a person has extremely long fingers and toes, with disorders of the heart, aorta and eyes [Described 1896. After Bernard Jean Antonin Marfan (1858–1942), French paediatrician.]

marasmus /mɑrəˈzæməs/ noun a wasting disease which affects small children who have difficulty in absorbing nutrients or who are malnourished. Also called failure to thrive

marble bone disease /ˈmɑrbləu ˈdɪzn ˈziːz/ noun same as osteopetrosis

march fracture /ˈmɑrʃ ˈfræktʃə/ noun a fracture of one of the metatarsal bones in the foot, caused by excessive exercise to which the body is not accustomed

Marfan’s syndrome /ˈmɑrfnənəu ˈsɪndrəm/ noun a hereditary condition in which a person has extremely long fingers and toes, with disorders of the heart, aorta and eyes [Described 1896. After Bernard Jean Antonin Marfan (1858–1942), French paediatrician.]

marijuana /ˈmɑːriˈwənə/ noun same as cannabis

marker /ˈmærkər/ noun 1. something which acts as an indicator of something else 2. a substance introduced into the body to make internal structures clearer to X-rays

marrow /ˈmɔːrəu/ noun soft tissue in cancellous bone. In young animals red marrow is concerned with blood formation while in adults it becomes progressively replaced with fat and is known as yellow marrow. Also called bone marrow. See illustration at Bone Structure in Supplement

marsupialisation /ˈmɑrəspjuələˈziʃən/ noun a surgical procedure in which the inside of a cyst is opened up so that the cyst can be allowed to shrink gradually, because it cannot be cut out

masculination /ˈmæskjuələnizən/ noun the development of male characteristics such as body hair and a deep voice in a woman, caused by hormone deficiency or by treatment with male hormones

Maslow’s hierarchy of human needs /ˌmæzləʊ, ˈhɑːrɪkstəˌfɑːnˌniːtʃə/ noun a system which explains human behaviour by organising human needs in order of priority, from basic ones such as eating to complex ones such as finding self-fulfilment, a higher level of motivation not being activated until the lesser needs have been satisfied

masochism /ˈmɑsəkʰɪzm/ noun a sexual condition in which a person takes pleasure in being hurt or badly treated

masochistic /ˌmɑsəˈkɪstɪk/ adjective referring to masochism

mass /ˈmæs/ noun 1. a large quantity, e.g. a large number of people. 2. The patient’s back was covered with a mass of red spots.

masseter /ˈmæsɪtər, ˈmæsɪstər/ noun a muscle in the cheek which clenches the lower jaw making it move up, to allow chewing

mast-/ˈmæst/ prefix same as masto- (used before vowels)

mast cell /ˈmæst sel/ noun a large cell in connective tissue, which carries histamine and reacts to allergens

mastectomy /ˈmæstektəmɪ/ noun the surgical removal of a breast

mastication /ˈmæstəʃən/ noun the act of chewing food

mastitis /ˈmæstɪtɪs/ noun inflammation of the breast

masto- /ˈmɑːstəʊ/ prefix referring to a breast

mastoid /ˈmɑːstəd/ adjective shaped like a nipple

mastoid air cell /ˈmɑːstəd ˈeəˌsel/ noun an air cell in the mastoid process

mastoid antrum /ˌmɑːstəd ˈæntrəmən/ noun a cavity linking the air cells of the mastoid process with the middle ear

mastoidectomy /ˌmɑːstəd ˈdɛktəmɪ/ noun a surgical operation to remove part of the mastoid process, as a treatment for mastoiditis

mastoiditis /ˌmɑːstəd ˈdætɪtɪs/ noun inflammation of the mastoid process and air cells. The symptoms are fever and pain in the ears.
mastoid process /ˈmʌstədɪəʊ/ˈprəʊsəs/ noun part of the temporal bone which protrudes at the side of the head behind the ear

masturbation /ˈmʌstəˈbɛrʃən/ˈnəʊn/ noun stimulation of one’s own genitals to produce an orgasm. Also called onanism

mater /ˈmeɪtər/ noun mater
dura mater

materia medica /maˈtria medika/ noun the study of drugs or dosages as used in treatment (NOTE: It comes from a Latin term meaning ‘medical substance’)

maternal /ˈmeɪtrənl/ adjective referring to a mother

maternal death /ˈmeɪtrənl dɛθ/ noun the death of a mother during pregnancy, childbirth or up to twelve months after childbirth

maternal deprivation /ˈmeɪtrənul ə prɪˈvɛʃən/ noun a psychological condition caused when a child does not have a proper relationship with a mother

maternal dystocia /maˈtrənl dɪstəˈsiə/ noun difficult childbirth caused by a physical problem in the mother

maternal instincts /maˈtrənl inˈstɪŋktz/ noun instinctive feelings in a woman to look after and protect her child

maternity /maˈtrənəti/ noun childbirth, the fact of becoming a mother

maternity clinic /maˈtrənətI klɪnɪk/ noun as antenatal clinic

maternity hospital /maˈtrənəti həˈspjəl/ noun

maternity ward /maˈtrənəti wərd/ noun a hospital ward or unit which deals only with women giving birth

matrix /ˈmeɪtrɪks/ noun an amorphous mass of cells forming the basis of connective tissue. Also called ground substance

matron /ˈmeɪtrən/ noun a title formerly given to a woman in charge of the nurses in a hospital

modern matron

mattress suture /maˈtrɛs ˈsʊtʃər/ noun a suture made with a loop on each side of the incision

maturation /ˌmeɪtʃəˈrɛʃən/ noun the process of becoming mature or fully developed

mature /ˈmeɪtʃər/ adjective fully developed

mature follicle /ˌmeɪtʃər ˈfɒlikəl/ noun a Graafian follicle just before ovulation

maturing /ˌmeɪtʃərɪŋ/ adjective becoming mature

maxilla /ˈmeɪkˈsɪlə/ noun, maxilla bone /ˈmeɪkˈsɪlə ˈbɔːn/ noun the upper jaw bone (NOTE: The plural is maxillae. It is more correct to refer to the upper jaw as the maxillae, as it is in fact formed of two bones which are fused together)

maxillary /ˈmeɪkˈsɪlərɪ/ adjective referring to the maxilla

maxillary antrum /ˈmeɪkˌsɪlərɪ ˈæntrəm/ noun

maxillary air sinus /ˈmeɪkˌsɪlərɪ ˈeə sɪnəs/ noun one of two sinuses behind the cheekbones in the upper jaw. Also called antrum of Highmore

maxillo-facial /ˈmeɪkˌsɪlərɪ ˈfæʃəl/ adjective referring to the maxillary bone and the face

MCB joint /ˈem siːˈpiː dʒənəti/ noun same as metacarpal-humeral joint

MCU, MCUG abbreviation micturating cystourethrogram

MD abbreviation doctor of medicine

ME abbreviation myalgic encephalomyelitis

measles /ˈmiːzlz/ noun an infectious disease of children, where the body is covered with a red rash. She's in bed with measles. He's got measles. They caught measles from their friend at school. Have you had the measles? Also called morbilli, rubeola (NOTE: Takes a singular or plural verb)

meat /miːt/ prefix relating to a meatus

meatus /ˈmiːtəs/ noun an opening leading to an internal passage in the body, e.g. the urethra or the nasal cavity (NOTE: The plural is meatuses or meatus.)

mechanism /ˈmeknɪzəm/ noun 1. a physical or chemical change by which a function is carried out 2. a system in the body which carries out or controls a particular function. The inner ear is the body’s mechanism for the sense of balance.

mechanism of labour /ˈmeknɪzəm əv ˈleɪbrə/ noun all the forces and processes which combine to push a fetus out of the uterus during its birth, together with the ones which oppose it

mechanotherapy /ˌmeknəˈθərpɪ/ noun the treatment of injuries through mechanical means, such as massage and exercise machines

meconium /ˌmeknʌˈʃən/ noun poisoning by opium or morphine
meconium /miːkˈnjuːmɪn/ noun the first dark green faeces produced by a newborn baby
medical /ˈmedɪkəl/ adjective same as tunica media
medial /ˈmedɪəl/ adjective nearer to the central midline of the body or to the centre of an organ. Compare lateral
medially /ˈmedɪəli/ adverb towards the central midline of the body, or placed in the middle
median nerve /ˈmedɪən nɜrv/ noun one of the main nerves of the forearm and hand
median plane /ˈmedɪən plɛn/ noun an imaginary flat surface on the midline and at right angles to the coronal plane, which divides the body into right and left halves. See illustration at anatomical terms in supplement
mediastinum /ˈmedɪəstɪnəm/ noun the section of the chest between the lungs, where the heart, oesophagus and phrenic and vagus nerves are situated
medic /ˈmedɪk/ noun a doctor or medical student (informal)
medical /ˈmedɪkəl/ adjective referring to the study of diseases • a medical student • noun an official examination of a person by a doctor • He wanted to join the army, but failed his medical. • You will have to have a medical if you take out an insurance policy
medical alert bracelet /ˈmedɪkəl əˈlaːt ,ˈbrɛkəlt/ noun a band or chain worn around the wrist giving information about the wearer’s medical needs, allergies or condition
medical assistant /ˈmedɪkəl əˈsəstənt/ noun someone who performs routine administrative and clinical tasks to help in the offices and clinics of doctors and other medical practitioners
medical audit /ˈmedɪkəl əˈdʌikt/ noun a systematic critical analysis of the quality of medical care provided to a person, which examines the procedures used for diagnosis and treatment, the use of resources and the resulting outcome and quality of life for the person
medical audit advisory group /ˈmedɪkəl əˈdʌikt əˈvɛrizəri ˈgrʊp/ noun a body with the responsibility of advising on medical audit in primary care. Abbreviation MAAG
medical certificate /ˈmedɪkəl ˈsərtifikət/ noun an official document signed by a doctor, giving someone permission to be away from work or not to do specific types of work
medical committee /ˈmedɪkəl ˈkəˌmɪtɪ/ noun a committee of doctors in a hospital who advise the management on medical matters
medical doctor /ˈmedɪkəl ˈdɒktər/ noun a doctor who practises medicine, but is not usually a surgeon
medical ethics /ˈmedɪkəl ˈɛθɪks/ plural noun the moral and professional principles which govern how doctors and nurses should work, and, in particular, what type of relationship they should have with their patients
medical examination /ˈmedɪkəl ɪŋˈzəmənt/ noun an examination of a person by a doctor
medical history /ˈmedɪkəl ˈhɪst(ə)ri/ noun the details of a person’s medical condition and treatment over a period of time
medical intervention /ˈmedɪkəl ɪnˈtɜːrveɪʃən/ noun the treatment of illness by drugs
medicalisation /ˈmedɪkəlɪzaʃən/ noun the act of looking at something as a medical issue or problem
medical jurisprudence /ˈmedɪkəl ˈdʒʊərisprədəns/ noun the use of the principles of law as they relate to the practice of medicine and the relationship of doctors with each other, their patients and society. • forensic medicine
Medical Officer of Health /ˈmedɪkəl ˈɒfɪsər əvˈhelθ/ noun formerly, a local government official in charge of the health services in an area. Abbreviation MOH
medical practitioner /ˈmedɪkəl ˈpræktrɪʃənər/ noun a person qualified in medicine, i.e. a doctor or surgeon
medical profession /ˈmedɪkəl ˈprəˌfɜərən/ noun all doctors
Medical Register /ˈmedɪkəl ˈredʒɪstra/ noun a list of doctors approved by the General Medical Council • The committee entered his name to be struck off the Medical Register
Medical Research Council /ˈmedɪkəl ˈrɪkəˈɜːstʃən/ noun a government body which organises and pays for medical research. Abbreviation MRC
medical school /ˈmedɪkəl ˈskuːl/ noun a section of a university which teaches medicine • He is at medical school
medical secretary /ˈmedɪkəl ˈsɛktrɪəri/ noun a qualified secretary who specialises in medical documentation, either in a hospital or in a doctor’s surgery
medical social worker /ˈmedɪkəl ˈsəʊʃəl ˈwɜːkər/ noun someone who helps people with family problems or problems related to their work
which may have an effect on their response to treatment.

medicinal ward /medikəˈtard/ noun a ward for people who do not have to undergo surgical operations.

Medicare /ˈmedɪkər/ noun a system of public health insurance in the US.

medicated /medɪˈkeɪtɪd/ adjective containing a medicinal drug.

medicated cough sweet

medicated shampoo /ˌmedɪˈkeɪtɪd ʃæm/pet/ noun a shampoo containing a chemical which is used to prevent dandruff.

medication /ˈmedɪkeɪʃən/ noun 1. the treatment of illnesses by giving people drugs. 2. medication 2. a drug used to treat a particular illness. What sort of medication has she been taking? 3. 80% of elderly patients admitted to geriatric units are on medication.

medical /ˈmedɪkl/ adjective which has healing properties or a beneficial effect on someone’s health. He has a drink of whisky before he goes to bed for medicinal purposes.

medicinal leech /ˈmedɪsənl ˈliːtʃ/ noun a leech which is raised specially for use in medicine.

medicine cabinet /ˈmedɪskəbɪtn/ noun a cupboard where medicines, bandages, thermometers and other pieces of medical equipment can be left locked up, but ready for use in an emergency.

medico /ˈmedɪskə/ noun a doctor (informal). The medico said I was perfectly fit.

medico- /ˈmedɪskə/ prefix referring to medicine or to doctors.

medicochirurgical /ˌmedɪskəˈkɪrəˈdʒʊərəl/ adjective referring to both medicine and surgery.

medicolegal /ˌmedɪskəˈlɛɡəl/ adjective referring to both medicine and the law.

medicosocial /ˌmedɪskəˈsəʊʃəl/ adjective involving both medical and social factors.

medium /ˈmiːdəm/ adjective, in the middle or at the halfway point. A substance through which something acts.

medroxyprogesterone /ˌmedrəksɪˈprəʊsərəʊ/ noun a synthetic hormone used to treat menstrual disorders, in oestrogen replacement therapy and as a contraceptive.

medulla /ˈmedəluː/ noun the soft inner part of an organ, as opposed to the outer cortex. See illustration at KIDNEY in Supplement.

medullary /ˈmedəluːr/ adjective similar to marrow.

medullary cavity /ˌmedəluːrri kəˈvɛtɪ/ noun a hollow centre of a long bone, containing bone marrow. See illustration at BONE STRUCTURE in Supplement.

medullated nerve /ˌmedəluːtɪd ˈnɜːr/ noun a nerve surrounded by a myelin sheath.

mefloquine hydrochloride /ˌmeɪfləˈkwɪn həˈdrəʊləˈkwaɪrəd/ noun a drug used in the prevention and treatment of malaria.

megal- /ˈmɛɡəl-/ prefix 1. large. Opposite micro-.

megalacol /ˌmɛɡələˈkɔl/ noun a condition in which the lower colon is very much larger than normal, because part of the colon above is constricted, making bowel movements impossible.

megalacol /ˌmɛɡələˈkɔl/ noun a condition in which the lower colon is very much larger than normal, because part of the colon above is constricted, making bowel movements impossible.

megacolon /ˌmɛɡəkəˈlɔn/ noun a condition in which the lower colon is very much larger than normal, because part of the colon above is constricted, making bowel movements impossible.

megacyst /ˌmɛɡəˈkaʊst/ noun an unusually large blood cell found in the bone marrow of people who have some types of anaemia caused by Vitamin B12 deficiency.

megaloablast /ˌmɛɡələˈæblɔst/ noun an unusually large blood cell found in the bone marrow of people who have some types of anaemia caused by Vitamin B12 deficiency.

megaloablast /ˌmɛɡələˈæblɔst/ noun an unusually large blood cell found in the bone marrow of people who have some types of anaemia caused by Vitamin B12 deficiency.

megaloanaemia /ˌmɛɡələˈænəmiə/ noun anaemia caused by Vitamin B12 deficiency.

megaloanaemia /ˌmɛɡələˈænəmiə/ noun anaemia caused by Vitamin B12 deficiency.

megaloanaemia /ˌmɛɡələˈænəmiə/ noun anaemia caused by Vitamin B12 deficiency.

megaly /ˌmɛɡəlɪ/ noun enlargement.

megaloureter /ˌmɛɡəluˈɔːrɪtər/ noun a condition in which a part of the ureter becomes very wide, above the site of a blockage.

meibomian cyst /ˈmiːbəmɪən ˈsɪst/ noun the swelling of a sebaceous gland in the eyelid. Also called chalazion.

meibomian gland /ˈmiːbəmɪən ˈɡlænd/ noun a sebaceous gland on the edge of the eyelid which secretes a liquid to lubricate the eyelid. Also called tarsal gland.
melbomianitis /maɪˈbɒmɪənɪtɪs/ noun a condition in which the meibomian glands become swollen

Meigs’ syndrome /ˈmiːɡz, sɪrədʒəm/ noun a condition in which liquid collects in the chest and abdominal cavities. It is associated with pelvic tumours.

meiosis /maɪˈsɪəs/ noun the process of cell division which results in two pairs of haploid cells, i.e. cells with only one set of chromosomes. Compare mitosis

Meissner’s corpuscle /ˈmiːsənəs, ˈmiːsnəs/ noun a receptor cell in the skin which is thought to be sensitive to touch

Meissner’s plexus /ˈmiːsnəs/ noun a network of nerve fibres in the wall of the alimentary canal. [Described 1853. After Georg Meissner (1829–1905), German anatomist and physiologist.]

melaena /ˈmeɪlənə/ noun black faeces where the colour is caused by bleeding in the intestine

melan- /mələn-/ prefix same as melan- (used before vowels)

melancholia /ˌmɛlənəˈkɔliə/ noun a severe depressive illness occurring usually between the ages of 45 and 65

melanin /ˈmelənɪn/ noun a dark pigment which gives colour to skin and hair, also found in the choroid of the eye and in some tumours

melano- /mələnəʊ-/ prefix black or dark

melanocyte /ˈmɛlənəsəʊs/ noun any cell which carries pigment

melanocyte-stimulating hormone /ˌmɛlənəsəʊsɪŋ ˈstreɪmələtɪŋ ˈhɔrmon/ noun a hormone produced by the pituitary gland which causes darkening in the colour of the skin. Abbreviation MSH

melanoma /ˌmɛləˈnɒmə/ noun a tumour formed of dark pigmented cells

melatonin /ˌmɛləˈtəʊmɪn/ noun a hormone produced by the pineal gland during the hours of darkness, which makes animals sleep during the winter months. It is thought to control the body’s rhythms.

mela /ˈmeɪlə/ noun same as melaena

melittus /ˈmelɪtəs/ noun diabetes mellitus

membrane /ˈmembrən/ noun a thin layer of tissue which lines or covers an organ

membranous /ˈmembrənəs/ adjective referring to membranes, or like a membrane

membranous labyrinth /ˈmembrənəs ˈlɛbərɪnθ/ noun a series of ducts and canals formed of membrane inside the osseous labyrinth

menarche /ˈmɛnərɪk/ noun the start of menstrual periods

Mendel’s laws /ˈmɛndələz ˈlɔːz/ plural noun the laws of heredity, that are the basis of the science of genetics [Described 1865. After Gregor Johann Mendel (1822–84), Austrian Augustinian monk and naturalist of Brno, whose work was rediscovered by de Vries in 1900.]

Ménière’s disease /ˈmeniərˌziː/ noun a disease of the middle ear, in which someone becomes dizzy, hears ringing in the ears and may vomit, and becomes progressively deaf. The causes may include infections or allergies, which increase the fluid contents of the labyrinth in the middle ear. [Described 1861. After Prosper Ménière (1799–1862) and his son, Emile Antoiné Ménière (1839–1905), French physicians.]

mening- /ˈmɛnɪŋ-/ prefix same as mening-

meningitis /ˌmɛnɪŋˈdʒɪtɪs/ noun a condition in which there are signs of meningeal irritation suggesting meningitis, but where there is no pathological change in the cerebrospinal fluid

meningococcal meningitis /ˌmɛnɪŋəʊˈkɒkəl ˌmɛnɪŋˈdʒɪtɪs/ noun inflammation of the meninges, causing someone to have violent headaches, fever, and stiff neck muscles, and sometimes to become delirious

meningo- /ˌmɛnɪŋəʊ-/ prefix referring to the meninges

meningococcal meningocele /ˌmɛnɪŋəʊˈkɒkəl ˌmɛnɪŋəʊˈsɛl/ noun a condition in which the meninges protrude through the vertebral column or skull

meningococcal meningitis /ˌmɛnɪŋəʊˈkɒkəl ˌmɛnɪŋˈdʒɪtɪs/ noun the commonest epidemic form of meningitis, caused by a bacterium Neisseria meningitidis, in which the meninges become inflamed causing headaches and fever

meningococcal meningitis /ˌmɛnɪŋəʊˈkɒkəl ˌmɛnɪŋˈdʒɪtɪs/ noun the bacterium Neisseria meningitidis which causes meningococcal meningitis (NOTE: The plural is meningococci.)

meningoencephalitis /ˌmɛnɪŋəʊˌɛnˈsɛfələtɪs/ noun inflammation of the meninges and the brain

meningoencephalocele /ˌmɛnɪŋəʊˌɛnˈsɛfələˌsɛl/ noun a condition in which part of the meninges and the brain push through a gap in the skull

meningomyelocele /ˌmɛnɪŋəˌmɪləˈsɛl/ noun the pushing forward of part of the meninges and spinal cord through a gap in the spine. Also called myelomeningocele, myelocele

meninx /ˈmɛnɪŋks/ noun plural meninges
mental deficiency /ment(ə)l diˈfɪʃ(ə)ns/ noun a former term for learning disability (NOTE: This term is regarded as offensive.)
mental development /ment(ə)l dɪˈveləpmənt/ noun the development of the mind
mental handicap /ment(ə)lˈhændɪkæp/ noun a former term for learning disability (NOTE: This term is regarded as offensive.)
mental health /ment(ə)l hɛlθ/ noun the condition of someone’s mind
Mental Health Acts /ˈment(ə)l ˈhelθ ekts/ plural noun laws made by a parliament which lay down rules for the care of people with mental illness
Mental Health Review Tribunal /ment(ə)l hɛlθ rɪˈvjuː ˈtrɪbjuːnl/ noun a committee which makes decisions about whether people who have been detained under the Mental Health Acts should be released. It consists of medical members, legal experts and lay members, who include people with experience in social services. Abbreviation: MHRT
meniscectomy /ˈmenɪsɪkɪˌtɒmɪ/ noun the surgical removal of a cartilage from the knee
meniscus /ˈmɛnɪskəs/ noun one of two pads of cartilage, the lateral meniscus and medial meniscus, between the femur and tibia in a knee joint. Also called semilunar cartilage (NOTE: The plural is menisci.)
menopause /ˌmenəˈpɔʊsə/ noun a period, usually between 45 and 55 years of age, when a woman stops menstruating and can no longer bear children. Also called climacteric, change of life
menorrhagia /ˌmɛnəˈrɔhədʒiə/ noun very heavy bleeding during menstruation. Also called flooding
menstruation /ˌmɛnstrjuˈeɪʃən/ noun bleeding from the uterus which occurs in a woman each month when the lining of the uterus is shed because no fertilised egg is present
menstrual /ˈmɛnstrjuəl/ adjective referring to menstruation
menstrual cycle /ˈmɛnstrjuəl sɪkli/ noun a period, usually of 28 days, during which a woman ovulates, the walls of the uterus swell and bleeding takes place if the ovum has not been fertilised
menstrual flow /ˈmɛnstrjuəl fləʊ/ noun the discharge of blood from the uterus during menstruation
menstruate /ˈmɛnstrjuət/ verb to bleed from the uterus during menstruation
menstruation /ˌmɛnstrjuˈeɪʃən/ noun bleeding from the uterus which occurs in a woman each month when the lining of the uterus is shed because no fertilised egg is present
mental /ˈment(ə)l/ adjective 1. referring to the mind 2. referring to the limb
mental aberration /ˈment(ə)l əˈbɛrəʃən/ noun slight forgetfulness or confusion (often humorous) ○ I thought the meeting was at 11 – I must have had a mental aberration.
mental age /ˈment(ə)l eɪdʒ/ noun a measurement based on intelligence tests that shows a person’s intellectual development, usually compared to standardised data for a chronological age ○ he’s nine, but he has a mental age of five although he is nine years old, his level of intellectual development is the same as that of an average child of five
mental block /ˈment(ə)l ˈbloc/ noun a temporary inability to remember something, caused by the effect of nervous stress on the mental processes
Mental Capacity Act /ˈment(ə)l ˈkæpəsɪti ˈektɪ/ noun a piece of UK legislation, introduced in 2007, that establishes five principles in relation to mental capacity and medical treatment, namely that patients should be assumed to be capable of making their own decisions, that they should be given support in decision-making, that it is patients’ capacity to make decisions that should be judged, not the decisions themselves, that treatment must be in patients’ best interests, and that treatment should restrict rights and freedoms as little as possible
mental deficiency /ˈment(ə)l diˈfɪʃ(ə)ns/ noun a former term for learning disability (NOTE: This term is regarded as offensive.)
mental development /ˈment(ə)l dɪˈveləpmənt/ noun the development of the mind
mental handicap /ˈment(ə)lˈhændɪkæp/ noun a former term for learning disability (NOTE: This term is regarded as offensive.)
mental health /ˈment(ə)l hɛlθ/ noun the condition of someone’s mind
Mental Health Acts /ˈment(ə)l ˈhelθ əkts/ plural noun laws made by a parliament which lay down rules for the care of people with mental illness
Mental Health Review Tribunal /ˈment(ə)l hɛlθ rɪˈvjuː ˈtrɪbjuːnl/ noun a committee which makes decisions about whether people who have been detained under the Mental Health Acts should be released. It consists of medical members, legal experts and lay members, who include people with experience in social services. Abbreviation: MHRT
mental hospital /ˈment(ə)l hɒspɪt(ə)l/ noun a psychiatric hospital (NOTE: This term is regarded as offensive.)
mental illness /ˈment(ə)l ˈɪlnəs/ noun any disorder which affects the mind
mental impairment /ˈment(ə)l ɪmˈpɛrment/ noun a temporary or permanent condition which affects a person’s mental state, making them function less effectively than they would usually, or than the average person would be expected to function
mentally /ˈment(ə)lɪ/ adverb in the mind ○ Mentally, she is very advanced for her age.
mentally handicapped /ˈment(ə)lɪ ˈhændɪkæpt/ adjective a former term for someone with learning disability (NOTE: This term is usually regarded as offensive.)
mentally ill /ˈment(ə)lɪ ˈɪl/ adjective experiencing mental illness
mental nerve /ˈment(ə)l/ noun a nerve which supplies the chin
mental patient /ˈment(ə)l, ˈpæt(ə)nt/ noun a former term of a patient who has mental illness (NOTE: This term is regarded as offensive.)
mental retardation /ˈment(ə)l, ˈriːtərəˈteɪʃən/ noun a former term for learning disability, a condition that results in someone finding it difficult to learn skills or information at the same rate as others of a similar age (NOTE: This term is regarded as offensive.)
mental subnormality /ˈment(ə)l, ˈsəˈnɔrəli ti/ noun a former term for learning disability.
mercury poisoning /ˈmɜːri kɑːri pɑːˈziŋ/ or by inhaling mercury vapour (NOTE: This term is regarded as offensive.)
mercury /ˈmɜːri kɑːri/ noun a poisonous liquid metal, used in thermometers (NOTE: The chemical symbol is Hg)
mercury poisoning /ˈmɜːri kɑːri pɑːˈziŋ/ noun poisoning by drinking mercury or mercury compounds or by inhaling mercury vapour
mercy killing /ˈmɜːsi ˈkɪlɪŋ/ noun same as euthanasia
meridian /ˈmɜːri dɪən/ noun in acupuncture and Chinese medicine, one of the pathways in the body along which its energy is believed to flow
meso- /ˈmɛsəʊ/ prefix same as meso- (used before vowels)
mesencephalon /ˌmesənˈsɛfəlɒn/ noun same as midbrain
mesenteric /ˌmesənˈtɛrɪk/ adjective referring to the mesentery
mesentery /ˈmesentərɪ/ noun a double-layer peritoneum which attaches the small intestine and other abdominal organs to the abdominal wall
mesial /ˈmiːziəl/ adjective 1. in dentistry, relating to the middle of the front of the jaw, or occurring in a place near this 2. relating to or located in the middle part of something
meso- /ˈmesəʊ/ prefix middle
mesometrium /ˌmesəʊ ˈmiːtrɪəm/ noun a muscle layer of the uterus
mesothelium /ˌmesəʊˈθɛlɪəm/ noun a layer of cells lining a serous membrane. Compare epithelium, endothelium
mesothelium /ˌmesəʊˈθɛlɪəm/ or by inhaling mercury vapour (NOTE: This term is regarded as offensive.)
messenger RNA /ˌmesənˈsɛrɪ dəˌrɛn ˈɛn ˈɛn/ a type of ribonucleic acid which transmits the genetic code from the DNA to the ribosomes which form the proteins coded on the DNA. Abbreviation mRNA
mestranol /ˌmistrəˈnɔl/ noun a synthetically produced oestrogen used in birth control pills
metabolic /ˈmɛtəˌbəlɪk/ adjective referring to metabolism
metabolic acidosis /ˌmɛtəˌbəlɪk əˌsɪdɒsɪs/ noun acidosis caused by a malfunction of the body’s metabolism
metabolic alkalosis /ˌmɛtəˌbəlɪk əˈlækˌlɔsɪs/ noun alkalosis caused by a malfunction of the body’s metabolism
metabolise /ˌmɛtəˈbɑləsɪz/ verb to change the nature of something by metabolism
muscle /ˈmʌskluː/ noun a substance produced by metabolism, or a substance taken into the body in food and then metabolised
metacarpal bone /ˈmɛtəˌkɑːpəl/ noun, metacarpal /ˌmɛtəˌkɑːpəl/ noun one of the five bones in the metacarpus
metacarpophalangeal /ˌmɛtəˌkɑːpəˈfələn ɡeɪl/ joint/ adjective relating to the part of the hand between the wrist and the fingers
metacarpophalangeal joint /ˌmɛtəˌkɑːpəˈfələn ɡeɪl dʒɔɪnt/ noun a joint between a metacarpal bone and a finger. Also called MCP joint, MP joint
metacarpus /ˌmɛtəˌkɑːpəs/ noun the five bones in the hand between the fingers and the wrist. See illustration at HAND in Supplement
metaphase /ˌmɛtəˈfɛzi/ noun one of the stages in mitosis or meiosis
metaphysiology /ˌmɛtəˈfɪziəlʒi/ noun the end of the central section of a long bone, where the bone grows and where it joins the epiphysis
metaplasy /ˌmɛtəˈpleɪziəs/ noun a change of one tissue to another
metastasis /ˌmɛtəˈtæstəsɪs/ noun the spreading of a malignant disease from one part of the body to another through the bloodstream or the lymph system. Also called secondary growth (NOTE: The plural is metastases.)
metastasise /ˌmɛtəˈtæstəˌsaɪz/ verb to spread by metastasis
metastatic /meta'stætɪk/ adjective relating to, or produced by, metastasis ○ Metastatic growths developed in the liver.

metatarsal /ˌmeɪtəˈtɑːsəl/ noun one of the five bones in the metatarsus │ adjective relating to the metatarsus

metatarsal arch /ˌmeɪtəˈtɑːsəl ərʃ/ noun an arched part of the sole of the foot, running across the sole of the foot from side to side. Also called transverse arch

metatarsalgia /ˌmeɪtəˈsældʒə/ noun pain in the heads of the metatarsal bones

metatarsophalangeal joint /ˌmeɪtəˈtɑːsəfələnˈdʒiːt/ noun a joint between a metatarsal bone and a toe

metatarsus /ˌmeɪtəˈtɑːsəs/ noun the five long bones in the foot between the toes and the tarsus. See illustration at FOOT in Supplement (NOTE: The plural is metatarsi.)

meteorism /ˌmiːtəˈrɪzəm/ noun same as tympanites

meter /ˈmɛtər/ noun US same as metre

-meter /ˈmɛtər, ˈmɪtər/ suffix measuring instrument

metformin /ˌmeɪtəˈfrɔːmɪn/ noun a drug which reduces the level of the blood sugar levels, used to treat non-insulin dependent diabetes which does not respond to dietary measures

methadone /ˌmeθəˈdɔʊn/ noun a synthetically produced narcotic drug, used to reduce pain and as a substitute for heroin in the treatment of addiction

methaemoglobin /ˌmeθəˈhiːməʊɡˈləʊbɪn/ noun a dark brown substance formed from haemoglobin which develops during illness, following treatment with some drugs. Methaemoglobin cannot transport oxygen round the body, and so causes cyanosis.

methaemoglobinemia /ˌmeθəˈhiːməʊɡˈləʊbɪnəˈmiə/ noun the presence of methaemoglobin in the blood

methane /ˈmɛθeɪn, ˈmeθəɪn/ noun a colourless flammable gas with no smell

methanol /ˌmeθəˈnɔʊl/ noun a colourless poisonous liquid, used as a solvent and a fuel. It changes easily into a gas. Also called methyl alcohol

methicillin /ˌmeθɪˈsɪlɪn/ noun a synthetically produced antibiotic, used in the treatment of infections which are resistant to penicillin

methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus /ˌmeθɪˈsɪlɪn rɪˈzɛstənt ˈsteɪfɪˌlɒkɒs ɔˈjʊərəs/ noun a bacterium resistant to almost all antibiotics and which can cause life-threatening infection in people recovering from surgery. Abbreviation MRSA

methionine /ˈmeθiəˈnəʊn/ noun an essential amino acid

methotrexate /ˌmeθəˈtreksət/ noun a drug which helps to prevent cells reproducing, used in the treatment of cancer

methy1 alcohol /ˌmeθɪˈl əˈalkəhol/ noun same as methanol

methy1ated spirits /ˌmeθɪˈleɪtɪtɪd ˈspɜːrɪts/ plural noun almost pure alcohol, with wood alcohol and colouring added

methy1prednisolone /ˌmeθɪˈprednɪsoʊlən/ noun, /ˌmeθɪˈplrednɪsoʊl/ noun a corticosteroid drug which reduces inflammation, used in the treatment of arthritis, allergies and asthma

metclopiromide /ˌmeθəˈkloʊprəmɪd/ noun a drug used to treat nausea, vomiting and indigestion

metoprolol /ˌmeθəˈtroʊprələl/ noun a drug which controls the activity of the heart, used to treat angina and high blood pressure

met- /ˈmiːtə/ prefix same as metro- (used before vowels)

metra /ˈmeθrə/ noun the uterus

metralgia /ˌmeθrəˈlædʒə/ noun pain in the uterus

metre /ˈmiːtər/ noun an SI unit of length ○ The room is four metres by three. Symbol m

metritis /ˌmeθrəˈtrɪtɪs/ noun same as myometritis

metro- /ˌmiːtroʊ/ prefix referring to the uterus

metroclopramide /ˌmeθrəˈkləʊprəmɪd/ noun a condition in which the uterus protrudes into the vagina

metronidazole /ˌmiːtroʊˈnɪdəzoʊl/ noun a yellow antibiotic compound, used especially in the treatment of vaginal infections

metroptosis /ˌmeθrəˈtɒsɪs/ noun a condition in which the uterus has moved downwards out of its usual position. Also called prolapse of the uterus

metrorrhagia /ˌmiːtroʊˈrɛθrədʒə/ noun unusual bleeding from the vagina between the menstrual periods

-metry /ˈmiːtrɪ/ suffix relating to the process of measuring, or to instruments which are used for measuring

mg abbreviation milligram

M1 abbreviation 1., mitral incompetence 2. myocardial infarction

Michel’s clips /ˈmɪʃəls ˈklɪps/ plural noun metal clips used to suture a wound [After Gaston Michel (1874–1937), Professor of Clinical Surgery at Nancy, France.]

miconazole /ˌmaɪkəˈnəʊzəl/ noun a drug used to treat fungal infections of the skin and nails

micro- /ˌmaɪkroʊ/ prefix 1. very small. Opposite macro- 2. one millionth (10^-6)
microangiopathy /miˈæŋkaʊˌiɒpæθi/ noun any disease of the capillaries
microbe /maɪˈkrəʊb/ noun a microorganism which may cause disease and which can only be seen with a microscope, e.g. a bacterium
microbiologist /ˌmaɪkrəˈboʊlɪst/ noun a scientist who specialises in the study of micro-organisms
microbiology /ˌmaɪkrəˈboʊləʒi/ noun the scientific study of microorganisms
microcephaly /ˌmaɪkrəˈsɛfəlɪ/ adjective having microcephaly
microcephaly /ˌmaɪkrəˈsɛfəlɪ/ noun a condition in which a person has an unusually small head, sometimes caused by the mother having had a rubella infection during pregnancy
microcytosis /miˈkrəʊsaɪtəsɪs/ noun an unusually small red blood cell
microcythaemia /ˌmiˈkrəʊsaɪθəˈmeɪə/ noun same as microcytosis
microwave therapy /ˈmaɪkrəʊwɛrv, fɛərəʊv/ noun treatment using high-frequency radiation
micturating /ˈmɪktʃərɪtɪŋ/ adjective referring to micturition
micturating cystogram /,mɪktʃərɪtɪŋ ,sɪstəʊˈɡɜːroʊm/ noun an X-ray of the bladder and urethra taken while the bladder is being filled and then emptied. Abbreviation MCU, MCUG
micturition /ˌmɪktʃəˈrɪʃ(ə)n/ noun same as urination
mid-/miːd/ prefix middle
midazolam /ˌmaɪdəˈzɔləm/ noun a drug used to produce sleepiness and to reduce anxiety before surgery or other procedures
midbrain /ˈmaɪdbrɛɪn/ noun the small middle section of the brain stem above the pons and between the cerebrum and the hindbrain. Also called mesencephalon
midcarpal /ˌmiːdˈkærpoʊl/ adjective between the two rows of carpal bones
middle colic /ˈmɪdlkəlɪk/ noun an artery which leads from the superior mesenteric artery
diverticulum /ˌmaɪdrɪtɪˈkjʊləm/ noun a section of the bowel between the eardrum and the inner ear
middle ear infection /ˌmaɪdəˈɔɪl/ ˈtɜːr in ˌfɛkʃən noun same as otitis media
midgut /ˌmaɪdɡʌt/ noun the middle part of the gut in an embryo, which develops into the small intestine
mid-life crisis /ˌmaɪd laɪf ˈkrɑːtɪs/ noun a period in early middle age when some people
experience feelings of anxiety, insecurity and self-doubt

milk leg /ˈmɪlkl ˈleɡ/ noun a condition which affects women after childbirth, where a leg becomes pale and inflamed as a result of lymphatic obstruction. Also called white leg

milk rash /ˈmɪlk ræʃ/ noun a temporary blotchiness of the skin seen in young babies

milk sugar /ˈmɪlk ˈsʌɡər/ noun same as lactose

milk tooth /ˈmɪlk tuːθ/ noun same as primary tooth

Miller-Abbott tube /ˈmɪlər-əbɒt ˈtjuːb/ noun a tube with a balloon at the end, used to clear the small intestine. The balloon is inflated after the tip of the tube reaches an obstruction.

milli- /ˈmɪli-/ prefix one thousandth (10⁻³). Symbol m

milligram /ˈmɪlɪɡræm/ noun a unit of measurement of weight equal to one thousandth of a gram. Symbol mg

mili litre /ˈmɪlɪlɪtər/ noun a unit of measurement of liquid equal to one thousandth of a litre. Abbreviation ml

millimetre /ˈmɪlɪmɪtər/ noun a unit of measurement of length equal to one thousandth of a metre. Abbreviation mm

minimum lethal dose /ˈmɪnɪməm ˈlɪθəl ˈdɔuíz/ noun the smallest amount of a substance required to kill someone or something. Abbreviation MLD

ministroke /ˈmɪnɪstrəʊk/ noun same as transient ischaemic attack

ministrachestoscopy /ˌmɪnɪstrəˈkɛstəʊs/ noun a temporary tracheostomy

minor injuries unit /ˈmɪnər ˈɪnʤə⟨rɪz ˈjuːtɪŋ/ noun a hospital department which treats most accidents and emergencies. Abbreviation MIU

milo- /ˈmɪloʊ-/ prefix less

miosis /ˌmɪəˈsɪəs/ noun 1. the contraction of the pupil of the eye, as in bright light 2. US same as miosis
miotic /ˈmaitɪs/ noun a drug which makes the pupil of the eye become smaller ■ adjective causing the pupil of the eye to become smaller

miscarriage /ˈmɪskærɪdʒ/ noun a situation in which an unborn baby leaves the uterus before the end of the pregnancy, especially during the first seven months of pregnancy ○ She had two miscarriages before having her first child. Also called spontaneous abortion

mismatch /ˈmɪsmætʃ/ verb to match tissues wrongly

missed case /ˈmiːst ˈkɛs/ noun someone with an infection or disease which is not identified by a doctor

mistletoe /ˈmɪstlətoʊ/ noun a small parasite, which causes dermatitis

mitochondrial /ˈmaɪtəkʌndriəl/ adjective referring to mitochondria

mitochondrion /ˌmaɪtəkʌndriən/ noun a tiny rod-shaped part of a cell's cytoplasm responsible for cell respiration (NOTE: The plural is mitochondria.)

mitomycin C /ˌmaɪtəmɪsɪn ʌ/ noun an antibiotic which helps to prevent cancer cells from growing, used especially in the chemotherapy treatment of bladder and rectal cancers

mitosis /ˈmaɪtəsɪs/ noun the process of cell division where the mother cell divides into two identical daughter cells. Compare meiosis

mitral /ˈmaɪtrəl/ adjective referring to the mitral valve

mitral incompetence /ˈmaɪtrəl ɪnˈkʌmptrəns/ noun abbreviation MI. Now called mitral regurgitation

mitral regurgitation /ˈmaɪtrəl ˈrɪɡərɡətʃən/ noun a situation in which the mitral valve does not close completely so that blood goes back into the atrium

mitral stenosis /ˌmaɪtrəl stɛˈnɔsɪs/ noun a condition in which the opening in the mitral valve becomes smaller because the cusps have fused (NOTE: This condition is almost always the result of rheumatic endocarditis.)

mitral valve /ˌmaɪtrəl ˈvælv/ noun a valve in the heart which allows blood to flow from the left atrium to the left ventricle but not in the opposite direction. Also called bicuspid valve

mitral valvotomy /ˌmaɪtrəl ˈvælvətɒmɪ/ noun a surgical operation to separate the cusps of the mitral valve in mitral stenosis

mittle schmerz /ˈmɪtləʃmɜːz/ noun a pain felt by women in the lower abdomen at ovulation

MI abbreviation minor injuries unit

MI abbreviation military

MLD abbreviation minimum lethal dose

MLSO abbreviation medical laboratory scientific officer

mm abbreviation millimetre

mmol abbreviation millimole

MMR /ˈem ər/ MMR vaccine /ˈem ər ət/ a single vaccine given to small children to protect them against measles, mumps and rubella

MND abbreviation motor neurone disease

MO abbreviation medical officer

mobilisation /ˌmaʊbiləˈzeɪʃən/ noun the act of making something mobile

modality /ˌmɒdələti/ noun a method used in the treatment of a disorder, e.g. surgery or chemotherapy

modernisation agenda /ˌmɒdənəˈzeɪʃən əˈdʒenə/ noun same as Agenda for Change

modern matron /ˌmedəˈmeɪtrən/ noun a nursing post which supports the ward sister in ensuring that basic care of patients, including cleanliness of the ward and infection control, is carried out to a high standard

MODS abbreviation multiple organ dysfunction syndrome

MOP abbreviation 1. male or female 2. multiorgan failure

Mogadon /ˈmɒɡədən/ a trade name for nitrazepam

MOH abbreviation Medical Officer of Health

mol symbol mole 2

molar /ˈmɔlər/ adjective 1. referring to the large back teeth 2. referring to the mole, the SI unit of amount of a substance ■ noun one of the large back teeth, used for grinding food. In milk teeth there are eight molars and in permanent teeth there are twelve. See illustration at TEETH in Supplement

molarity /ˈmɔlərɪtɪ/ noun the strength of a solution shown as the number of moles of a substance per litre of solution

mole /ˈmɔl/ noun 1. a dark raised spot on the skin ○ She has a large mole on her chin. 2. melanoma 2. an SI unit of measurement of the amount of a substance. Symbol mol

molecular /ˈmɔləˌkjʊlər/ adjective referring to a molecule

molecular biology /ˌmɔləˌkjʊlər biˈɒlədʒi/ noun the study of the molecules of living matter

molecular weight /ˌmɔləˌkjʊlər ˈwɛjt/ noun the weight of one molecule of a substance

molecule /ˈmɔlɪkjʊl/ noun the smallest independent mass of a substance
molluscum contagiosum /ˌmɒləskəm kənˈtæɡəsəm/ noun a contagious viral skin infection which gives a small soft sore
molluscum fibrosum /ˌmɒləskəm fəˈrɪbrəsəm/ noun same as neurofibromatosis
monaural /ˌmʌnoʊˈrɔrəl/ adjective referring to the use of one ear only
monocytosis /ˌmɒnəˈsaɪtəsɪs/ noun a condition in which there is an unusually high number of monocytes in the blood. Symptoms include sore throat, swelling of the lymph nodes and fever. It is probably caused by the Epstein–Barr virus. Also called glandular fever

monoplegia /ˌmɒnəˈplɪdʒə/ noun the paralysis of one part of the body only, i.e. one muscle or one limb
monosaccharide /ˌmɒnəsəˈskærəd/ noun a simple sugar which cannot be broken down any further, such as glucose or fructose
monosodium glutamate /ˌmɒnəsəˈnɒdəm ˈɡlʊtəmət/ noun a sodium salt of glutamic acid, often used to make food taste better. (Chinese restaurant syndrome
monosomy /ˌmɒnəsaʊəmi/ noun a condition in which a person has a chromosome missing from one or more pairs
monoxide /ˌmɒnəʊkəʊdʒ/ noun a carbon monoxide
monogyotic twins /ˌmɒnəˈgɒdʒɪtɪk ˈtwɪnz/ plural noun same as identical twins
mons /mɒnz/ noun a fleshy body part which sticks out, especially the one formed by the pad of flesh where the pubic bones join (NOTE: The plural is mons.)
mons pubis /mɒnz ˈpjuːbɪs/ noun a cushion of fat covering the pubis
mons veneris /mɒnz ˈvɛnərɪs/ noun same as mons pubis
Montgomery’s glands /mɒntəˈgaɪməriz ˈɡlænznz/ plural noun sebaceous glands around the nipple which become more marked in pregnancy
Morbus ring to a rash which is similar to measles
mood /mʊd/ noun a person’s mental state at a particular time ○ a mood of excitement □ in a bad mood feeling angry or irritable □ in a good mood feeling happy
moon face /ˈmʊn feɪs/ noun a condition in which someone has a round red face, occurring in Cushing’s syndrome and when there are too many steroid hormones in the body
Mooren’s ulcer /ˈmɔrənz ˈɔlər/ noun a persistent ulcer of the cornea, found in elderly people
Morbid /ˈmɔrbɪd/ adjective showing symptoms of being diseased ○ The X-ray showed a morbid condition of the kidneys.
morbid anatomy /ˌmɔrbɪd əˈnætəmɪ/ noun same as pathology
morbidity /ˌmɔrbɪdɪtɪ/ noun the number of cases of a disease per hundred thousand of population
morbilii /mɔrˈbɪli/ noun same as measles
morbilliform /ˌmɔrbɪˈfɪlərm/ adjective referring to a rash which is similar to measles
morbus /mɔrˈbʊs/ noun disease
moribund /mɔrɪˈbʌnd/ adjective dying: noun a dying person
morning-after pill /mɔrniŋ-əˈfɜːtə pil/ noun a contraceptive pill taken after intercourse. Also called next-day pill

morning sickness /ˈmɔrniŋ sɪknəs/ noun nausea and vomiting experienced by women in the early stages of pregnancy when they get up in the morning.

Moro reflex /ˈmorə riˈflɛks/ noun a reflex of a newborn baby when it hears a loud noise (NOTE: The baby is laid on a table and observed to see if it raises its arms when the table is struck.) [After Ernst Moro (1874–1951), paediatrician in Heidelberg, Germany.]

morpha /ˈmɔrә ˈfa/ noun a form of scleroderma, a disease where the skin is replaced by thick connective tissue

morpho- /ˈmɔrfəʊ-/ prefix relating to form, shape or structure

morphoea /ˈmɔrφiəʊə/ noun same as morphea

morphology /ˈmɔrfəʊlədʒi/ noun the study of the structure and shape of living organisms

-morphous /ˈmɔrfəʊs-/ suffix relating to form or structure of a particular type

mortality rate /mɔrtəˈrali teɪtə rət/ noun the number of deaths per year, shown per hundred thousand of population

mortification /ˌmɔrtɪˈfɪkʃən/ noun + necrosis

mortis /ˈmɔrtəs/ /ˈrɪɡər/ mortuary /ˈmɔrtʃəri/ noun a room in a hospital where dead bodies are kept until removed by an undertaker for burial

mosquito /ˈmɔskɪtəʊ/ noun an insect which sucks human blood, some species of which can pass viruses or parasites into the bloodstream

mother /ˈmʌðə/ noun a biological or adoptive female parent

mother-fixation /ˈmʌðə fɪkˈʃefən/ noun a condition in which a person’s development has been stopped at a stage where he or she remains like a child, dependent on his or her mother

motile /ˈməʊtəl/ adjective referring to a cell or microorganism which can move spontaneously. Sperm cells are extremely motile.

motility /ˈmɔtəlɪti/ noun 1. (of cells or microbes) the fact of being able to move about. 2. (of the gut) the action of peristalsis

motion /ˈməʊʃən/ noun 1. movement 2. same as bowel movement

motion sickness /ˈməʊʃən ˈsɪknəs/ noun illness and nausea felt when travelling. It is caused by the movement of liquid inside the labyrinth of the middle ear causes motion sickness, which is particularly noticeable in vehicles which are closed, such as planes, coaches, hovercraft.

motor /ˈmɔtər/ adjective referring to movement, which produces movement

motor area /ˈmɔtər ˈɛərə/ motor cortex /ˈmɔtər kɔrtəks/ noun the part of the cortex in the brain which controls voluntary muscle movement by sending impulses to the motor nerves

motor disorder /ˈmɔtər dɪsˈɔrdər/ noun impairment of the nerves or neurons that cause muscles to contract to produce movement

motor end plate /ˈmɔtər ˈend plɛt/ noun the end of a motor nerve where it joins muscle fibre

motor nerve /ˈmɔtər nɜrv/ noun a nerve which carries impulses from the brain and spinal cord to muscles and causes movements. Also called efferent nerve

motor neurone /ˈmɔtər ˈnjʊərən/ noun a neurone which is part of a nerve pathway transmitting impulses from the brain to a muscle or gland

motor neurone disease /ˈmɔtər ˈnjʊərən dɪzəˈzəd/ noun a disease of the nerve cells which control the movement of the muscles. Abbreviation MND

COMMENT: Motor neurone disease has three forms: progressive muscular atrophy (PMA), which affects movements of the hands, lateral sclerosis, and bulbar palsy, which affects the mouth and throat.

motor pathway /ˈmɔtər ˈpaθweɪ/ noun a series of motor neurones leading from the motor cortex to a muscle

mottled /ˈmɔt(ə)ld/ adjective with patches of different colours

mountain fever /ˈmɔntən ˈfiər/ noun same as brucellosis

mountain sickness /ˈmɔntən sɪknəs/ noun same as altitude sickness

mouth /mɔuth/ noun an opening at the head of the alimentary canal, through which food and drink are taken in, and through which a person speaks and can breathe. She was sleeping with her mouth open. (NOTE: For other terms referring to the mouth, see oral and words beginning with stomat-, stomato-.)

mouth-to-mouth /mɔutθ tu ˈmɔutθ/ mouth-to-mouth resuscitation /mɔutθ tu ˈmɔutθ ri ˈreʃəsˌıkʃən/ mouth-to-mouth ventilation /mɔutθ tu ˈmɔutθ vənˈtɪləʃən/ noun same as cardiopulmonary resuscitation (informal)

mouthwash /mɔutθwɔʃ/ noun an antiseptic solution used to treat infection in the mouth

movement /ˈmʌvmənt/ noun the act of changing position or the fact of not being still

MP joint /em ˈpɪk ˈdʒɒnt/ noun same as metacarpophalangeal joint

MRC abbreviation Medical Research Council
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mucous plug /ˈmjuːkəs plʌg/ noun a plug of mucus which blocks the cervical canal during pregnancy
mucoviscidosis /ˈmjuːkəʊvɪsɪdɒsɪs/ noun same as cystic fibrosis
mucus /ˈmjuːkəs/ noun a slippery liquid secreted by mucous membranes inside the body, which protects those membranes (NOTE: For other terms referring to mucus, see words beginning with blenn-)
multi-/mʌlti/ prefix many
multidisciplinary /ˌmʌltiˌdɪsˈpɜrniəl/ adjective using or involving several specialised subjects or skills or a multidisciplinary team
multifactorial /ˌmʌltɪfæktəˈriəl/ adjective 1. involving several different factors or elements 2. referring to inheritance which depends on more than one gene. Height and weight are examples of characteristics determined by multifactorial inheritance.
multifocal lens /ˌmʌltɪˈfoʊkl ˈlɛnz/ noun a lens in spectacles whose focus changes from top to bottom so that the person wearing the spectacles can see objects clearly at different distances
multiforme /ˌmʌltɪˈfɔrm/ or erythema multiforme
multigravida /ˌmʌltɪˈgreɪvɪdə/ noun a pregnant woman who has been pregnant two or more times before
multi-infarct dementia /ˌmʌlti ˈɪnfærkt dɪ ˈmɛnʃə/ noun dementia caused by a number of small strokes, when the dementia is not progressive as in Alzheimer's disease but increases in steps as new strokes occur
multilocular /ˌmʌltɪˈlɪkjʊlər/ adjective referring to a body part or growth which has a lot of separate compartments or locules
multi-organ failure /ˌmʌlti ˈɔːɡən ˈfeɪlər/ noun an extremely serious condition in which several of the body's organs stop functioning at the same time. The person may survive, depending on how many organs fail and the length of time that the failure lasts. Abbreviation MOF
multipara /ˌmʌltɪˈpærə/ noun a woman who has given birth to two or more live children
multiple /ˌmʌltɪpl/ adjective occurring several times or in several places
multiple birth /ˌmʌltɪˈbɜːtl/ noun a birth where more than one child is born at the same time
multiple fracture /ˌmʌltɪˈfræktr/ noun a condition in which a bone is broken in several places
multiple organ dysfunction syndrome /ˌmʌltɪˈɔːɡən ˈdɪsˈfʌŋkʃən ˈsɜːndrəm/ noun a state of continuous disturbances and abnormalities in organ systems, rather than true
failure, e.g. following trauma and sepsis. It is often fatal. Abbreviation MODS

multiple pregnancy /ˈmʌltəpjərəˈniːzi/ noun a pregnancy where the mother is going to give birth to more than one child

multiple sclerosis /mʌltəˈsklerəsi/ noun a nervous disease which gets progressively worse, where patches of the fibres of the central nervous system lose their myelin, causing numbness in the limbs and progressive weakness and paralysis. Abbreviation MS. Also called disseminated sclerosis. ☑ arteriosclerosis, atherosclerosis

multipolar neurone /ˈmʌltəpələ ˈnjuːrən/ noun a neurone with several processes. See illustration at NEURONE in Supplement. Compare bipolar neurone, unipolar neurone

multiresistant /ˌmʌltəˈrɛsɪstənt/ adjective resistant to several types of antibiotic

multivitamin /ˈmʌltəˌvɪtəmən/ noun a preparation containing several vitamins and sometimes minerals, used as a dietary supplement ☑ adjective referring to a preparation containing several vitamins, and sometimes minerals ☑ multivitamin pills ☑ multivitamin supplement

mumps /mʌmps/ noun an infectious disease of children, with fever and swellings in the salivary glands, caused by a paramyxovirus ☑ He caught mumps from the children next door. Also called infectious parotitis (NOTE: Takes a singular or a plural verb.)

Münchausen’s syndrome /ˈmʌnkəəˌzoʊənəz, ˈsɪndrəˌmuːnə/ noun a mental disorder in which someone tries to get hospital treatment by claiming symptoms of an illness which he or she does not have. Many people will undergo very painful procedures which they do not need. [Described by Richard Asher in 1951, and named after Baron von Münchhausen, a 16th century traveler and invertebrate liar.]

Münchausen’s syndrome by proxy /ˈmʌnkəəˌzoʊənəz bai ˈprɔksi/ noun a mental disorder in which someone tries to get hospital treatment for someone else such as their child or an elderly relative. It is regarded as a form of child abuse, as the person may cause a child to be ill in order to receive attention.

murmur /ˈmɜrmər/ noun a sound, usually the sound of the heart, heard through a stethoscope

muscae volitantes /ˈmʌsksi vələˈtæntəz/ plural noun pieces of cellular or blood debris present in the vitreous of the eye, common in old age but, if a sudden event, can be a symptom of retinal haemorrhage. Also called floaters

muscarine /ˈmʌskərɪn/ noun a poison found in fungi

muscarinic /ˈmʌskərɪnɪk/ adjective referring to a neurone or receptor stimulated by acetylcholine and muscarine

muscle /ˈmʌskəl/ noun 1. an organ in the body, which contracts to make part of the body move ☑

If you do a lot of exercises you develop strong muscles. ☑ The muscles in his legs were still weak after he had spent two months in bed. ☑ She had muscle cramp after going into the cold water. See illustration at EYE in Supplement 2, same as muscle tissue

muscle fatigue /ˈmʌskəl ˈfeɪti/ noun fatigue in the muscles after strenuous exercise

muscle fibre /ˈmʌskəl ˈfaɪbə/ noun a component fibre of muscles (NOTE: There are two types of fibre which form striated and smooth muscles.)

muscle relaxant /ˈmʌskəl ˈrɛksənt/ noun a drug which reduces contractions in the muscles, e.g. baclofen

muscle spasm /ˈmʌskəl ˈspæsm/ noun a sudden contraction of a muscle

muscle tissue /ˈmʌskəl ˈtjuːʃə/ noun the specialized type of tissue which forms the muscles and which can contract and expand

muscle wasting /ˈmʌskəl ˈweɪstɪŋ/ noun a condition in which the muscles lose weight and become thin

muscular /ˈmʌskjʊlər/ adjective referring to muscle

muscular dystrophy /ˈmʌskjʊlər ˈdɪstrəfi/ noun a type of muscle disease where some muscles become weak and are replaced with fatty tissue. ☑ Duchenne muscular dystrophy

muscular fatigue /ˈmʌskjʊlər ˈfeɪti/ noun same as muscle fatigue

muscular tissue /ˈmʌskjʊlər ˈtjuːʃə/ noun same as muscle tissue

musculoskeletal /ˈmʌskjʊləskəˈliːəl/ adjective referring to muscles and bone

mutant /ˈmjuːtənt/ adjective in which mutation has occurred

mutant gene /ˈmjuːtənt ˈɡene/ noun a gene which has undergone mutation

mutation /ˈmjuːtəʃən/ noun a change in DNA which changes the physiological effect of the DNA on the cell

mute /ˈmjuːt/ adjective 1. unwilling or unable to speak 2. felt or expressed without speech ☑ noun somebody who is unable or unwilling to speak (NOTE: This term is sometimes considered offensive.)

mutism /ˈmjuːtɪzəm/ noun the condition of being unable to speak. Also called dumbness
myalgia /ˈmaɪəlɡə/ noun a muscle pain
myalgic encephalomyelitis /ˌmaɪəlɪk ˌɛnθəkləʊməlɪtɪs/ noun a long-term condition affecting the nervous system, in which someone feels tired and depressed and has pain and weakness in the muscles. Abbreviation ME. Also called chronic fatigue syndrome, postviral fatigue syndrome
myasthenia /ˌmaɪəˈsthɪəniə/ myasthenia
myeloid tissue /ˌmaɪəlɔɪd ˈtʃɪzɪs/ noun a general weakness and dysfunction of the muscles, caused by poor conduction at the motor end plates
myeloma /ˌmaɪələʊmə/ noun a malignant tumour in bone marrow, at the ends of long bones or in the jaw
myelomeningcele /ˌmaɪələʊmənɪŋˈsɛlə/ noun same as meningo(myelo)cele
myelopathy /ˌmaɪələˈpæθi/ noun any disorder of the spinal cord or bone marrow
myelosuppression /ˌmaɪəlɔʊsəˈprɛʃən/ noun a condition in which the bone marrow does not produce enough blood cells, often occurring after chemotherapy
myo- /ˈmiːəʊ-/ prefix referring to muscle
myocardial /ˌmaɪəˈkɑːrdɪəl/ adjective referring to the myocardium
myocardial infarction /ˌmaɪəkɑːrdɪəl ɪnˈfɑːkʃən/ noun the death of part of the heart muscle after coronary thrombosis. Abbreviation MI
myocarditis /ˌmaɪəkɑːrdɪˈtɪs/ noun inflammation of the heart muscle
myocardium /ˌmaɪəkɑːrdɪəm/ noun the middle layer of the wall of the heart, formed of heart muscle. See illustration at heart in Supplement
mycele /ˈmiːsəli/ noun a condition in which a muscle pushes through a gap in the surrounding membrane
myoclonic /ˌmaɪəˈklɒnɪk/ adjective referring to myoclonus
myoclonic epilepsy /ˌmaɪəkʌlɒnɪk ˈɛplɪəpsɪ/ noun a form of epilepsy where the limbs jerk frequently
myoclonus /ˌmaɪəˈklɒnəs/ noun a muscle spasm which makes a limb give an involuntary jerk
myocyte /ˌmaɪəsɔtɪ/ noun a muscle cell
myofibril /ˌmaɪəfɪbruːl/ noun a long thread of striated muscle fibres
myofibrosis /ˌmaɪəfɪbrəˈsɪəs/ noun a condition in which muscle tissue is replaced by fibrous tissue
myoma /ˌmaɪəˈəʊmə/ noun a benign tumour in a smooth muscle
myometectomy /ˌmaɪəˌmɛtəktəmɪ/ noun the surgical removal of a benign growth from a muscle, especially removal of a fibroid from the uterus
myometritis /ˌmaɪəˈmɛtərɪtɪs/ noun inflammation of the myometrium. Also called metritis
myometrium /ˌmaɪəˈmɛtɹɪəm/ noun the muscular tissue in the uterus
myoneural /ˌmaɪəˈnjuərəl/ adjective relating to or involving both the muscles and the nerves
myoneural junction /ˌmaɪənjuərəl ˈdʒʌŋkʃən/ noun same as neuromuscular junction
myopathy /ˌmaɪəˈpəθi/ noun a disease of a muscle, especially one in which the muscle wastes away
myopia /məˈsjuːpiə/ noun a condition in which someone can see clearly objects which are close, but not ones which are further away. Also called shortsightedness. Opposite longsightedness

myopic /məˈɒpɪk/ adjective able to see close objects clearly, but not objects which are further away. Also called shortsighted, nearsighted

myoplasty /məˈpleɪstɪ/ noun a form of plastic surgery to repair a muscle

myopathy /məˈpæθi/ noun a form of plastic surgery to repair a muscle

myotonic /məˈtɒnɪk/ adjective referring to myotonia

myotonia /məˈtɒnɪə/ noun difficulty in relaxing a muscle after exercise

myotonic /məˈtɒnɪk/ adjective referring to tone in a muscle

myringa /məˈrɪŋɡə/ noun same as eardrum

myringitis /məˈrɪŋɡɪtɪs/ noun inflammation of the eardrum

myringoplasty /məˈrɪŋɡəʊˈpleɪstɪ/ noun the surgical repair of a perforated eardrum. Also called tympanoplasty

myringotome /məˈrɪŋɡəʊˈtɔmɪ/ noun a sharp knife used in myringotomy

myringotomy /məˈrɪŋɡəʊˌtɒmɪ/ noun a surgical operation to make an opening in the eardrum to allow fluid to escape. Also called tympanotomy

myx-/mɪks-, myxo- /mɪks-/ prefix referring to mucus

myxoedema /mɪksəˈdiːmə/ noun a condition caused when the thyroid gland does not produce enough thyroid hormone. The person, often a middle-aged woman, becomes overweight, moves slowly and develops coarse skin. It can be treated with thyroxine.

myxoedematous /mɪksəˈdemətəs/ adjective referring to myxoedema

myxoid cyst /mɪksəd ˈkɪst/ noun a cyst which develops at the base of a fingernail or toenail

myxovirus /mɪksəˈvɜːrəs/ noun any virus which has an affinity for the mucoprotein receptors in red blood cells. One of these viruses causes influenza.
nanometre /ˈnænəmɛtər/ noun a unit of measurement of length equal to one thousand millionth of a metre. Symbol nm

nabothian cyst /ˌnɑˌbɑˈθiən ˈsɪst/, nabothian follicle /ˌnɑˌbɑˈθiən ˈfɔlɪkl/ nabothian gland /ˌnɑˌbɑˈθiən ˈɡlænd/ noun a cyst which forms in the cervix of the uterus when the ducts in the cervical glands are blocked

Naegele rule /ˌnɛɡələ ˈrul/ noun a method used to determine when a pregnant woman is likely to go into labour, in which nine months and seven days are added to the date on which her last period started. If the woman does not have a 28-day menstrual cycle, an adjustment is made: e.g., if she has a 26-day cycle you would subtract 2 days from the Naegele's estimated due date.

naevus /ˈnɛvəs/ noun same as birthmark (NOTE: The plural is naevi)

NAl abbreviation non-accidental injury

nail /nɛl/ noun a hard growth, made of keratin, which forms on the top surface at the end of each finger and toe. Also called unguis (NOTE: For terms referring to nail, see words beginning with onych-, onycho-)

nail avulsion /nɛl ə ˈvɔlʃən/ noun the act of pulling away an ingrowing toenail

nail bed /ˈnɛl ˈbed/ noun the part of the nail which is just under the nail and on which the nail rests

nail matrix /ˈnɛl ˌmɛtrɪks/ noun the internal structure of the nail, the part of the finger from which the nail grows

naloxone /ˈnɑləksən/ noun a drug resembling morphine, used in the diagnosis of narcotics addiction and to reverse the effects of narcotics poisoning

named nurse /ˈnɛmd ˈnɔrs/ noun a nurse, midwife or health visitor who is responsible for communicating with a particular person and ensuring that his or her needs for care and information are met

nandrolone /ˌnændroʊˈlɑn/ noun an anabolic steroid which builds muscle. Its use is banned by the International Amateur Athletics Federation.

nano- /ˈnænəʊ/ prefix one thousand millionth (10^-9). Symbol n

nappy /ˈnæpi/ noun a cloth used to wrap round a baby’s bottom and groin, to keep clothing clean and dry

nappy rash /ˈnæpi ˈræʃ/ noun sore red skin on a baby’s buttocks and groin, caused by long contact with ammonia in a wet nappy

naproxen /ˈnæpɾəkson/ noun a pain-relieving drug

naproxy /ˈnæpʌkson/ adjective referring to sleep or stupor

narcolepsy /ˈnærkəlɛpsɪ/ noun a condition in which someone has an uncontrollable tendency to fall asleep at any time

narcoleptic /ˈnærkəlɛptɪk/ adjective 1. causing narcolepsy 2. having narcolepsy 3. noun 1. a substance which causes narcolepsy 2. someone who has narcolepsy

narcosis /ˈnɑrkəsɪs/ noun a state of lowered consciousness induced by a drug

narcotic /ˈnɑrktɪk/ noun a pain-relieving drug which makes someone sleep or become unconscious 1. The doctor put her to sleep with a powerful narcotic. 2. adjective causing sleep or unconsciousness 3. the narcotic side-effects of an antihistamine

nare /ˈnɑrə/ plural noun the nostrils (NOTE: The singular is naris.)

nasal /ˈnæsəl/ adjective referring to the nose
nasal apertures /ˈneɪzəl/ ˈɛpərˌfəsə plural nān the two openings shaped like funnels leading from the nasal cavity to the pharynx. /ˈkɒɪnən/ noun

nasal cavity /ˈneɪzəl/ ˈkeɪvətɪ/ noun the cavity above and behind the hard palate below, divided in two by the nasal septum and leading to the nasopharynx

d/or /ˈvinərənt/ nasal sinuses part of the pharynx which connects with the nose

nasopharynx /ˈneɪzəfæriŋkəs/ noun the part of the nasal cavity from the side walls. Also called turbinate bones

nasal congestion /ˈneɪzəl/ ˈkɒnˌdʒestʃən/ noun the blocking of the nose by inflammation as a response to a cold or other infection

nasal drops /ˈneɪzəl/ ˈdrɒps/ plural noun drops of liquid inserted into the nose

nasal septum /ˈneɪzəl/ ˈsɛptəm/ noun a wall of cartilage between the two nostrils and the two parts of the nasal cavity

nasal spray /ˈneɪzəl/ ˈspreɪ/ noun a spray of liquid into the nose

nascent /ˈneɪsənt/ ˈneɪsənt/ noun 1. in the process of coming into existence and starting to develop 2. referring to a substance, especially hydrogen, in the process of being created. At this stage it is often in a highly active form

näsepän /ˈneɪsəpən/ a trade name for a mixture containing chlorhexidine and neomycin, used to treat nasal infection by organisms such as staphylococci

naso- /ˈneɪzəʊ/ prefix referring to the nose

nasogastric /ˈneɪzəʊˌgæstrɪk/ ˈadvektɪv referring to the nose and stomach

nasogastric tube /ˈneɪzəʊˌgæstrɪk ˈtjuːb/ noun a tube passed through the nose into the stomach

nasolacrimal /ˈneɪzəlˌlærəkˈmɪrəl/ adjective referring to the nose and the tear glands

d/or /ˈvinərənt/ nasolacrimal duct /ˈneɪzəlˌlærəkˈmɪrəl ˈdʌkt/ noun a duct which drains tears from the lacrimal sac into the nose

nasopharyngeal /ˈneɪzəˌfɛərniŋˈdʒɪərəl/ adjective referring to the nasopharynx

d/or /ˈvinərənt/ nasopharyngitis /ˈneɪzəˌfɛərniŋˈdʒɜːrətɪs/ noun inflammation of the mucus membrane of the nasal part of the pharynx

nasopharynx /ˈneɪzəˌfɛərniŋks/ noun the top part of the pharynx which connects with the nose

nasosinusitis /ˈneɪzəˌsʌnəˈsaɪnətɪs/ noun a condition in which the nose and sinuses swell up

nates /ˈnetes/ plural noun same as buttock

National Boards /ˈneɪʃəl/ ˈbɔːrdz/ noun the National Boards for Nursing, Midwifery, and Health Visiting, which were formerly responsible for the education of professionals in these fields in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland

National Council for Vocational Qualifications /ˈneɪʃəl ˈkɒnsəl ˈkeɪvətʃəl ˈkwɒlətʃən/ noun full form of NCVQ

National Health Service /ˈneɪʃəl ˈhealtʃər/ ˈsevərɪs/ noun a government service in the UK which provides medical services free of charge at the point of delivery, or at reduced cost, to the whole population. The service is paid for out of tax revenue. Abbreviation NHS

National Institute for Clinical Excellence /ˈneɪʃəl ˈɪnstɪtʃətʃən fə klinɪkəl/ ˈeksələns/ noun an organisation in the UK which produces recommendations for treatments based on clinical evidence and cost-effectiveness. Abbreviation NICE

National Service Framework /ˈneɪʃəl ˈsɜːvɪsˌfreɪmərkwɜːk/ noun full form of NSF

natriuretic /ˈneɪtrəriˌrɛtɪk/ noun something which helps sodium to be excreted in the urine

natural childbirth /ˈneɪtrəl ˈbɪʃʊtl/ ˈbɪʃʊtl/ noun childbirth where the mother is not given any pain-killing drugs or anaesthetic but is encouraged to give birth after having prepared herself through relaxation and breathing exercises and a new psychological outlook

natural immunity /ˈneɪtrəl ˈɪmjʊərətɪv/ ˈɪmjʊərətɪv/ noun the immunity from disease which a newborn baby has from birth and which is inherited or acquired in the uterus or from the mother’s milk

natural killer cell /ˈneɪtrəl ˈkaɪlər/ ˈkeɪlər/ cell/ noun a white blood cell which can recognise microorganisms and tumour cells as foreign without any previous exposure to them, and destroy them

natural mother /ˈneɪtrəl ˈmʌðə/ noun

natural parent /ˈneɪtrəl ˈpeərənt/ noun same as birth mother, birth parent

nature nurture debate /ˈneɪtʃər ˈnjuːtʃər ˌd逼t/ noun the arguments put forward about whether human beings behave in the way they do because of their genetic make-up and instincts or because of the way they are educated and the influences they are exposed to when they are young

naturalopathy /ˈneɪtrələˌpəθi/ noun a method of treatment of diseases and disorders which does not use medical or surgical means, but natural forces such as light, heat, massage, eating natural foods and using herbal remedies

nausea /ˈneɪziə/ noun a feeling that you want to vomit ○ She suffered from nausea in the morning. ○ He felt slight nausea after getting onto the boat.

nauseated /ˈneɪziətɪd/ adjective feeling as if you are about to vomit ○ The casualty may feel nauseated

nāvel /ˈnɛvəl/ noun the scar with a depression in the middle of the abdomen where the umbilical...
cord was detached after birth. Also called umbilicus (NOTE: For other terms referring to the navel, see words beginning with omphal-, omphalo-)
naviculard /nəˈvɪkʊləd/ adjective relating to a navicular bone n noun same as navicular bone
navicular bone /nəˈvɪkələr bɔːn/ noun one of the tarsal bones in the foot. See illustration at foot in Supplement
NCVO /ˈɛn sɪ və kjuː/ noun a government body in the UK responsible for setting standards of qualification for specific jobs. Full form National Council for Vocational Qualifications
NDU abbreviation Nursing Development Unit
nearsighted /nəˈsætɪd/ adjective same as myopic
nebula /ˈnebjʊlə/ noun a slightly cloudy spot on the cornea
nebuliser /ˈnebjʊləzər/ nebulator noun same as atomiser
neck /nek/ noun 1. the part of the body which joins the head to the body ○ He is suffering from pains in the neck. ○ The front of the neck is swollen with goitre. ○ The jugular veins run down the side of the neck. 2. a narrow part of a bone or organ
neck collar /ˈnek kɜːbə/ noun a strong high collar to support the head of a person with neck injuries or a condition such as cervical spondylitis
necro- /nekroʊ/ prefix referring to death
necrology /ˈnekroʊlɒdʒi/ noun the scientific study of mortality statistics
necrophilia /ˌnekroʊˈfɪliə/, necrophilism /ˈnɛkrəfilɪzəm/ noun unusual pleasure in corpses
necropsy /ˈnekroʊpsɪ/ noun same as post mortem
necrosis /ˈnekroʊsɪs/ noun the death of a part of the body such as a bone, tissue or an organ as a result of disease or injury ○ Gangrene is a form of necrosis.
necrotic /ˈnɛkrətɪk/ adjective referring to, or affected with, necrosis ○ necrotic tissue
necrotising enterocolitis /ˌnɛkrəˈtɪziŋ ˌentəˈrəʊkəlɪtɪs/ noun a disorder in which patches of dead tissue are found in the small or large intestine as a result of severe bacterial infection. It occurs in babies, especially premature ones.
necrotomy /ˈnɛkrətəmi/ noun the dissection of a dead body (NOTE: The plural is necrotomies.)
needle /ˈniːdl/ noun 1. a thin metal instrument with a sharp point at one end and a hole at the other for attaching a thread, used for sewing up surgical incisions 2. the hollow pointed end of a hypodermic syringe, or the syringe itself
needlestick /ˈniːdl(ə)stɪk/ noun an accidental pricking of your own skin by a needle, as by a nurse picking up a used syringe
needlestick injury /ˈniːdl(ə)stɪk ɪnˈdʒəri/ noun the real or potential harm resulting from a prick with a needle previously used to take blood or give an injection. The main concern is the risk of HIV or hepatitis B infection.
needling /ˈniːdlɪŋ/ noun the puncture of a cutaneous with a needle
needs assessment /ˈniːdz əˈsesmənt/ noun the investigation of what a particular group of people need in terms of health and social care, so that services can be matched to their needs
needs deprivation /ˈniːdz dɪˈpɜːriːv(ə)ˈʃən/ noun a state in which someone does not have the opportunity or capacity to fulfil his or her basic needs
negative /ˈnɛɡətɪv/ adjective 1. meaning or showing ‘no’ 2. indicating that something being tested for is not present ○ The test results were negative. Opposite: positive
negative feedback /ˌnɛɡətɪv ˈfiːdbæk/ noun a situation in which the result of a process represses the process which caused it
negligence /ˈnɛɡlɪdʒəns/ noun the act of causing injury or harm to another person or to property as the result of doing something wrongly or failing to provide a proper level of care
Neisseria /nəˈsɪəriə/ noun a genus of bacteria which includes gonococcus, which causes gonorrhoea, and meningococcus, which causes meningitis
nematode /ˌnɛmətəd/ noun a type of parasitic roundworm, e.g. a hookworm, pinworm or roundworm
neo- /ˈniːəʊ/ prefix new
neoadjuvant chemotherapy /ˌniːədʒuˌvɛnt, ˌkiːməˈθɛərɪ/ noun chemotherapy given to people with tumours instead of immediate surgery or radiotherapy, in the hope of reducing the need for these later
neomycin /ˌniːəmɔsiˈməʊn/ noun a drug used externally to treat bacterial infections
neonatal /ˌniːənətəl/ adjective referring to the first few weeks after birth
neonatal death rate /ˌniːənətɔl ˈdɛθ ˈrɛt/ noun the number of babies who die soon after birth, shown per thousand babies born
neonatal screening /ˌniːənətɔl, ˈskiːnərɪŋ/ noun a test of a set of tests performed on babies soon after birth so that any problems can be treated immediately (NOTE: Tests for certain diseases such as hypothyroidism and phenylketonuria are a legal duty.)
neonate /ˌniːənət/ noun a baby which is less than four weeks old
neonatologist /ˌniːənətəˈlɒdʒɪst/ noun a specialist who looks after babies during the first few
weeks of life, or premature babies and babies with some congenital disorders

neonatology /ˈniːəʊətɒlədʒi/ noun the branch of medicine dealing with babies in the first few weeks of life

neoplasma /ˈnɪəʊpɑːləzəm/ noun any new and morbid formation of tissue

neoplasty /ˈnɪəʊplæstɪ/ noun the surgical repair or replacement of damaged tissue

neostigmme /ˌnɪəʊstɪgmɪ/ noun a white crystalline compound used in the treatment of muscle fatigue, myasthenia and to reverse the effects of muscle relaxant drugs

nephr- /ˈnɛfr-/ prefix kidney

nephralgia /ˈnɛfroʊlʤiə/ noun pain in the kidney

nephralgic /ˈnɛfrəlʤɪk/ adjective relating to pain in the kidney

nephrectomy /ˈnɛfrɛktəmi/ noun a surgical operation to remove the whole kidney (NOTE: The plural is nephrectomies.)

nephritis /ˈnɛfrɪtɪs/ noun inflammation of the kidney

nephroblastoma /ˌnɛfroʊˈbлаːstəmə/ noun a malignant tumour in the kidneys in young children, usually under the age of 10, leading to swelling of the abdomen. It is treated by removal of the affected kidney. Also called Wilms' tumour (NOTE: The plural is nephroblastomas or nephroblastomata.)

nephrocalcinosis /ˌnɛfroʊˈkælsɪnəsɪs/ noun a condition in which calcium deposits are found in the kidney

nephrocapulectomy /ˌnɛfroʊˈkæpləskjʊət/ noun a surgical operation to remove the capsule round a kidney (NOTE: The plural is nephrocapulectomies.)

nephrogram /ˌnɛfroʊˈgræm/ noun a radiographic examination of the kidney

nephrolith /ˈnɛfrəlɪθ/ noun a stone in the kidney

nephrolithiasis /ˌnɛfrəlɪθˈeɪəsɪs/ noun a condition in which stones form in the kidney

nephrolithotomy /ˌnɛfrəlɪθˈɔtəmɪ/ noun a surgical operation to remove a stone in the kidney (NOTE: The plural is nephrolithotomies.)

nephrologist /ˌnɛfrəlɪɡɪst/ noun a doctor who specialises in the study of the kidney and its diseases

nephrology /ˌnɛfrəlɪdʒi/ noun the study of the kidney and its diseases

nephroma /ˌnɛfrəˈməʊmə/ noun a tumour in the kidney, or a tumour derived from renal substances (NOTE: The plural is nephromas or nephromata.)

nephron /ˌnɛfrəʊn/ noun a tiny structure in the kidney through which fluid is filtered

nephropathy /ˈnɛfroʊpəθi/ noun a disease or medical disorder of the kidney (NOTE: The plural is nephropathies.)

nephropexy /ˌnɛfrəʊpɛksɪ/ noun a surgical operation to attach a mobile kidney (NOTE: The plural is nephropexies.)

nephroptosis /ˌnɛfroʊpəˈtɒsɪs/ noun a condition in which a kidney is mobile. Also called floating kidney

nephrosclerosis /ˌnɛfrəʊskləˈroʊsɪs/ noun a kidney disease due to vascular change

nephroscope /ˌnɛfrəʊskəʊp/ noun a type of endoscope used to examine the kidneys

nephrosis /ˌnɛfrəˈsoʊsɪs/ noun degeneration of the tissue of a kidney

nephrostomy /ˌnɛfrəˈstəmɪ/ noun a surgical operation to make a permanent opening into the pelvis of the kidney from the surface (NOTE: The plural is nephrostomies.)

nephrotic /ˌnɛfrəˈtɪk/ adjective relating to or caused by nephrosis

nephrotic syndrome /ˌnɛfrəˈtɪk sɪˈndrəʊm/ noun increasing oedema, albuminuria and raised blood pressure resulting from nephrosis

nephrotomy /ˌnɛfrəˈtəmɪ/ noun a surgical operation to cut into a kidney (NOTE: The plural is nephrotomies.)

nephrototoxic /ˌnɛfrəˈtɒkˌtɪk/ adjective poisonous or damaging to kidney cells

nephroureterectomy /ˌnɛfrəˌjʊərəˈtɛrkət/ noun a surgical operation to remove all or part of a kidney and the ureter attached to it. Also called ureteronephrectomy (NOTE: The plural is nephroureterectomies.)

nerve gas /ˈnɜrv/ noun 1. a bundle of fibres that can transmit electrochemical impulses and that forms part of the network that connects the brain and spinal cord to the body’s organs 2. the sensitive tissue in the root of a tooth (NOTE: For other terms referring to nerves, see words beginning with neur-, neuro-)

nerve block /ˈnɜrv block/ noun the act of stopping the function of a nerve by injecting an anaesthetic

nerve centre /ˈnɜrv ˈsentʃə/ noun the point at which nerves come together

nerve ending /ˈnɜrv ˈendɪŋ/ noun same as sensory receptor

nerve entrapment syndrome /ˈnɜrv ɪnˈtræpmənt sɪˈndrəʊm/ noun pain caused by pressure on a nerve, especially where nerves occur in narrow passages such as the wrist

nerve fibre /ˈnɜrv ˈfaɪbə/ noun a thin structure leading from a nerve cell and carrying nerve impulses, e.g. an axon

nerve gas /ˈnɜrv ɡæs/ noun a gas which attacks the nervous system
nervous

stress and the patient’s focus on keeping both the things which cause nervous disorder with ectodermal cells running the length of an neural tube defect a congenital anomaly which occurs when the edges of the neural tube do not close up properly while the fetus develops in the uterus, e.g. spina bifida (NOTE: There is less risk of a neural tube defect if the mother takes folic acid during her pregnancy.)

neurapraxia a lesion of a nerve which leads to paralysis for a very short time, giving a tingling feeling and loss of function neurectomy a surgical operation to remove all or part of a nerve (NOTE: The plural is neurectomies.)

network the growth of new nerve tissue after damage

nerve impulse an electrochemical impulse which is transmitted by nerve cells nerve regeneration the growth of new nerve tissue after damage has occurred nerve root the first part of a nerve as it leaves or joins the spinal column (NOTE: The dorsal nerve root is the entry for a sensory nerve, and the ventral nerve root is the exit for a motor nerve.)

tissue which forms nerves, and which is able to transmit the nerve impulses

nervous /ˈnɜrvoʊs/ adjective 1. referring to nerves 2. very easily worried 

neurogenic 1. caused or resulting from the nervous system 2. affecting the nervous system

neuroendocrine system a system in which the organs and tissues interact to control the function of organs and tissues

nerve cell /ˈnɜrv ə s/ plural noun a system of nerve cells and nerve fibres

nerve fluid synovial fluid

nerve injury a break in a nerve which leads to paralysis for a very short time

nerve injury prevention a system in which the nuerous system and hormonal systems interact to control the function of organs and tissues

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nerve impulse /ˈnɜrv ɪmpʌls/ noun a series of nerve impulses which are transmitted along a nerve.

nerve regeneration /ˈnɜrvoʊ ɡɛrɪneɪʃən/ noun the growth of new nerve tissue after damage has occurred

nerve root /ˈnɜrv ət/ noun the first part of a nerve as it leaves or joins the spinal column (NOTE: The dorsal nerve root is the entry for a sensory nerve, and the ventral nerve root is the exit for a motor nerve.)

nerve tissue /ˈnɜrv ɪˈtʃʊs/ noun tissue which forms nerves, and which is able to transmit the nerve impulses

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neuropathic bladder /ˈnjuərɒpθɪk/ noun a condition in which there are fewer neutrophils than usual in a cell in the nervous system which transmits nerve impulses. Also called myoneural junction

neuropathic bladder /ˈnjuərɒpθɪk/ noun a condition in which the bladder does not function properly because its nerve supply is damaged, e.g. due to an injury to the spinal cord

neuropathy /ˈnjuərəpθi/ noun the study of diseases of the nervous system

neuropath /ˈnjuərəpatθ/  noun a surgical operation to join by suture a nerve which has been cut (NOTE: The plural is neuromorphs.)

neurosecretion /ˈnjuəroʊsɛktrən/ noun a substance secreted by a nerve cell

neurosis /ˈnjuəroʊsɪs/ noun a disorder of the personality in which a person experiences obsessive negative emotions towards someone or something, e.g. fear of empty spaces or jealousy of a sibling. \(\text{NOTE: The plural is neuroses.}\)

neurosurgery /ˈnjuərəʊsɜːrgi/ noun surgery on the nervous system, including the brain and spinal cord

neurotransmitter /ˈnjuəroʊtrənsmitər/ noun a chemical substance which transmits nerve impulses from one neurone to another

neutralise /ˈnjuəroʊtrənsmitər/ noun a chemical substance which transmits nerve impulses from one neurone to another

neutral /ˈnjuəroʊtrənsmitər/  noun a type of white blood cell with an irregular nucleus, which can attack and destroy bacteria. Also called polymorph

neuropath /ˈnjuərəpatθ/  noun a type of white blood cell with an irregular nucleus, which can attack and destroy bacteria. Also called polymorph

neurophysiology /ˈnjuəroʊfɪzɪljəri/ noun the study of the physiology of nerves

neuroplasty /ˈnjuəroʊplæstɪ/  noun surgery to repair damaged nerves

neurophysiology /ˈnjuəroʊfɪzɪljəri/ noun the study of the physiology of nerves

neuropsychiatry /ˈnjuərəʊpsɪkjətrɪ/ noun the study of mental and nervous disorders

neuromuscular /ˈnjuərəmʌskjʊəl/ adjective relating to both nerves and muscles

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neurophysiology /ˈnjuəroʊfɪzɪljəri/ noun the study of the physiology of nerves

neuropathy /ˈnjuərəpθi/ noun a disease involving destruction of the tissues of the nervous system (NOTE: The plural is neuropathies.)

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new variant CJD /ˈnjuːjværɪənt/  noun a variant of Creutzfeldt–Jakob disease. Symbol N

next-day pill /ˈnekst deɪ ˈplɪ/ noun same as morning-after pill

next-day pill /ˈnekst deɪ ˈplɪ/ noun same as morning-after pill
next of kin /ˈnekst əv ˈkɪni/ noun the person or persons who are most closely related to someone (NOTE: Takes a singular or plural verb.)
nexus /ˈneksəs/ noun a point where two organs or tissues join
NHS abbreviation National Health Service
NHS Direct /ˈen ɪdɪt/ ədʒekt/ noun in the UK, a national telephone helpline run by nurses to provide information about health and health services for the public
NHS targets /ˈen ɪdɪt/ əz ‘tæɡəts/ plural noun performance targets set by the government for individual NHS primary care trusts
niacin /ˈnəʊsetrən/ noun a vitamin of the vitamin B complex found in milk, meat, liver, kidney, yeast, beans, peas and bread, lack of which can cause mental disorders and pellagra. Also called nicotinic acid
nicardipine /nɪˈkɑrdɪpɪn/ noun a drug which slows down the movement of calcium ions into smooth muscle cells, used especially to treat angina
NICE /ˈnaɪsi/ abbreviation National Institute for Clinical Excellence
niclosamide /nɪˈkləʊsəməd/ noun a drug used for removing tapeworms
nicotine /ˈnɪkətən/ noun the main alkaloid substance found in tobacco
nicotine addiction /ˈnɪkətən əˌdɪkʃən/ noun an addiction to nicotine, derived from smoking tobacco
nicotine patch /ˈnɪkətən ˈpætʃ/ noun a patch containing nicotine which is released slowly into the bloodstream, applied to the skin as a method of curing nicotine addiction
nicotine replacement /ˈnɪkətən ˈrɪplæsment/ noun the use of nicotine patches or other products to help during an attempt to give up smoking
nicotinic acid /ˈnɪkətɪnɪk ˈæsɪd/ same as nicacin
nictation /ˈnɪktʃən/ noun the act of winking
nidation /ˈnaɪdəʃən/ noun 1. the process of building the endometrial layers of the uterus between menstrual periods 2. the point in the development of an embryo at which the fertilised ovum reaches the uterus and implants in the wall of the uterus. Also called implantation
nidus /ˈnɪdəs/ noun a site where bacteria can settle and breed, which becomes a centre of infection (NOTE: The plural is niduses or nidi.)
Niemann-Pick disease /ˌnɪmən ˈpɪk diˈzɪd/ noun a rare inherited disease of a group which affect metabolism. Signs in babies include feeding difficulties, a large abdomen within 3 to 6 months, and progressive loss of early motor skills.
nifedipine /nɪˈfɛdɪpɪn/ noun a drug which stops the heart muscles from taking up calcium, used in the treatment of high blood pressure and angina pectoris
night nurse /ˈnaɪt nɜːs/ noun a nurse who is on duty at night
night sweat /ˈnaɪt swet/ noun heavy sweating when a person is asleep at night
night terror /ˈnaɪt ˈtɜːr/ noun a period of disturbed sleep, which a child does not remember afterwards
nigra /ˈnaɪgrə/ linea nigra nigilism /ˈnaɪhlɪzəm/ noun the rejection of all the usual social conventions and beliefs, especially of morality and religion
nihilistic /ˈnɪhlɪstɪk/ adj relating to or showing a belief in nihilism
nipple /ˈnɪpəl/ noun 1. same as mammilla 2. US a rubber teat on a baby’s feeding bottle
Nissl granule /ˈnɪsəl ɡrænjuːl/ noun one of the coarse granules surrounding the nucleus in the cytoplasm of nerve cells. See illustration at NEURONE in Supplement [Described 1894. After Franz Nissl (1860–1919). German psychiatrist.]
nit /ˈnɪt/ noun an egg or larva of a louse
nitrate /ˈnɪtreɪt/ noun a drug such as glyceryl trinitrate which dilates the vessels leading to the heart muscle and lowers cardiac work by reducing venous return to the heart, for rapid relief of angina and in heart failure (NOTE: Patients can develop tolerance to these drugs.)
nitrate /ˈnɪtreɪt/ suffix used in names of nitrate drugs
nitrazepam /ˈnɪtrəzəpəm/ noun a tranquiliser used in some sleeping pills
nitrofurantoin /ˈnɪtəroʊfərəntɔɪn/ noun a drug which helps to prevent the growth of bacteria, used in the treatment of urinary infections
nitrogen /ˈnɪtrəgən/ noun a chemical element, which is a gas that is the main component of air and is an essential part of protein (NOTE: The chemical symbol is N.)
nitroglycerin /ˈnɪtəˌglɪsərɪn/ noun a drug which helps the veins and coronary arteries to become wider
nitrous oxide /ˈnɪtrəs ˈəʊksaid/ noun a colourless gas with a sweet smell, used in combination with other gases as an anaesthetic in dentistry and surgery. Also called laughing gas
nm abbreviation nanometre
NMC abbreviation Nursing and Midwifery Council
nmol abbreviation nanomole
NMR abbreviation nuclear magnetic resonance
noci- /ˈnəʊsɪ/ prefix pain or injury
nociassociation /ˌnəʊsɪəˌsɛsɪˈɛʃən/ noun an unconscious release of nervous energy, e.g. in a result of shock
nociceptive /ˌnəʊsɪˈsɛptɪv/ adjective referring to nerves which carry pain to the brain
nociceptor /ˌnəʊsɪˈsɛptər/ noun a sensory nerve which carries pain to the brain
nocil /nɒkl/ prefix same as nocti-
nocile /ˈnɒkəli/ adverb at night. Opposite mane (NOTE: used on prescriptions)
nocil- /nɒkl/ prefix referring to night
nocuturia /ˈnɒkˈtjuərɪə/ noun the fact of passing an unusually large quantity of urine during the night
nocurnal /nɒkˈtɜːn(ə)l/ adjective referring to or taking place at night
nocurnal enuresis /nɒkˈtɜːn(ə)rɪəs/ noun the act of passing urine when asleep in bed at night. Also called bedwetting
nodal /nɒd(ə)l/ adjective referring to nodes
nodal tachycardia /nɒd(ə)l təˈkærdɪə/ noun a sudden attack of rapid heartbeats. Also called paroxysmal tachycardia
node /nɒd/ noun a small mass of tissue
node of Ranvier /nɒd av rənˈvriər/ noun one of a series of gaps in the myelin sheath surrounding a nerve fibre. See illustration at NEURODE in Supplement
nod off /nɒd əf/ verb to fall asleep (informal)
nodosum /nɒdəˈsʌm/ adj erythema nodosum
nodular /nɒdʒələr/ adjective formed of nodules
nodule /nɒdʒəl/ noun 1. a small node or group of cells. 2. Bohn's nodules 2, the anterior part of the inferior vermis
nomen proprium /nəˈmən prəˈprɪjərəm/ noun full form of n.p.
nom- /nɒm/ prefix not
non-absorbable suture /nɒnˌæbəˈræbl/ noun a suture made of a substance which cannot be absorbed into the body and which eventually has to be removed
non-accidental injury /nɒn əˈkɛnsəld/ noun an injury which is not caused accidentally
non-allergic /nɒn ˌæləˈrɪdʒɪk/ adjective not aggravating an allergy
non-compliance /nɒn kəmˈpləns/ noun the failure to take drugs at the correct times and in the dosages prescribed, or to take them at all
non comos mentis /nɒn kəˈmɒs ˈmɛntɪs/ adjective referring to a person who is mentally incapable of managing his or her own affairs (NOTE: From a Latin phrase meaning 'not of sound mind'.)
non-contagious /nɒn ˈkæntədʒiəs/ adjective not contagious
non-emergency surgery /nɒn ˈɛmərʒənsi ˈsɜːrˈjeɪʃən/ noun a surgical operation which does not need to be performed immediately because it is for a condition which is not life-threatening, e.g. joint replacement. Also called non-urgent surgery
non-Hodgkins lymphoma /nɒn ˈhɒdɡinz ˈlɪmfəmə/ noun a cancer of the lymph nodes which differs from Hodgkin's disease by the absence of a particular type of cell with double nuclei non-insulin-dependent diabetes /nɒn ˌɪnsjʊlɪn ˌdɪˈpændənt ˈdɪəbətɪs/ noun same as Type II diabetes mellitus
non-invasive /nɒn ɪnˈveɪzɪv/ adjective referring to treatment which does not involve entering the body by making an incision. ▶ invasive non-maleficence /nɒn ˈmæləfɪʃəns/ noun the concept that professionals in the health service have a duty to protect the patient from harm non-medical prescriber /nɒn ˈmedɪkəl prɪˈskriːbər/ noun a professional healthcare worker who prescribes medicine but is not a registered doctor or dentist
non-official drug /nɒn ˈɔːfɪʃəl ˈdrəɡ/ noun a drug that is not listed in the national pharmacopoeia. Compare official drug
non-palpable /nɒn ˈpælpəb(ə)l/ adjective not able to be felt when touched
non-secretor /nɒn ˈsekrɪtər/ noun a person who does not secrete substances indicating ABO blood group into mucous fluids such as semen or saliva
non-smoker /nɒn ˈsmɔːkər/ noun a person who does not smoke
non-specific /nɒn ˈspɛsɪfɪk/ adjective not caused by any single identifiable cause
non-specific urethritis /nɒn ˈspɛsɪfɪk jʊˈriːθrɪtɪs/ noun any sexually transmitted inflammation of the urethra not caused by gonorrhoea (dated) Abbreviation NSU
non-steroidal /nɒn ˌstɛrəˈɪdəl/ adjective not containing steroids
non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drug /nɒn ˌstɛrəˈɪdəl ən ˌtaɪˈmæntrəliənt ˈdrəɡ/ noun a drug used in the treatment of pain associated with inflammation, including rheumatic disease, post-operative analgesia and dysmenorrhoea, by inhibiting the release of prostaglandins. Abbreviation NSAID (NOTE: Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs have names ending in -fen: ibuprofen.)
non-union /nɒn ˈjuːnɪn/ noun a condition in which the two parts of a fractured bone do not join together and do not heal
non-urgent surgery 204

non-urgent surgery [n. ˌnɒn əˈdʒɜːnt ˈsʌrʒərɪ] same as non-emergency surgery

nosocomial [ˈnɔsəkəməl] noun a hormone secreted by the medulla of the adrenal glands which acts as a vasoconstrictor and is used to maintain blood pressure in shock, haemorrhage or hypotension.

normal [ˈnɔrəml] adjective usual, ordinary or conforming to a standard. After he took the tablet, his blood pressure went back to normal. Her temperature is two degrees above normal. Is it normal for a person with myopia to suffer from headaches?

normotic [ˈnɔrəmətɪk] adjective referring to blood pressure at the usual level.

Norton score /ˈnɔrtnərnˌskɔːr/ noun a scale for deciding how likely it is that pressure sores will develop, used mostly in assessing elderly patients.

nosebleed /ˈnəʊzbliːd/ noun an incident of bleeding from the nose, usually caused by a blow or by sneezing, by blowing the nose hard or by high blood pressure (informal). She had a headache, followed by a violent nosebleed. Also called epistaxis.

noseo- /ˈnɔsəʊ-/ prefix disease.

nosocomial /ˈnɔsəkəməl/ adjective referring to hospitals.

nosocomial infection /ˈnɔsəkəməl ɪnˈfekʃən/ noun an infection which is passed on to a person being treated in a hospital.

nosology /ˈnɔsəlɒdʒɪ/ noun the classification of diseases.

notch /ˈnɔtʃ/ noun a depression on a surface, usually on a bone, but sometimes on an organ. Cardiac notch.

notifiable disease /ˌnɔtɪfɪərəb(ə)l dɪˈzɑːsər/ noun a serious infectious disease which, in the UK, has to be reported by a doctor to the Department of Health so that steps can be taken to stop it spreading.

noxious /ˈnɒksəs/ adjective harmful. A noxious gas.

n.p. noun the name of the drug written on the label of its container.

NPO abbreviation used to refer to patients being kept without food. The patient should be kept NPO for five hours before the operation. Full form: not eaten before surgery.

NSAID abbreviation non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drug.

NSF /ˈnsf/ noun a long-term strategy for improving a specific area of healthcare across the UK. Full form: National Service Framework.

NSU abbreviation: non-specific urethritis.

nuchae /njuʃən/ plural noun same as nape (Note: The plural is nuchae.)

nuchal /ˈnjuʃkəl/ adjective referring to the back of the neck.

nuclear /ˈnjuːklər/ adjective referring to nuclei, e.g. of a cell or an atom.

nuclear magnetic resonance /ˈnjuːkləri ˈmæɡəstrik ˈrenəns/ noun a scanning technique using magnetic fields and radio waves which reveals abnormalities in soft tissue and body fluids. Magnetic resonance imaging. Abbreviation: NMR.

nuclear medicine /ˈnjuːklər ˈmiːdɪs(ə)n/ noun the use of radioactive substances for detecting and treating disorders.

nuclease /ˈnjuːklɪs/ noun an enzyme which breaks down nucleic acids.

nucleic acid /ˈnjuːklɪk/ noun an organic acid of a type found in all living cells, which consists of complex nucleotide chains which pass on genetic information, e.g. DNA or RNA.

nucleo- /ˈnjuːkləʊ-/ prefix referring to a cell or atomic nucleus.

nucleus /ˈnjuːklɪs/ noun 1. the central body in a cell, which contains DNA and RNA and controls the function and characteristics of the cell. See illustration at Neuron. In Supplement 2, a group of nerve cells in the brain or spinal cord. (Note: The plural is nuclei.)

nullipara /ˈnʌlɪpərə/ noun a woman who has never had a child. (Note: The plural is nulliparas or nulliparous). Nulliparae.

nulliparae [ˈnʌlɪpərəʊ] noun a woman who has never had a child.

nurse /nɜːs/ noun a person who looks after sick people in a hospital or helps a doctor in a local surgery. Some nurses may be trained to diagnose...
and treat patients. She works as a nurse in the local hospital. She’s training to be a nurse.

**noun**

nurse practitioner /nəs ˈprekfətrɪ/ noun a nurse with additional clinical training at degree level who often works independently, assessing, diagnosing and treating patients, particularly in primary care

nurse prescriber /nəs ˈprɛskrɪbər/ noun a nurse who is qualified and entitled to prescribe medicines for patients

nurse station /nəs ˈsteɪʃən/ noun an area in or near a ward from which nurses work, keep records and control the activities of the ward

nursing /nəsɪŋ/ noun 1. the work or profession of being a nurse. He has chosen nursing as his career. 2. care for sick people provided by a nurse.

nursing audit /nəs ɪŋ əˈdʌlt/ noun a formal detailed review of records or observation of nursing actions so that judgments can be made about the quality of nursing care being given

nursing dependency /nəs ɪŋ dɪˈpendənsi/ noun the extent to which a patient requires nursing care

nursing development unit /nəs ɪŋ dɪˈveləpmənt ˈjuːnɪt/ noun a nurse-led ward or unit that sets out to demonstrate by example innovative high-quality care, to reflect on practice and draw lessons from this experience, and to provide learning opportunities for other nurses.

nursing diagnosis /nəs ɪŋ dɪˈzaɪnəs/ noun an assessment of the nursing needs of a patient, which forms the basis of a subsequent care plan

nursing home /nəs ɪŋ ˈhəʊm/ noun a house where convalescents or dependent elderly people can live under medical supervision by a qualified nurse

nursing intervention /nəs ɪŋ ˈɪntərvenʃən/ noun the treatment of illness by nursing care, without surgery

nursing language /nəs ɪŋ ˈlæŋgwɪdʒ/ noun the standard terminology used in nursing

nursing model /nəs ɪŋ ˈmɛdl/ noun a set of stated principles about nursing which gives professionals a way of formulating a plan of care, assessing its success and addressing any problems which arise from it

nursing mother /nəs ɪŋ ˈmʌðər/ noun a mother who breast-feeds her baby

Nursing Officer /nəs ɪŋ ˈɒffɪs/ noun in the UK, a nurse employed by the Department of Health to assist the Chief Nursing Officer in providing professional advice to Ministers and policy makers

nursing practice /nəs ɪŋ ˈpræktɪs/ noun treatment given by nurses

nursing process /nəs ɪŋ ˈprəʊses/ noun a standard method of treatment and documentation of treatment carried out by nurses

nursing standard /nəs ɪŋ ˈstændərd/ noun an accepted level of achievement by which nursing care can be assessed or compared

nutrition /njuːˈtʃərən/ noun involuntary nodding of the head

nutrient /njuːˈtrɪənt/ noun a substance in food which is necessary to provide energy or to help the body grow, e.g. protein, fat or a vitamin

nutrition /njuːˈtrɪʃən/ noun the study of the supply of nutrients to the body from digesting food

nutritional /njuːˈtrɪʃənl/ adjective referring to nutrition

nyc-t/-nɪkt/ prefix night or darkness

nyctalopia /ˈnɪktələpɪə/ noun the condition of being unable to see in bad light. Also called night blindness

nyctophobia /ˈnɪktəfəbiə/ noun fear of the dark

nymphae /ˈnɪmfə/ plural noun same as labia minora

nympho-/ˈnɪmfəʊ/ prefix 1. female sexuality. 2. nymphae

nymphomania /ˈnɪmfəməniə/ noun an obsessive sexual urge in a woman (NOTE: A similar condition in a man is called satyriasis.)

nymphomaniac /ˈnɪmfəməniæk/ noun a woman who has an unusually obsessive sexual urge (NOTE: This term is regarded as offensive.)

nymstagmus /ˈnɪʃtægmaʊs/ noun a rapid, involuntary movement of the eyes up and down or from side to side

nystatin /ˈnɪstətɪn/ noun an anti-microbial drug used in the treatment of fungal infections, especially thrush
oat cell carcinoma /ˌɔt sel kærˈsɪnəmə/ noun a type of cancer of the bronchi, with distinctive small cells

OB abbreviation obstetrics

obese /ˈəʊz/ adjective so overweight as to be at risk of several serious illnesses, including diabetes and heart disease

obesity /ˈəʊzɪtɪs/ noun the condition of being seriously overweight

objective /əˈdʒektɪv/ noun an aim or goal

1. existing independently of any individual person’s mind
2. not influenced by any bias or prejudice caused by personal feelings

objecting to symptoms of illness which can be observed by somebody other than the person who is ill. Compare subjective

obligate /əˈblaɡeɪt/ adjective referring to an organism which exists and develops in only one way, e.g. a virus which is a parasite only inside cells

oblique /ˈɔbliːk/ adjective lying at an angle

oblique fissure /ˈɔbliːk ˈfɪʃə/ noun a groove between the superior and inferior lobes of a lung. See illustration at lungs in Supplement

oblique fracture /ˈɔbliːk ˈfʁæktʃə/ noun a fracture in which the bone is broken diagonally

oblique muscle /ˈɔbliːk ˈmʌskəl/ noun 1. each of two muscles in the wall of the abdomen 2. each of two muscles which control the movement of the eyeball

obliterans /ˈɔbliːtərəns/ • endarteritisobliterans

oblongata /ˌɔblɒŋətə/ • medullaoblongata

observable /əˈzɛrvəb(ə)l/ adjective which can be seen or measured

observation /ˌɒbˈzɛrvəʃ(ə)n/ noun the process of watching and examining a person or thing over a period of time

She was admitted to hospital for observation.

observation register /ˌɒbˈzɛrvəʃ(ə)nˌredʒɪstr/ noun a record of children who have had problems at birth, or soon after their birth, and so need particular follow-up care from a health visitor, general practitioner or social worker

observe /əˈzɔːv/ verb 1. to see something

The nurses observed signs of improvement in the patient’s condition. The girl’s mother observed symptoms of anorexia. 2. to watch a person or thing carefully in order to discover something

Observe the way in which the patient is lying. 3. to take something into account

You’re expected to observe the rules of conduct.

obsession /ˈəʊbˈʃɛʃ(ə)n/ noun a mental disorder in which a person has a fixed idea or emotion which he or she cannot get rid of, even if he or she knows it is wrong or unpleasant

She has an obsession about cats.

obessional /əˈbɛʃ(ə)nəl/ adjective referring to or having an obsession

He is suffering from an obsessional disorder.

obessive /əˈbɛsɪv/ adjective having or showing an obsession

He has an obsessive desire to steal little objects.

obessive action /əˈbɛsɪv ˈækʃən/ noun an action such as washing which is repeated over and over again and indicates a mental disorder

obessive-compulsive disorder /əˈbɛsɪv ˈkɒmpʌlsɪv ˈdɪsərdər/ noun a mental disorder characterised by the need to perform repeated ritual acts such as checking or cleaning, which can be treated with psychotherapy and antidepressants. Abbreviation OCD

obstetrical forceps /ˈɒbˌstɛtrɪkl ˈfɔːrsIPS/ plural noun a type of large forceps used to hold a baby’s head during childbirth

obstetrician /ˌɒbstaˈtrɪʃ(ə)n/ noun a doctor who specialises in obstetrics

obstetrics /ˌɔbˌstɛtrɪks/ noun a branch of medicine and surgery dealing with pregnancy, childbirth and the period immediately after childbirth. Abbreviation OB

obstipation /ˌɒbˈstɪpeɪʃ(ə)n/ noun severe constipation, often caused by a blockage in the intestines

obstruction /ˌɒbˈstrʌkʃ(ə)n/ noun something which blocks a passage or a blood vessel

obstructive /əˈbstrʌktɪv/ adjective caused by an obstruction

obstructive jaundice /ˌɑbˌstrʌktɪv ˈdʒɔːndɪs/ noun jaundice caused by an obstruc-
tion of the bile ducts. Also called posthepatic jaundice, acholelithic jaundice, icterus gravis neonatorum

obstructive lung disease /o'brektive 'lu:n di'si:z/ noun bronchitis and emphysema

obstructive sleep apnoea /o'brektive 'spi:l 'epno:ea/ noun the stopping of breathing, or difficulty in breathing, during sleep, resulting in loud snoring

obturation /ob'tju:reʃən/ noun the act of obstructing a body passage, or the state of a body passage when it is obstructed, e.g. by hard faeces

obturating /o'bju:treitɪŋ/ adjective referring to one of two muscles in the pelvis which govern the movement of the hip and thigh

obturator foramen /o'bju:treitərərə for'əmən/ noun an opening in the hip bone near the acetabulum. See illustration at PELVIS in Supplement (NOTE: The plural is obturator foramina.)

obtusion /o'bju:ʒu:n/ noun a condition in which perception and feelings become dulled

OC abbreviation oral contraceptive

cellular /o'sipət(ə)l/ adjective referring to the back of the head

cellulitis /o'sipəlijətɪs/ noun a condition of the skin, usually caused by bacteria

cellulitis of the breast /o'sipələtɪs oʊvər 'brest/ noun an inflammation of the breast caused by bacteria or fungi

occupancy rate /əkˈɔpənsi ret/ noun the number of beds occupied in a hospital, shown as a percentage of all the beds

occupational /əkˈɔpəʃənəl/ adjective referring to work

occupational asthma /əkˈɔpəʃənəl 'æstəma/ noun asthma caused by materials with which people come into contact at work

occupational dermatitis /əkˈɔpəʃənəl 'dərəmatətɪs/ noun dermatitis caused by materials touched at work

occupational disease /əkˈɔpəʃənəl di'zi:s/ noun a disease which is caused by the type of work a person does or the conditions in which a person works, e.g. a disease caused by dust or chemicals in a factory

occupational hazard /əkˈɔpəʃənəl 'hæzəd/ noun a dangerous situation related to the working environment

occupational health nurse /əkˈɔpəʃənəl 'hæθnəs/ noun a nurse who deals with health problems of people at work. Abbreviation OH nurse

occupational medicine /əkˈɔpəʃənəl 'mɛdərənəl/ noun the branch of medicine concerned with accidents and diseases connected with work

occupational therapist /əkˈɔpəʃənəl 'θerəpiəst/ noun a qualified health professional who offers patients occupational therapy

occupational therapy /əkˈɔpəʃənəl 'θerəpi/ noun light work or hobbies used as a means of treatment, especially for physically challenged or mentally ill people, to promote independence during the recovery period after an illness or operation

OCD abbreviation obsessive-compulsive disorder

oc-t /ɵkt/ prefix same as octo- (used before vowels)

oc-te /ɵkti, 'octə/ -octa- /-əktə/ prefix eight

ocular /ɵkjuˈlər/ adjective referring to the eye

Opticians are trained to detect all kinds of ocular imbalance.

ocular dominance /ɵkjuˈlər ˈdəmnəns/ noun a condition in which a person uses one eye more than the other

ocular prosthesis /ɵkjuˈlər ˌprəʊθiˈsiːs/ noun a false eye

oculist /ɵkjuˈlist/ noun a qualified physician or surgeon who specializes in the treatment of eye disorders

oculo /ɵkjuˈlaʊ/ prefix eye

oculomotor /ɵkjuˈmoʊtər/ noun a nerve which controls the movements of the eyeball

oculomotor nerve /ɵkjuˈmoʊtər ,nəʊvərn/ noun the third cranial nerve which controls the eyeballs and eyelids.
oculonasal /ˌɒkjʊləˈneɪzəl/ adjective referring to both the eye and the nose

oculophthalmoscopy /ˌɒkjʊlə,fθæləmˈsɔpi/ noun measurement of the pressure inside the eyeball

OD /əd/ abbreviation overdose

O.D. /əd/ abbreviation written on a prescription every day.

Full form omni die ▶ abbreviation overdose

ODA abbreviation operating department assistant

odont- /ˌɒdənt/ prefix same as odonto- (used before vowels)

odonto- /ˌɒdəntəʊ/ prefix tooth

odontoid /ˌɒdəntˈoid/ adjective similar to a tooth, especially in shape

odontoid process /ˌɒdəntˈɔʊɪd ˈprɔʊsəs/ noun a projecting part of a vertebra, shaped like a tooth

odontology /ˌɒdəntəˈlɒdʒi/ noun the study of teeth and associated structures, and their disorders

odyne- /ˌɒdnɪə/ prefix same as dyneo- (used before vowels)

odynia /ˌɒdnəˈsi/ suffix pain

odyno- /ˌɒdnəʊ/ prefix pain

odynophagia /ˌɒdənəˈfædʒiə/ noun a condition in which pain occurs when food is swallowed

oedema /ˈɔɪdəmə/ noun the swelling of part of the body caused by accumulation of fluid in the intercellular tissue spaces. Her main problem is oedema of the feet. Also called dropsy.

Oedipus complex /ˌɔɪdɪpəs ˈkɒmplɛks/ noun (in Freudian psychology) a condition in which a boy feels sexually attracted to his mother and sees his father as an obstacle

oedematous /ˌɔɪdəˈmetəs/ adjective referring to oedema (NOTE: The US spelling is edematous.)

Oedipus complex /ˌɔɪdɪpəs ˈkɒmplɛks/ noun (in Freudian psychology) a condition in which a boy feels sexually attracted to his mother and sees his father as an obstacle

Oedipus complex /ˌɔɪdɪpəs ˈkɒmplɛks/ noun (in Freudian psychology) a condition in which a boy feels sexually attracted to his mother and sees his father as an obstacle

oesophagocyst /ˈɔsəfægəʊsɪst/ noun a cylindrical pouch forming part of the oesophagus

oesophagus /ˈɔsəfægəs/ noun the tube which food passes from the pharynx to the stomach

OES /ˈeɪ ik/ abbreviation operative department assistant

oesophagitis /ˌɔsəfæɡəˈtaɪtɪs/ noun inflammation of the oesophagus, caused by acid juices from the stomach or by infection

oesophageal /ˌɔsəfæˈgəl/ adjective referring to the oesophagus (NOTE: The US spelling is esophageal.)

oesophagectomy /ˌɔsəfæˈɡətəmɪ/ noun a surgical operation to remove part of the oesophagus (NOTE: The plural is oesophagectomies.)

oesophago- /ˌɔsəfæˈɡəʊ/ prefix oesophagus

oesophagogastroduodenoscopy /ˌɔsəfæˈɡəʊɡæstrəˈduədənəskəpi/ noun a surgical operation in which a tube is put down into the oesophagus so that the doctor can examine it, the stomach and the duodenum. Abbreviation: OGD (NOTE: The plural is oesophagogastroduodenoscopies.)

oesophagojenostomy /ˌɔsəfæˈɡɔʊdʒənəstəmi/ noun a surgical operation to create a junction between the jejunum and the oesophagus after the stomach has been removed (NOTE: The plural is oesophagojenostomies.)

oesophagoscopy /ˌɔsəfæˈɡɔʊskəpi/ noun an examination of the oesophagus with an oesophagoscope (NOTE: The plural is oesophagoscopy.

oesophagogastroduodenoscopy /ˌɔsəfæˈɡəʊɡæstrəˈduədənəskəpi/ noun a surgical operation to remove part of the oesophagus (NOTE: The US spelling is esophagectomy)

oesophago- /ˌɔsəfæˈɡəʊ/ prefix oesophagus

oesophagoscope /ˌɔsəfæˈɡɔʊskəpi/ noun a thin tube with a light at the end, which is passed down the oesophagus to examine it

oesophagogastroduodenoscopy /ˌɔsəfæˈɡəʊɡæstrəˈduədənəskəpi/ noun an examination of the oesophagus with an oesophagoscope (NOTE: The plural is oesophagoscopy.

oesophagogastroduodenoscopy /ˌɔsəfæˈɡəʊɡæstrəˈduədənəskəpi/ noun a surgical operation to create a junction between the jejunum and the oesophagus after the stomach has been removed (NOTE: The plural is oesophagojenostomies.)

oesophagogastric /ˌɔsəfæˈɡɔʊɡæstrɪk/ adjective referring to the oesophagus and the stomach

oesophagogastroduodenoscopy /ˌɔsəfæˈɡəʊɡæstrəˈduədənəskəpi/ noun a surgical operation to remove part of the oesophagus (NOTE: The US spelling is esophagectomy)

oesophagogastric /ˌɔsəfæˈɡɔʊɡæstrɪk/ adjective referring to the oesophagus and the stomach

oesophago- /ˌɔsəfæˈɡəʊ/ prefix oesophagus

oesophagogastric /ˌɔsəfæˈɡɔʊɡæstrɪk/ adjective referring to the oesophagus and the stomach

OESD abbreviation oesophagogastroduodenoscopy
semen in which there are too few spermatozoa in the
oligospermia ovulation which does not occur as often as is
consequently oligomenorrhea, oligomenorrhoea noun a curved projecting part at the end of the ulna at the elbow, which
gives rise to a painful tingling sensation if hit by accident. Also called funny bone
oleic /əˈliːk/ adjective referring to oil
oleic acid /əˈliːk ˈæsɪd/ noun a fatty acid which is present in most oils
oleo-/əˈliːəʊ/ prefix oil
 oleum /əˈliːəm/ noun oil (used in pharmacy)
olfaction /ˈəlfækʃən/ noun 1. the sense of smell 2. the way in which a person's sensory organs detect smells
olfactory /ˈəlfæktrɪ/ adjective referring to the sense of smell
olfactory nerve /ˈəlfæktrɪ nɜːv/ noun the first cranial nerve which controls the sense of smell
 olig- /ˈɔlɪɡ/ prefix same as oligo- (used before vowels)
 oligemia /ɔˈlɪdʒiəm/ noun a condition in which a person has too little blood in his or her circulatory system (NOTE: The US spelling is oligemia.)
 oligo-/əˈlɪɡoʊ/ prefix few or little
 oligodactylism /əˈlɪɡoʊˈdæktɪlɪz/ noun a congenital condition in which a baby is born without some fingers or toes
 oligodipsia /ˌoʊlɪˈɡɒdɪpsɪə/ noun a condition in which a person does not want to drink
 oligodontia /ˌoʊlɪˈɡɒdəntɪə/ noun a state in which most of the teeth are lacking
 oligohydranmios /ˌoʊlɪˈɡɒhɔɪdrənmɪə/ noun a condition in which the amnion surrounding the fetus contains too little amniotic fluid
 oligomenorrhoea /ˌoʊlɪˈɡɒmənəˈrəʊə/ noun a condition in which a person menstruates infrequently (NOTE: The US spelling is oligomenorrhea.)
 oligo-ovulation /ˌoʊlɪˈɡɒˌəʊvjuˈleɪʃən/ noun ovulation which does not occur as often as is usual
 oligospermia /ˌoʊlɪˈɡɒsərˈpɜrmiə/ noun a condition in which there are too few spermatozoa in the semen
 oliguria /ˌoʊlɪˈɡɪəriə/ noun a condition in which a person does not produce enough urine
-ology /əˈlɑːdʒiə/ suffix area of study
-olol /əˈlɑːl/ suffix beta blocker  atenolol  propranolol hydrochloride
 o.m. adverb (written on a prescription) every morning. Full form omni mane
 om-/ʌm/ prefix relating to the shoulder
 o-ma /ˈoʊmə/ suffix tumour
 oment- /əˈment/ prefix omentum
 omenta plural of omentum
 omental /əˈmentəl/ adjective referring to the omentum
 omentum /əˈmentəm/ noun a double fold of peritoneum hanging down over the intestines. Also called epiploon (NOTE: The plural is omenta. For other terms referring to the omentum see words beginning with epipo-.)
 omeprazole /əˈmoʊprəzɔʊl/ noun a drug which reduces the amount of acid released in the stomach, used in the treatment of ulcers and heartburn
 omphal- /əˈmफ़əl/ prefix same as omphalo- (used before vowels)
 omphalitis /əmˈfələtɪs/ noun inflammation of the navel
 omphalocele /əmˈfələsəl/ noun a hernia in which part of the intestine protrudes through the abdominal wall near the navel
 omphalus /əmˈfələs/ noun a scar with a depression in the middle of the abdomen where the umbilical cord was detached after birth. Also called navel, umbilicus (NOTE: The plural is omphali.)
 omycin /əˈmʌsərən/ suffix macrolide drug ○ erythromycin
 o.n. adverb (written on a prescription) every night. Full form omni nocte
 onco-/ənˈkɑːkəʊ/ prefix tumour
 oncogene /ənˈsɪkədʒen/ noun a part of the genetic system which causes malignant tumours to develop
 oncogenesis /ənˈsɪkədʒənəsis/ noun the origin and development of a tumour
 oncogenic /ənˈsɪkədʒənɪk/ adjective causing tumours to develop ○ an oncogenic virus
 oncologist /ənˈsɪkəlɑːdʒɪst/ noun a doctor who specialises in oncology, especially cancer
 oncology /ənˈsɪkəlɑːdʒi/ noun the scientific study of new growths, especially cancers
 oncometer /ənˈkɑːmətər/ noun 1. an instrument for measuring swelling in an arm or leg using changes in their blood pressure 2. an instrument for measuring the variations in size of the kidney and other organs of the body
ondansetron /ˌɒndænˈsetrən/ noun a drug which helps to prevent the production of serot- onin, used to control nausea and vomiting caused by drug treatment and radiotherapy for cancer

onych/o-n/ prefix same as onycho- (used before vowels)

onych/o-sis /ˌɒnɪkˈəʊsɪs/ noun a condition in which a nail becomes separated from its bed, without falling out

onych/o-ma-desis /ˌɒnɪkˈəʊmədəsɪs/ noun a condition in which the nails fall out

onych/o/my-kosis /ˌɒnɪkˈəʊməkəʊsɪs/ noun an infection of a nail with a fungus

ooocyte /ˈʌʊəʊsɪt/ noun a cell which forms from an oogonium and becomes an ovum by meiosis

ooocyte donation /ˈʌʊəʊsɪt ˈdɑːnəʃən/ noun the transfer of oocytes from one woman to another who cannot produce her own, so that she can have a baby. The oocytes are removed in a laparoscopy and fertilised in vitro.

oo/genesis /ˈʌʊədʒiˈnɛsɪs/ noun the formation and development of ova

COMMENT: In oogenesis, an oogonium produces an oocyte, which develops through several stages to produce a mature ovum. Polar bodies are also formed which do not develop into ova.

ophor/o- /ˈʌfərəʊ/ prefix same as ophoro- (used before vowels)

ophore /ˈʌfərəʊ/ noun same as ovary

ophorectomy /ˌʌfərɪˈɛktaʊmɪ/ noun a surgical operation to remove an ovary. Also called ovariecctomy (NOTE: The plural is ophorectomies.)

ophoritis /ˌʌfərəˈrɪtɪs/ noun inflammation in an ovary, which can be caused by mumps. Also called ovaritis

ophoro- /ˈʌfərəʊ/ prefix ovary

ophorocystectomy /ˌʌfərəʊˌsɪstəˈtɛktaʊmɪ/ noun a surgical operation to remove an ovarian cyst. (NOTE: The plural is ophorocystectomies.)

ophorocystosis /ˌʌfərəʊˌsɪstəˈsɪtəsɪs/ noun the development of one or more ovarian cysts

ophoron /ˌʌfərərəʊn/ noun same as ovary (technical) (NOTE: The plural is ophorona.)

ophoporopexy /ˌʌfərəˈpɑːpɛksɪ/ noun a surgical operation to attach an ovary (NOTE: The plural is ophoporopexies.)

ophorosalpingectomy /ˌʌfərəˌsɔːlˈpɪŋktɛktaʊmɪ/ noun a surgical operation to remove an ovary and the Fallopian tube attached to it (NOTE: The plural is ophorosalpingectomies.)

op /ɒp/ noun an operation (informal)

op abbreviation outpatient

opacification /ˌɒpəˈsɪfɪkʃən/ noun the fact of becoming opaque, as the lens does in a case of cataract

opacity /ˌɒpəˈsɪtɪ/ noun the fact of not allowing light to pass through

opaque /ˌɒpəˈkɛɪk/ adjective not allowing light to pass through

operant conditioning /ˌɒpərənt ˈkændɪʃən/ noun a form of learning which takes place when a piece of spontaneous behaviour is either reinforced by a reward or discouraged by punishment

operating department assistant /ˌɒpərətɪŋ dɪˈpɑːtmaʊnt əˈsɪstənt/ noun a person who works in an operating department. Abbreviation ODA

operating microscope /ˌɒpərətɪŋ ˌmɪskrəʊˈskɪp/ noun a special microscope with two eyepieces and a light, used in very delicate surgery

operating table /ˌɒpərətɪŋ ˈteɪbl/ noun a special table on which the patient is placed to undergo a surgical operation

operating theatre /ˌɒpərətɪŋ ˈθɛətər/ noun a special room in a hospital, where surgical operations are carried out (NOTE: The US term is operating room).

operation /ˌɒpəˈreɪʃən/ noun 1. a surgical procedure carried out to repair or remove a damaged body part. 2. She’s had an operation on her foot. (NOTE: A surgeon performs or carries out an operation on a patient.)

ophthalm/o/- /ˈɒfθəlməʊ/ prefix eye

ophthalm/o- /ˈɒfθəlməʊ/ prefix same as ophthalm/o- (used before vowels)

ophthalmectomy /ˌɒfθəlməˈkjʊmɪ/ noun a surgical operation to remove an eye (NOTE: The plural is ophthalmectomies.)

ophthalmia /ˌɒfθəlmɪə/ noun an inflammation of the eye

ophthalmia neonatorum /ˌɒfθəlmɪə ˌnɪənətəˈrəm/ noun conjunctivitis of a newborn baby, beginning 21 days after birth, caused by infection in the birth canal

ophthalmic /ˌɒfθəlmɪk/ adjective referring to the eye

ophthalmic nerve /ˌɒfθəlmɪk ˈnɜːrv/ noun a branch of the trigeminal nerve, supplying the eyeball, the upper eyelid, the brow and one side of the scalp

ophthalmic optiman /ˌɒfθəlmɪk ˈɒptɪmən/ noun a surgeon who specialises in surgery to treat eye disorders
ophthalmitis /ˈɔfθəlmətɪs/ noun inflammation of the eye
ophthamo- /ˈɔfθəlməʊˌ, ˈɔfθəlməʊ/ prefix eye or eyeball
ophthalmological /ˌɔfθəlməˈlɒdʒɪk/ adjective referring to ophthalmology
ophthalmologist /ˈɔfθəlməˈlɒdʒɪst/ noun a doctor who specialises in the study of the eye and its diseases. Also called eye specialist
ophthalmology /ˈɔfθəlmələdʒi/ noun the study of the eye and its diseases
ophthalmoplegia /ˈɔfθəlməˈplɪkdʒə/ noun paralysis of the muscles of the eye
ophthalmoscope /ˈɔfθəlməskəʊps/ noun an instrument containing a bright light and small lenses, used by a doctor to examine the inside of an eye
ophthalmoscopy /ˌɔfθəlməsˈkɒpi/ noun an examination of the inside of an eye using an ophthalmoscope (NOTE: The plural is ophthalmoscopies.)
ophthalmotomy /ˈɔfθəlmətəmə/ noun a surgical operation to make a cut in the eyeball (NOTE: The plural is ophthalmotomies.)
ophthalmotonometer /ˌɔfθəlmətəˈnɒmtər/ noun an instrument which measures pressure inside the eye
-opia /ˈəpɪə/ suffix eye condition
opiate /ˈɔpɪtɪk/ noun a sedative which is prepared from opium, e.g. morphine or codeine
opistho- /ˈɒpɪsthoʊ/ prefix backbone
opisthotonos /ˌɒpɪsthoʊˈnɒsəs/ noun a spasm of the body in which the spine is arched backwards, occurring, e.g., in people with tetanus
opium /ˈɒpiəm/ noun a substance made from poppies which is used in the preparation of codeine and heroin
opponens /ˈɒpənənz/ noun one of a group of muscles which control the movements of the fingers, especially one which allows the thumb and little finger to come together
opportunist /ˈɔpərətɪst/ noun, opportunistic /ˈɔpərətnɪstɪk/ adjective referring to a parasite or microorganism which takes advantage of the host’s weakened state to cause infection
sonic index /sɒnɪk/ INDEX noun a number which gives the strength of an individual’s serum reaction to bacteria
sonin /ˈsɒnɪn/ noun a substance, usually an antibody, in blood which sticks to the surface of bacteria and helps to destroy them
optic /ˈɔptɪk/ adjective referring to the eye or to sight
-optical /ˈɔptɪkəl/ adjective 1. same as optic 2. relating to the visible light spectrum
optical fibre /ˈɔptɪkəl/ fibre noun an artificial fibre which can carry light or images
opportunism /ˌɔpətroʊˈnɪzəm/ noun the policy of taking advantage of a situation to gain an advantage or benefit
orpheus /ɒrˈpiːəs/ noun Orpheus, a Greek musician who had the power to charm the animals and the dead back to life
organ /ˈɔɡrən/ noun one of the main parts of the body that work together to keep the body healthy
organism /ˈɔɡrənɪzm/ noun an organism which is made up of many cells
organ to organ /ˈɔɡrəntuˈɔɡrənt/ adjective referring to the passage from one organ to another
organism /ˈɔɡrənɪzm/ noun a living thing which is made up of many cells
organ transplant /ˈɔɡrəntuˈɔɡrənt/ noun a procedure in which an organ from one person is transplanted into another person
organic /ˈɔɡrənɪk/ adjective 1. relating to something made of living things
oral /ˈɔːrəl/ adjective 1. referring to the mouth 2. referring to medication that is swallowed ○ an oral contraceptive Compare enteral, parenteral
oral cavity /ˈɔːrəl kævɪti/ noun the mouth
oral contraceptive /ˈɔːrəl kəntrəˈkɔrtɪv/ noun a contraceptive pill which is swallowed
oral hygiene /ˈɔːrəl haɪˈdʒiːn/ noun the practice of keeping the mouth clean by gargling and mouthwashes
orally /ˈɔːrəl/ adverb by swallowing ○ not to be taken orally
oral medication /ˈɔːrəl mɛdˈkeɪʃən/ noun medication which is taken by swallowing
oral rehydration therapy /ˈɔːrəl rɪˈhɛtər/ noun the administration of a simple glucose and electrolyte solution to treat acute diarrhoea, particularly in children, which has greatly reduced the number of deaths from dehydration. Abbreviation ORT
oral thermometer /ˈɔːrəl ˈθɛməʊmətər/ noun a thermometer which is put into the mouth to take someone’s temperature
noun

plant, animal, bacterium, fungus or other living
ular purpose

organisation or more organs of the body

disorder associated with physical changes in one
organic disease

organisms in the body

organic

organisation, e.g. the liver, an eye or ovaries

organ

person's ability to perform self-care, defined as
modern model for nursing which focuses on a
Orem's model

sensation of weight

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orchidopexy

orchidectomy

operation to place an undescended testis in the
orchidectomy

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orchidectomies

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osteochondritis dissecans
condition where pieces of articular cartilage become detached from the joint surface
osteochondrosis /ɔstɪkˈɒndrərəs/ noun a disorder of cartilage and bone formation which affects the joints in children, causing pain and a limp, probably due to circulation disturbances to that part of the bone
osteoclast /ˈɒstɪsklæst/ noun a cell which destroys bone
osteocyte /ˈɒstɪsəʊt/ noun a bone cell
osteogenesis /ˌɒstɪˌdʒɛnəsɪs/ noun same as ossification
osteogenesis imperfecta /ˌɒstɪˌdʒɛnəsɪs impˈpɛfkərə/ noun a congenital condition in which bones become soft and break easily due to unusual bone formation. Also called brittle bone disease
osteology /ɒstˈɒlədʒi/ noun the study of bones and their structure
osteolysis /ɒstˈɒləsɪs/ noun destruction of bone tissue by osteoclasts
osteolytic /ˌɒstɪˌlətɪk/ adjective referring to osteolysis
osteoma /ˌɒstɪˈəʊmə/ noun a benign tumour in a bone (NOTE: The plural is osteomas or osteomata.)
osteomalacia /ˌɒstɪˈmələsɪʃə/ noun a condition in adults in which the bones become soft because of lack of calcium and Vitamin D, or limited exposure to sunlight
osteomyelitis /ˌɒstɪˈməʊliətɪs/ noun inflammation of the interior of bone, especially the marrow spaces
osteon /ˈɒstɪən/ noun same as Haversian system
osteopath /ˌɒstɪˈθeɪp/ noun a person who practises osteopathy
osteopathy /ˌɒstɪˈθeɪpi/ noun 1. the treatment of disorders by massage and manipulation of joints 2. any disease of bone (NOTE: The plural is osteopathies.)
osteopetrosis /ˌɒstɪˈpətrəsɪs/ noun a disease of a group in which bones increase in density. Also called marble bone disease
osteophyte /ˌɒstɪˈsəʊft/ noun a bony growth
osteoplasty /ˌɒstɪˈplæstɪ/ noun plastic surgery on bones
osteoporosis /ˌɒstɪˌpərəsɪs/ noun a condition in which the bones become thin, porous and brittle, due to low levels of oestrogen, lack of calcium and lack of physical exercise. Also called brittle bone disease
osteosarcoma /ˌɒstɪˌsərˈkəmə/ noun a malignant tumour of bone cells (NOTE: The plural is osteosarcomas or osteosarcomata.)
osteosclerosis /ˌɒstɪˌskləˈsɜrəs/ noun a condition in which the bony spaces become hardened as a result of persistent inflammation
osteotome /ˈɒstɪˌtəʊm/ noun a type of chisel used by surgeons to cut bone
osteotomy /ˌɒstɪˈtəʊmɪ/ noun a surgical operation to cut a bone, especially to relieve pain in a joint (NOTE: The plural is osteotomies.)
ostium /ˈɒstɪjʊm/ noun an opening into a passage (NOTE: The plural is ostia.)
-ostomy /ˌɒstɪˈməʊ/ suffix operation to make an opening
OT abbreviation occupational therapist
ot- /ɒt/ prefix same as oto- (used before vowel)
ota gia /ouˈtældʒə/ noun same as earache
OTC abbreviation referring to medication which can be bought freely at a chemist’s shop, and does not need a prescription. Full form over the counter
OTC drug /ˈɒtɪk/ adjective referring to the ear
otitis /ˌɒtɪˈtɪtɪs/ noun inflammation of the ear
otitis externa /ˌɒtɪˈtɪtɪs ɪkˈstreɪnə/ noun inflammation of the external auditory meatus to the eardrum
otitis interna /ˌɒtɪˈtɪtɪs ɪnˈtɜrnə/ noun inflammation of the inner ear. Also called labyrinthitis
otitis media /ˌɒtɪˈtɪtɪs ˈmiːdɪə/ noun an infection of the middle ear, usually accompanied by headaches and fever. Also called middle ear infection.
ympathitis
oto- /ˌɒtəʊ/ prefix ear
otolaryngology /ˌɒtələˈrɪŋɡələdʒi/ noun a doctor who specialises in treatment of diseases of the ear and throat
otolaryngology /ˌɒtələˈrɪŋɡədʒi/ noun the study of diseases of the ear and throat
otolith /ˌɒtələʊθ/ noun a stone which forms in the inner ear
otolith organ /ˌɒtələʊθ ˈɔrgən/ noun one of two pairs of sensory organs in the inner ear, the saccule and the utricle, which pass information to the brain about the position of the head
otолог /ˌɒtələʊdʒi/ noun a doctor who specialises in the study of the ear
otology /ˌɒtələdʒi/ noun the scientific study of the ear and its diseases
-otomy /ˈɒtəmɪ/ suffix an act of cutting into an organ or part of the body in a surgical operation
otoplasty /ˌɒtəˈplæstɪ/ noun plastic surgery of the external ear to repair damage or deformity
otohinolaryngologist /ˌɒtəˈhɪnləˈrɪŋɡələdʒɪ/ noun a doctor who specialises in the study of the ear, nose and throat
otohinolaryngology /ˌɒtəˈhɪnləˈrɪŋɡə/ noun the study of the ear, nose and throat. Also called ENT
ovaries /ɔvərəri-/ noun the organs which release the female hormone oestrogen. Also called ovarian follicles.

ovariotomies /ɒvərəɪˈtɒmɪz/ noun the surgical removal of one or both ovaries.

ovarian /ɒvərərɪən/ adjective relating to the ovaries.

ovulation /ˌɒvərəˈleɪʃən/ noun the discharge of an ovum from the ovaries, especially in the menstrual cycle. After ovulation, the cells that line the inside of the ovary form a structure called the corpus luteum.

ovulatory /ˌɒvərəˈrɪətəri-/ adjective describing a condition in which ovulation occurs regularly.

ovulate /ˈɑvələt/ verb to release an egg from the ovaries during ovulation.

ovarian cancer /ˌɒvərərɪən ˈkænsər/ noun a malignant tumour of the ovary, which can spread to other parts of the body.

ovarian cyst /ˌɒvərərɪən ˈsɪst/ noun a cyst that develops in the ovaries.

ovarian cancer /ˌɒvərərɪən ˈkænsər/ noun a malignant tumour of the ovary, which can spread to other parts of the body.

ovarian cycle /ˌɒvərərɪən ˈsɪkl/ noun the regular changes in the ovary during a woman’s reproductive life.

ovarian follicle /ˌɒvərərɪən ˈfolɪkl/ noun a cell which contains an ovum. Also called Graafian follicle.

ovariectomy /ˌɒvərərɪətəmri/ noun the surgical removal of one or both ovaries.

ovariolysis /ˌɒvərərɪəlɪsɪs/ noun the process by which an ovary is removed.

ovariotomy /ˌɒvərərɪətəmri/ noun a surgical procedure to remove an ovary or a tumour in an ovary.

ovariotomy /ˌɒvərərɪətəmri/ noun a surgical procedure to remove an ovary or a tumour in an ovary.

ovaritis /ˌɒvərəˈrɪtɪs/ noun an inflammation of the ovaries.

ovary /ˈɒvərɪ/ noun one of a pair of organs in a woman which produce ova or egg cells and secrete the female hormone oestrogen. Also called ovary.

ovariocele /ˌɒvərərɪəˈsɛl/ noun a mass of ovarian tissue that protrudes through the ovary.

over-otoxin /ˈoʊvərɪˌtoʊkˈsɪn/ noun an allergen that causes an allergic reaction in the body.

overburden /ˈoʊvərˈbɜrnd/ verb to overload or overburden something or someone.

overflow incontinence /ˌoʊvəˈfləʊr ɪnˈkənˈtɪnəns/ noun a condition where urine leaks from the bladder because the bladder is too full.

overflowing incontinence /ˌoʊvəˈfləʊrɪŋ ɪnˈkənˈtɪnəns/ noun a condition where urine leaks from the bladder because the bladder is too full.

overcompensation /ˌoʊvərˈkɒmpəˌzeɪʃən/ noun an excessive response to a stimulus or situation.

overdose /ˌoʊvərˈdəʊs/ verb to take in too much of a drug or medication.

overdose /ˌoʊvərˈdəʊs/ verb to take in too much of a drug or medication.

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overdose /ˌo
ovulation /ˌʌvəˈleɪʃən/ noun the release of an ovum from the mature ovarian follicle into the Fallopian tube

ovum /ˈɒvəm/ noun a female egg cell which, when fertilised by a spermatozoon, begins to develop into an embryo (NOTE: The plural is ova. For other terms referring to ova, see words beginning with oo-)

-oaxacin /ˌoʊkˈsæsɪn/ suffix quinolone drug ◦ ciprofloxacin

oxidase /ˌɒksɪdəs/ noun an enzyme which encourages oxidation by removing hydrogen. ◦ monoamine oxidase

oxidation /ˌɒksɪˈdeɪʃən/ noun the action of making oxides by combining with oxygen or removing hydrogen

oximeter /ˌɒksɪˈmɪtər/ noun an instrument which measures the amount of oxygen in something, especially in blood

oxybutynin /ˌɒksɪˈbjuːtɪn/ noun a drug which reduces the need to pass urine

oxycephalic /ˌɒksɪˈsɛfəlɪk/ adjective referring to oxycephaly

oxycephaly /ˌɒksɪˈsɛfəlɪ/ adjective a condition in which the skull is shaped into a point, with exophthalmos and poor sight. Also called turicephaly

oxygene /ˌɒksɪˈdʒiːn/ noun a chemical element that is a common colourless gas which is present in the air and essential to human life (NOTE: The chemical symbol is O.)

oxygcnate /ˌɒksɪˈɡɛnət/ verb to combine blood with oxygen (NOTE: oxygenating – oxygcnated)

oxygcnated blood /ˌɒksɪˈɡɛnətɪd ˈblʌd/ noun blood which has received oxygen in the lungs and is being carried to the tissues along the arteries. Also called arterial blood. Compare deoxygcnated blood (NOTE: Oxygenated blood is brighter red than venous deoxygcnated blood)

oxygcnation /ˌɒksɪˈɡɛnəˈʃən/ noun the fact of becoming combined or filled with oxygen ◦ Blood is carried along the pulmonary artery to the lungs for oxygcnation.

oxygcnator /ˌɒksɪˈɡɛnətər/ noun a machine which puts oxygen into the blood, used as an artificial lung in surgery

oxygcn cylinder /ˌɒksɪˈdʒən ˈsɪlɪndər/ noun a heavy metal tube which contains oxygen and is connected to a patient’s oxygen mask

oxygcn mask /ˌɒksɪˈdʒən ˈmaʊsk/ noun a mask connected to a supply of oxygen, which can be put over the face to help someone with breathing difficulties

oxygcn tent /ˌɒksɪˈdʒən ˈtent/ noun a type of cover put over a person so that he or she can breathe in oxygen

oxygcn therapy /ˌɒksɪˈdʒən ˈθerəpi/ noun any treatment involving the administering of oxygen, e.g. in an oxygen tent or in emergency treatment for heart failure

oxyghemoglobin /ˌɒksɪˈhehməˌɡloʊbən/ noun a compound of haemoglobin and oxygen, which is the way oxygen is carried in arterial blood from the lungs to the tissues. ◦ haemoglobin (NOTE: The US spelling is oxyhemoglobin.)

oxyntic /ˌɒkˈsɪntɪk/ adjective referring to glands and cells in the stomach which produce acid

oxyntic cell /ˌɒkˈsɪntɪk ˈsel/ noun a cell in the gastric gland which secretes hydrochloric acid. Also called parietal cell

oxytetracycline /ˌɒksɪˌtɛrəˈsaiklɪn/ noun an antibiotic which is effective against a wide range of organisms

oxytocic /ˌɒksɪˈtɒsɪk/ noun a drug which helps to start the process of childbirth, or speeds it up ◦ adjective starting or speeding up childbirth by causing contractions in the muscles of the uterus

oxytocin /ˌɒksɪˈtɒsɪn/ noun a hormone secreted by the posterior pituitary gland, which controls the contractions of the uterus and encourages the flow of milk

ozone /ˈɔzən/ noun a gas present in the atmosphere in small quantities, which is harmful at high levels of concentration

ozone sickness /ˈɔzən ˌsɪŋkəs/ noun a condition experienced by jet travellers, due to levels of ozone in aircraft
paedicarian /ˈpediətriən/ noun a doctor who specialises in the treatment of diseases of children
paediatrics /ˈpediətrɪks/ noun the study of children, their development and diseases. Compare geriatrics
paedo- /ˈpiːdəʊ/ prefix referring to children
paedodontia /ˈpiːdəʊdəntiə/ noun another spelling of pedodontia
Paget's disease /ˈpædʒəts diːzɪz/ noun 1. same as osteitis deformans 2. a form of breast cancer which starts as an itchy rash round the nipple [Described 1877. After Sir James Paget (1814–99), British surgeon.]
pain /peɪn/ noun the feeling of severe discomfort which a person has when hurt ◆ The doctor gave him an injection to relieve the pain. ◆ She is suffering from back pain. [NOTE: Pain can be used in the plural to show that it recurs: She has pains in her left leg.]
pain clinic /ˈpeɪn kliːnIk/ noun a centre which looks after people with severe persistent pain and whose staff include professionals from many specialist areas of medicine
painkiller /ˈpeɪn,kɪlkər/ noun a drug that reduces pain
pain pathway /ˈpeɪn, peɪnθwei/ noun a series of linking nerve fibres and neurones which carry impulses of pain from the site to the sensory cortex
pain receptor /ˈpeɪn riːˈsektər/ noun a nerve ending which is sensitive to pain
pain relief /ˈpeɪn riːˈliːf/ noun the act of easing pain by using analgesics
pain threshold /ˈpeɪn ˈθreʃθold/ noun the point at which a person finds it impossible to bear pain without crying
palate /ˈpeɪlət/ noun the roof of the mouth and floor of the nasal cavity, formed of the hard and soft palates
body by feeling it with the hand

palpate /ˈpæltət/ noun one of two bones which form part of the hard palate, the orifices of the eyes and the cavity behind the nose. Also called *palatine bone*

palatine /ˈpæltətn/ adjective referring to the palate

palatine bone /ˈpæltətn bəʊn/ noun same as palatine bone

palatine tonsil /ˈpæltətn təns(ə)l/ noun same as tonsil

palato- /-pələtoʊ/ prefix the palate

palatoplasty /ˈpæltəpləstɪ/ noun plastic surgery of the roof of the mouth, e.g. to repair a cleft palate

palatopla gia /pələtpələdʒə/ noun paralysis of the soft palate

palatorrhaphy /ˌpælətorrəˈfæfi/ noun a surgical operation to suture and close a cleft palate. Also called *staphylorrhaphy, uraniscorrhaphy*

pali- /-pəli/ prefix same as *palin-*

palindrome /ˈpældrəʊmɪk/ adjective repeating a palindromic disease

palliative /ˈpæliətɪv/ noun a treatment or drug which relieves symptoms but does nothing to cure the disease which causes the symptoms. For example, a painkiller can reduce the pain in a tooth, but will not cure the caries which causes the pain. ■ adjective providing relief

palliative care /-pələtiəv ˈkɛə/ palliative treatment /-pələtiəv ˈtriːtmənt/ noun treatment which helps to reduce the symptoms of a disease, especially a terminal or chronic condition, but does not cure it.

COMMENT: Palliative care may involve giving antibiotics, transfusions, pain-killing drugs, low-dose chemotherapy and psychological and social support to help the person and their family adjust to the illness. The treatment is often provided in a hospice.

palilidotomy /ˌpæləliˈdɒtəmi/ noun an operation on the brain which can reduce many of the symptoms of Parkinson’s disease, such as tremor, bradykinesia and stooped posture

palor /ˈpælər/ noun the condition of being pale

palm /pɑːlm/ noun the inner surface of the hand, extending from the bases of the fingers to the wrist

palmar /ˈpælmər/ adjective referring to the palm of the hand

palmar arch /ˈpælmər ər/ noun one of two arches or joins within the palm formed by two arteries which link together

palmar fascia /ˈpælmər ˈfæsɪə/ noun the tendons in the palm of the hand

palpate /ˈpæltət/ verb to examine part of the body by feeling it with the hand

palpation /ˈpæltəʃən/ noun an examination of part of the body by feeling it with the hand

pallenebra /ˈpæləpnəbə/ noun same as eyelid (NOTE: The plural is *palpebrae.* )

palpebral /ˈpælpəbrəl/ adjective referring to the eyelids

palpation /ˌpælpəˈteʃən/ noun awareness that the heart is beating rapidly or irregularly, possibly caused by stress or by a disease

pan- /-pən/ prefix referring to everything

panacea /ˈpænsəsɪə/ noun a medicine which is supposed to cure everything

panarthritis /ˌpænərəˈθrɪtɪs/ noun inflammation of all the tissues in a joint or of all the joints in the body

pancarditis /ˌpænkaˌdɪtɪs/ noun inflammation of all the tissues in the heart, i.e. the heart muscle, the endocardium and the pericardium

pancreas /ˈpænkrəs/ noun a gland which lies across the back of the body between the kidneys. See illustration at *DIGESTIVE SYSTEM* in Supplement

pancreatectomy /ˌpænkrəˈtektriːmi/ noun the surgical removal of all or part of the pancreas

pancreatic /ˌpænkrəˈtɪk/ adjective referring to the pancreas

pancreatic duct /ˌpænkrəˈtɪk ˈdʌkt/ noun a duct leading through the pancreas to the duodenum

pancreatic juice /ˌpænkrəˈtiːk ˈdʒuːs/, pancreatic secretion /ˌpænkrəˈtiːk ˈsɛkʃən/ noun a digestive juice, formed of enzymes produced by the pancreas, which digests fats and carbohydrates

pancreatin /ˌpænkrəˈteɪtn/ noun a substance made from enzymes secreted by the pancreas, used to treat someone whose pancreas does not produce pancreatic enzymes

pancreatitis /ˌpænkrəˈteɪtɪs/ noun inflammation of the pancreas

pancreatectomy /ˌpænkrəˈtektriːmi/, pancreatotomy /ˌpænkrəˈtektriːmi/, pancreatotomy /ˌpænkrəˈtektriːmi/ noun a surgical operation to open the pancreatic duct

pancytopenia /pænsəˈsɪptəniə/ noun a condition in which there are too few red and white blood cells and blood platelets

pandemic /ˌpændɪˈmiːk/ noun an epidemic disease which affects many parts of the world. Compare endemic, epidemic ■ adjective widespread

panhysterectomy /ˌpænθɪstərəˈektmi/ noun the surgical removal of all the uterus and the cervix

panic /ˈpænɪk/ noun a feeling of great fear which cannot be stopped and which sometimes results in irrational behaviour. He was in a panic as he sat in the consultant’s waiting room.

■ verb to be suddenly afraid. She panicked
paralyse /ˈpərəlɪzi/ verb to make a part of the body unable to carry out voluntary movements by weakening or damaging muscles or nerves so that they cannot function, or by using a drug. His arm was paralysed after the stroke.

paralysis /pəˈrælɪəsɪs/ noun a condition in which part of the body cannot be moved because the motor nerves have been damaged or the muscles have been weakened. The condition causes paralysis of the lower limbs. He suffered temporary paralysis of the right arm.

paralytic /ˌpərəˈlɪtɪk/ adjective 1. referring to paralysis. 2. referring to a person who is paralysed.

paralytic ileus /ˌpərəˈlɪtɪk ˈɪləs/ noun an obstruction in the ileum caused by paralysis of the muscles of the intestine. Also called adynamic ileus.

paramedian /ˌpərəˈmɪdіən/ adjective near the midline of the body.

paramedian plane /ˌpərəˈmɪdіən ˈpleɪn/ noun a plane near the midline of the body, parallel to the sagittal plane and at right angles to the coronal plane. See illustration at ANATOMICAL TERMS in Supplement.

paramedic /ˌpərəˈmɛdɪk/ noun a person whose work involves the restoration of health and normal functioning.

parameter /pəˈræmətər/ noun a measurement of something such as blood pressure which may be an important consideration in treating the condition which the person has.

parametritis /ˌpərəˈmɛtrɪtɪs/ noun inflammation of the parametrium.

parametrium /ˌpərəˈmɪtrɪəm/ noun the connective tissue around the uterus.

paranasal /ˌpərəˈnæzəl/ adjective by the side of the nose.

paranasal sinus /ˌpərəˈnæzəl ˈsɪnəs/, paranasal air sinus /ˌpərəˈnæzəl ˈɛər ˈsɪnəs/ one of the four pairs of sinuses in the skull near the nose, which open into the nasal cavity and are lined with sticky mucus. (Note: They are the frontal, maxillary, ethmoidal and sphenoidal sinuses.)

paranoia /ˌpərəˈnɒːə/ noun a behaviour characterised by mistaken ideas or delusions of persecution or self-importance.

paranoiac /ˌpərəˈnɒːɪk/ noun a person affected by paranoia.

paranoid /ˈpərənɔɪd/ adjective having a fixed delusion.

paranoid disorder /ˌpərənɔɪd ˈdɪsˈɔːdər/ noun a mental disorder which causes someone experiencing it to believe strongly that something is not right with them, with someone else or with the world generally and to maintain the belief even when given evidence against it.

paranoid schizophrenia /ˌpərənɔɪd ˌskɪtəˈzoʊ ˈtrɪzmə/ noun a form of schizophrenia in which the person believes he or she is being persecuted.

paraparesis /ˌpərəˈpærəˌsɪs/ noun incomplete paralysis of the legs.

paraphimosis /ˌpərəfɪˈməʊsɪs/ noun a condition in which the foreskin around the penis is tight and may have to be removed by circumcision.

paraplegia /ˌpəˌræpləˈdʒiːə/ noun paralysis which affects the lower part of the body and the legs, usually caused by an injury to the spinal cord.

paraplegic /ˌpəˌræpləˈdʒɪk/ noun someone who has paraplegia — adjective paralysed in the lower part of the body and legs.

paraprofessional /ˌpərəˈprɒfəˈsɪənəl/ noun the study of effects of the mind which appear not to be explained by known psychological or scientific principles, e.g. extrasensory perception and telepathy.

Parquat /ˌpərəkweɪt/ a trade name for dime-thyl dipyridamidum used as a weedkiller.

parasagittal /ˌpərəˈsægɪtəl/ adjective near the midline of the body.

parasagittal plane /ˌpərəˈsægɪtəl ˈpleɪn/ noun a plane near the midline of the body, parallel to the sagittal plane and at right angles to the coronal plane. Also called paramedian plane. See illustration at ANATOMICAL TERMS in Supplement.

parasite /ˌpərəˈsaɪt/ noun a plant or animal which lives on or inside another organism and draws nourishment from that organism.

parasitic /ˌpərəˈsɪtɪk/ adjective referring to parasites.

parasitic cyst /ˌpərəˈsɪtɪk ˈsɪst/ noun a cyst caused by the growing larvae of a parasite in the body.

parasiticide /ˌpərəˈsɪtɪsaɪd/ noun a substance which kills parasites — adjective killing parasites.

parasuicide /ˌpərəˈsjuːsɪd/ noun an act where someone tries to kill himself or herself, but without really intending to do so, rather as a way of drawing attention to his or her psychological condition.

parasympathetic nervous system /ˌpərəˌsɪmpəθəˈtɪk ˈnɜːvəs ˈsɪstəm/ parasympathetic system /ˌpərəˌsɪmpəθəˈtɪk ˈsɪstəm/ noun one of two parts of the autonomic nervous system. Its messages reach the organs of the body through the cranial and sacral nerves to the eyes, the gastrointestinal system and other organs. Sympathetic nervous system /ˌsɪmpəθəˈtɪk ˈnɜːvəs ˈsɪstəm/ parasym-patholytic /ˌpərəˌsɪmpəθəˈlɪtɪk/ noun a drug which reduces the effects of the par-
asymptomatic nervous system by relaxing smooth muscle, reducing the amount of sweat and saliva produced and widening the pupil of the eye. An example is atropine. ■ adjective relating to a parasympatholytic drug.

parasympathomimetic /pərəˈsɪmətɪk/ noun a drug which stimulates the parasympathetic nervous system by making smooth muscle more tense, widening the blood vessels, slowing the heart rate, increasing the amount of sweat and saliva produced and contracting the pupil of the eye. ■ adjective producing effects similar to those of a parasympathomimetic drug.

parathormone /pərəˈθɔːrmən/ noun the hormone secreted by the parathyroid glands which regulates the level of calcium in blood plasma. Also called parathyroid hormone.

parathyroid /pərəˈθɔːrd/ noun same as parathyroid gland ■ adjective 1. relating to a parathyroid gland 2. located close to the thyroid gland.

parathyroidectomy /pərəˈθɔːrdəktəmɪ/ noun the surgical removal of a parathyroid gland.

parathyroid gland /pərəˈθɔːrd ˈɡlænd/ noun one of four small glands which are situated in or near the wall of the thyroid gland and secrete a hormone which controls the way in which calcium and phosphorus are deposited in bones. ■ adjective same as parathyromone.

paratyphoid /pərəˈtaɪfɔɪd, parəˈtaɪfɔɪd/ noun an infectious disease which has similar symptoms to typhoid and is caused by bacteria transmitted by humans or animals.

Comment: There are three forms of paratyphoid fever, known by the letters A, B, and C, caused by three types of bacterium, Salmonella paratyphi A, B, and C. TAB injections give immunity against paratyphoid A and B, but not against C.

paraverterbral /pərəˈvɜːtrəbəl/ adjective near the vertebrae, beside the spinal column.

paraverterbral injection /pərəˈvɜːtrəbəl ɪnˈdʒɛkʃən/ noun an injection of local anaesthetic into the back near the vertebrae.

parenchyma /ˈpærəŋkɪmə/ noun tissues which contain the working cells of an organ.

parenchymal /ˈpærəŋkɪməl/ adjective relating to parenchyma.

parenteral /pərɛntəˈrɔrəl/ adjective referring to medication which is not given by mouth but in the form of injections or suppositories. Compare enteral, oral.

parenteral nutrition /pərɛntəˈrɔrəl ˈnjuːtʃən/ noun the process of feeding someone by means other than the digestive tract, especially by giving injections of glucose to someone critically ill.

parenting /ˈpærəntɪŋ/ noun the activities involved in bringing up children. ■ parenting skills the abilities and experience that make someone a good parent.

parasympathetic /pərəˈsɪmpæθətɪk/ adjective referring to the wall of a cavity or any organ.

paravertebral /pərəˈvɜːtrəbəl/ adjective referring to the wall of a cavity or any organ.

parathyroid /pərəˈθɔːrd/ noun one of two bones which form the sides of the skull.

parietal /pərəˈtɛəl/ adjective same as oxyntic cell.

parietal lobe /pərəˈtɛəl ˈləʊb/ noun the middle lobe of the cerebral hemisphere, which is associated with language and other mental processes, and also contains the postcentral gyrus.

parietal pleura /pərəˈtɛəl ˈpljuərə/ noun a membrane attached to the diaphragm and covering the chest cavity. Also called outer pleura.

See illustration at Lungs in Supplement.

-par ( /pər/ ) suffix used for anticogulants (heparin).


parity /pərəˈtɪərɪ/ noun 1. equality of status or position, especially in terms of pay or rank 2. the number of children that a woman has given birth to.

Parkinsonism /pærkɪnˈsəʊzn/ noun a progressive nervous disorder, which may be an effect of some drugs, repeated head injuries or brain tumours. The main symptoms are trembling hands and a slow shuffling walk. Also called paralysis agitans.

Parkinson’s disease /pækɪnˈsəʊzn, dɪ,jɪt/ noun a progressive nervous disorder without a known cause which is a type of Parkinsonism, the main symptoms of which are trembling hands, a slow shuffling walk and difficulty in speaking [Described 1817. After James Parkinson (1755–1824), English physician.]

paronychia /pərəˈnʌkiə/ noun inflammation near the nail which forms pus, caused by an infection in the fleshy part of the tip of a finger. ■ whitlow.

parosmia /pərəˈzɪmɪə/ noun a disorder of the sense of smell.

parotid /pərəˈtɪd/ adjective near the ear.

parotid gland /pərəˈtɪd ˈɡlænd/ noun one of the glands which produces saliva, situated in the neck behind the joint of the jaw and ear.

parotitis /pərəˈtɪtɪs/ noun inflammation of the parotid glands.

parous /pərəs/ adjective referring to a woman who has given birth to one more children.
immunity which is acquired by a baby in the passive immunity initiating an action during the night.

pass away
gut inside the body pass water to produce faeces or urine that contain blood passed a small stone in his urine.
other body product to come out of the body pass particles of less than a specified size, usually of particulate matter or composed of particles paroxysmal dyspnoea /parəksizəməl disˈpnoːə/ noun an attack of breathlessness at night, usually caused by congestive heart failure.
tachycardia /parəksizəməl tækˈkaːdiə/ noun same as nodal tachycardia

par paroxysmal partial thickness burn /parəksizəməl ˈpɑrəʊksɪməl/ burn which leaves enough tissue for a burn which leaves enough tissue for partial thickness burn particle /ˈpɑrtɪkl/ noun a very small piece of matter particulate particulate matter /ˈpɑrtɪkl ˈmætə/ noun particles of less than a specified size, usually of carbon, which are used as a measure of air pollution and can affect asthma parturient /ˈpɑrtʃʊriənt/ adjective referring to childbirth parturition /ˈpɑrtʃʊriən/ noun same as childbirth par pas prefix small pass /pɑs/ verb to allow faeces, urine or any other body product to come out of the body. He passed a small stone in his urine. pass water to urinate (informal) passage /ˈpɑsɪdʒ/ noun 1. a long narrow channel inside the body. 2. the introduction of an instrument into a cavity pass away /pɑs ˈwɛ/ verb used to avoid saying ‘die’ (informal) Mother passed away during the night.

passive passive immunity /ˈpəsɪv ˈɪmɪnətəri/ noun immunity which is acquired by a baby in the uterus or by a person through an injection with an antitoxin

passive movement /ˈpəsɪv ˈmʌvment/ noun movement of a limb or other body part by a doctor or therapist, not by the person

passive smoking /ˈpəsɪv ˈsmeɪkɪŋ/ noun the act of breathing in smoke from other people’s cigarettes when you do not smoke yourself

pass on /pɑs ˈəʊn/ verb 1. to give a disease to someone. Haemophilia is passed on by a woman to her sons. The disease was quickly passed on by carriers to the rest of the population. 2. used to avoid saying ‘die’. My father passed on two years ago.

pass out /pɑs ˈəut/ verb to faint (informal)

When we told her that her father was ill, she passed out.

passive use of patches to pass blood kill bacteria in food by heating it pasteurise /pəˈstɔːriːz/ pasteurize verb to kill bacteria in food by heating it. Also called pasteurisation, pasteurization noun the process of heating food or food products to destroy bacteria. [After Louis Pasteur (1822–95), French chemist and bacteriologist.] pastil pastil /ˈpɑstɪl/ noun a sweet jelly with medication in it, which can be sucked to relieve a sore throat.

patch /pɑtʃ/ noun a piece of sticking plaster a piece of sticking plaster

patch test /pɑtʃ tɛst/ noun a test for allergies or tuberculosis, where a piece of sticking plaster containing an allergic substance or tuberculin is stuck to the skin to see if there is a reaction.

patella /ˈpɑtɛlə/ noun the small bone in front of the knee joint. Also called kneecap.

patellar /ˈpɑtɛlər/ adjective referring to the kneecap patellar reflex /ˈpɑtɛlər ˈrɪflɛks/ noun the jerk made as a reflex action by the knee, when the legs are crossed and the patellar tendon is tapped sharply. Also called knee jerk.

patellar tendon /ˈpɑtɛlər ˈtendən/ noun a tendon just below the kneecap patelllectomy /ˈpætəlˌlɛktəmi/ noun a surgical operation to remove the kneecap.

patent /ˈpætənt/ adjective open, exposed The presence of a pulse shows that the main blood vessels from the heart to the site of the pulse are patent.

patent ductus arteriosus /ˈpætənt ˈdæktəs əˌtɛriərəsəs/ noun a congenital condition in which the ductus arteriosus does not close, allowing blood into the circulation without having passed through the lungs.
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pathy /pæθi/ suffix disease
patient /pətɪnt/ noun a person who is in
hospital or who is being treated by a doctor. The
patients are all asleep in their beds. The
doctor is taking the patient’s temperature.
patient allocation /pətɪnt_ələˈkeiʃən/ noun a system of assigning each patient to a par-
ticular nurse for all their care needs
patient-group direction /pətɪnt_ɡroup_ˈdɛkər_ʃən/ noun full form of PGD
patient identifier /pətɪnt_ɪˈdɛntɪfɪkər/ noun a code of letters and numbers attached to the
patient’s medical records by which all informa-
tion concerning the patient can be tracked, e.g. cause of death
Paul–Bunnell reaction /pɔyl_ˈbʌnlrəkʃən/ noun a blood test to see if someone has glandular fever, where the person’s blood is tested against a solution containing glandular fever bacilli (Described 1932. After John Rodman Paul (1893–1971), US physician; Walle Willard Bunnell (1902–66), US physician.)
pavement epithelium /pəˈvɛmənt ˌepɪˈθɪliəm/ noun same as squamous epithelium
Pavlov’s method /ˈpævloʊvz_ˈmɛθəd/ noun a set of procedures for the study or production of
conditioned reflexes
PBI test /pɪbɪ/ noun same as protein
bound iodine test
p.c. /pi:/ adverb (used on prescriptions)
after food. Full form post cibum
PCC abbreviation Professional Conduct Committee
PCG abbreviation primary care group
PCOD abbreviation polycystic ovary disease
PCOS abbreviation polycystic ovary syndrome
PCP abbreviation pneumoniae carinii pneumonia
PCT abbreviation primary care trust
p.d. adverb (used on prescriptions) per day. Full
form per diem
PDA /pi:/ noun a handheld computer with
various functions, e.g. information storage and
digital notetaking. Full form personal digital
assistant
PE abbreviation pulmonary embolism
peak expiratory flow rate /piːk ɪk_ˌspiəˈrætəri_ˈfləʊ_ˈrɛt/ noun the rate at which someone can expel air from their lungs when they are full and with no time limit. Abbreviation PEFR
Pearson bed /pɛərson/ noun a type of
bed with a Balkan frame, a rectangular frame
attached to and overhanging the bed, used mainly
for people with splints
peau d’orange /pəˈduɾˈɑːʁʒ/ noun thick-
ened skin with many little depressions caused by
lymphoedema which forms over a breast tumour or in elephantiasis (NOTE: From the French phrase meaning ‘orange peel.’)

PEC /ˈpiːsi/ noun the committee responsible for the day-to-day management of a Primary Care Trust and for developing service policies and investment plans. Full form Professional Executive Committee

Pecten /ˈpektən/ noun 1. the middle section of the wall of the anal passage 2. a hard ridge on the pubis

Pectineal /ˈpektɪnɪnl/ adjective referring to the pecten of the pubis

Pectoral /ˈpektərəl/ noun 1. a therapeutic substance which has a good effect on respiratory disease 2. same as pectoral muscle • adjective referring to the chest

Pectoral girdle /ˈpektərəl ˈɡɜːdəl/ noun the shoulder bones, the scapulae and clavicles, to which the upper arm bones are attached. Also called shoulder girdle

Pectoralis minor /ˈpektərəl ˈmɪnər/ noun a small chest muscle which allows the shoulder to be depressed

Pectoral muscle /ˈpektərəl ˈməskəl/ noun one of two muscles which lie across the chest and control movements of the shoulder and arm. Also called chest muscle

Pectus /ˈpektəs/ noun the anterior part of the chest

Pectus carinatum /ˈpektəs ˈkærɪnətəm/ noun a condition in which the sternum is unusually prominent. Also called pigeon breast

Pectus excavatum /ˈpektəs ˈeksəkəvətəm/ noun a congenital condition, in which the chest is depressed in the centre because the lower part of the breastbone is curved backwards. Also called funnel chest

Pedicile /ˈpedɪkl/ noun a long thin piece of skin which attaches a skin graft to the place where it was growing originally

Pediculosis /ˌpiˌdɪkyləˈsaɪs/ noun a skin disease caused by being infested with lice

Pediculus /ˌpiˌdɪkylələs/ noun same as louse (NOTE: The plural is Pediculi.)

Pediculus capitis /ˌpiˌdɪkyləˌkæpɪtɪs/ noun same as head louse

Pedo- /ˈpiːdoʊ-/ prefix same as paedo-

Pedodontia /ˌpiˌdɪˈdɒndəntɪə/ noun the study of children’s teeth

Pedodontist /ˌpiˌdɪdəʊˈdɒntɪst/ noun a dentist who specialises in the treatment of children’s teeth

Peduncle /ˌpiˌdʌŋkəl/ noun a stem or stalk

pee /ˈpiː/ verb same as urinate (informal)

Peel /piːl/ verb 1. to take the skin off a fruit or vegetable 2. (of skin) to come off in pieces ○ After getting sunburnt, his skin began to peel.

PEEP abbreviation positive end-expiratory pressure

Peer review /ˌpiːr riˈvjuː/ noun an assessment of a piece of someone’s work by people who are experts on the subject

PEFR abbreviation peak expiratory flow rate

Pel-Ebstein fever /ˈpel ˈɛbstən ˌfiːvər/ noun a fever associated with Hodgkin’s disease which recurs regularly [Described 1885. After Peter Klaases Pel (1852–1919), Professor of Medicine in Amsterdam, Netherlands; Wilhelm Ebstein (1836–1912), Professor of Medicine at Göttingen, Germany.]

Pellagra /ˈpɛləɡrə/ noun a disease caused by a deficiency of nicotinic acid, riboflavin and pyridoxine from the vitamin B complex, where patches of skin become inflamed, and the person has anorexia, nausea and diarrhoea

Pellet /ˈpelət/ noun a small rod- or oval-shaped pill of steroid hormone, usually either oestrogen or testosterone, that is implanted under the skin for slow absorption

Pelvic /ˈpelvɪk/ adjective referring to the pelvis

Pelvic brim /ˈpelvɪk ˈbrɪm/ noun a line on the ilium which separates the false pelvis from the true pelvis

Pelvic cavity /ˈpelvɪk ˈkeɪvətɪ/ noun a space below the abdominal cavity, above the pelvis

Pelvic colon /ˈpelvɪk ˈkəʊlən/ noun same as sigmoid colon

Pelvic diaphragm /ˈpelvɪk ˈdaɪəfrəm/ noun a sheet of muscle between the pelvic cavity and the peritoneum

Pelvic floor /ˈpelvɪk ˈflɔːr/ noun the lower part of the space beneath the pelvic girdle, formed of muscle

Pelvic fracture /ˈpelvɪk ˈfræktrə/ noun a fracture of the pelvis

Pelvic girdle /ˈpelvɪk ˈɡɜːdəl/ noun the ring formed by the two hip bones to which the thigh bones are attached. Also called hip girdle

Pelvic inflammatory disease /ˈpelvɪk ɪnˈflemətərɪ ˈdɪziˌdi/ noun an inflammation of a woman’s reproductive organs in the pelvic area, which can cause infertility

Pelvic outlet /ˈpelvɪk ˈaʊltət/ noun an opening at the base of the pelvis

Pellimeter /ˈpelɪmɪtər/ noun an instrument to measure the diameter and capacity of the pelvis

Pelvimetry /ˌpelɪˈvɪmətri/ noun the act of measuring the pelvis, especially to see if the internal ring is wide enough for a baby to pass through in childbirth
pelvis /ˈpelvɪs/ noun 1. the strong basin-shaped ring of bone near the bottom of the spine, formed of the hip bones at the front and sides and the sacrum and coccyx at the back. 2. the internal space inside the pelvic girdle (NOTE: [all senses] The plural is pelvisses or pelvises.)

pelvis of the kidney /ˈpelvɪs əv ˈkidn/ noun see illustration at Kidney in Supplement (NOTE: For other terms referring to the pelvis of the kidney, see words beginning with pyel-, pyelo-)

pemphigoid /ˈpɛmfiɡɔɪd/ noun a skin disease which is similar to pemphigus 2 adjective referring to a skin disease similar to pemphigus

pemphigus /ˈpɛmfiɡəs/ noun a rare disease where large blisters form inside the skin

perfiulosa /ˈpɛrdʒuləˈsə/ adjective referring to an object or body part which hangs loosely or swings freely

-penia /ˈpiːniə/ suffix meaning a deficiency or not enough of something

pericillamine /ˌpɛriˈsɪləməni/ noun a chelating agent which is used to help the body get rid of toxic metals

penicillin /ˌpɛniˈsɪlɪn/ noun a common antibiotic originally produced from a fungus (NOTE: Penicillin drugs have names ending in -cillin: amoxicillin.)

penicillin resistance /ˌpɛnɪsɪlɪn ˈrɪzɪstənς/ noun the ability of bacteria to resist penicillin

Penicillium /ˌpɛniˈsɪlɪəm/ noun the fungus from which penicillin is derived

penile /ˈpiːnɪl/ adjective referring to the penis

penis /ˈpiːnɪs/ noun the male genital organ, which also passes urine. See illustration at Uro-genital System (Males). 2. ① Kraurosis penis

pentamidine /ˈpɛnətmɪdɪn/ noun an antibiotic used in the treatment of African sleeping sickness and of pneumonia in people with AIDS

pentazocine /ˈpɛntəzəsɪn/ noun an artificially produced narcotic drug used to reduce pain

Pentothal /ˈpɛntəθɔl/ a trade name for thiopentone

PEP abbreviation post-exposure prophylaxis

Peplau’s model /ˌpɛplɔːs ˈmɒld/ noun a model for nursing which describes the individual as a system with physiological, psychological and social components. The nurse and patient work together to define the patient’s problems and to understand their reactions to one another, and the nurse takes on different roles in each phase of the relationship, such as a teacher, counsellor, leader, and technical expert, until the patient no longer needs their care.

pepsin /ˌpɛpsɪn/ noun an enzyme in the stomach which breaks down the proteins in food into peptones

pepsinogen /ˌpɛpsɪˈnədʒən/ noun a secretion from the gastric gland which is the inactive form of pepsin

peptic /ˈpɛptɪk/ adjective referring to digestion or to the digestive system

peptic ulcer /ˈpɛptɪk əˈlsə/ noun a benign ulcer in the duodenum or in the stomach

peptidase /ˌpɛptɪdəˈzə/ noun an enzyme which breaks down proteins in the intestine into amino acids

peptide /ˈpɛptɪd/ noun a compound formed of two or more amino acids

per 1/penˈper 2 preposition 1. out of each ① ten per thousand 2. by or through ② per rectum

perception /ˈpɛrˌsepʃən/ noun an impression formed in the brain as a result of information about the outside world which is passed back by the senses

perceptive deafness /ˌpɛrˈsepətiv ˈdɛfnəs/ noun same as sensorineural deafness

perfusion /ˌpɜrˈfjuʃən/ noun a test, usually on the heart and lungs, in which the doctor taps part of the person’s body and listens to the sound produced

percutaneous /ˌpɜrˈkuːtənəs/ adjective through the skin

percutaneous absorption /ˌpɜrˈkuːtənəs əˈbərsərʃən/ noun the process of absorbing a substance through the skin

percutaneous angioplasty /ˌpɜrˈkuːtənəs ˌæŋɡɪəˈplæstɪ/ noun the repair of a narrowed artery by passing a balloon into the artery through a catheter and then inflating it. Also called balloon angioplasty

percutaneous epididymal sperm aspiration /ˌpɜrˈkuːtənəs ˌɛpɪdɪdɪməl ˈspɜrzm əˈsərprəʃən/ noun the removal of sperm from the epididymis by withdrawing it through the skin, usually as part of fertility treatment. Abbreviation PESA

per diem /ˌpɜrˈdiːm/ adverb (written on prescription) per day

perforated eardrum /ˌpɜrˈfɔrətɪd ˈɛədrəm/ noun an eardrum with a hole in it

perforation /ˌpɜrˈfɔrəʃən/ noun a hole through the whole thickness of a tissue or membrane such as the intestine or eardrum

performance indicators /ˌpɜrˈfərməns ɪndɪkˈteɪtərz/ plural noun statistical information needed for analysis of how effectively health organisations are meeting their objectives, produced by health authorities and sent to the government. Abbreviation Pls

perfusion /ˌpɜrˈfjuʃən/ noun the process of passing a liquid through vessels, an organ or tissue, e.g. the flow of blood into lung tissue

perfusion scan /ˌpɜrˈfjuʃən skən/ noun a procedure in which radioactive or radiopaque
substances are introduced into the body so that the blood supply of an organ can be traced
peria(de)ritis /periə'deɪrɪtɪs/ noun inflammation of tissue around a gland
perianal /ˌpɜriənəl/ adjective around the anus
peria(de)ritis /periəˈdɛɪrɪtɪs/ noun inflammation of the outer coat of an artery and the tissue round it
peria(de)ritis nodosa /ˌpɜriəˈdɛɪrɪtɪs ˈnɒdəsə/ noun same as polyarteritis nodosa
peria(de)ritis /ˌpɜriəˈdɛɪrɪtɪs/ noun inflammation of the tissue round it
pericard- /ˌpɜrɪkɑːrd-/ prefix referring to the pericardium
pericardectomy /ˌpɜrɪkɑːrdɪˈɛktəmi/ noun the surgical removal of the pericardium
pericardial /ˌpɜrɪkɑːrdɪəl/ adjective referring to the pericardium
pericardial effusion /ˌpɜrɪkɑːrdɪəl ˈɛfəsən/ noun an excess of fluid which forms in the pericardial sac
pericardial sac /ˌpɜrɪkɑːrdɪəl ˈsæk/ noun the inner part of the pericardium forming a bag-like structure or sac which contains fluid to prevent the two parts of the pericardium rubbing together
pericardiectomy /ˌpɜrɪkɑːrdɪˈɛktəmi/ noun same as pericardectomy
pericardiocentesis /ˌpɜrɪkɑːrdɪəˌkɑsənˈtɛsɪs/ noun the puncture of the pericardium to remove fluid
pericardiorrhaphy /ˌpɜrɪkɑːrdɪəˈrɔfəri/ noun a surgical operation to repair a wound in the pericardium
pericardiostomy /ˌpɜrɪkɑːrdɪəˈstəmə/ noun a surgical operation to open the pericardium through the thoracic wall to drain off fluid
pericardiostomy /ˌpɜrɪkɑːrdɪəˈstəmə/ noun same as pericardotomy
pericarditis /ˌpɜrɪkɑːrdɪˈtɪs/ noun inflammation of the pericardium
pericardium /ˌpɜrɪkɑːrdɪəm/ noun a membrane which surrounds and supports the heart
pericardiomy /ˌpɜrɪkɑːrdɪəˈməʊni/ noun a surgical operation to open the pericardium
perichondritis /ˌpɜrɪkənˈdɔrɪtɪs/ noun inflammation of cartilage, especially in the outer ear
perichondrium /ˌpɜrɪkənˈdɔriəm/ noun the fibrous connective tissue which covers cartilage
pericranium /ˌpɜrɪkərəˈnɪəm/ noun connective tissue which covers the surface of the skull
perilymph /ˌpɜrɪlɪm/ noun a fluid found in the labyrinth of the inner ear
perimenopause /ˌpɜrɪˈmɛnəpəʊz/ noun the few years before the menopause, in which oestrogen levels start to fall
perimeter /ˌpɜrɪˈmɪtrɪ/ noun 1, an instrument to measure the field of vision 2, the length of the outside line around an enclosed area
perimetrías /ˌpɜrɪˌmeɪtrɪəs/ noun inflammation of the perimetrium
perimetry /ˌpɜrɪˈmɪtrɪ/ noun a measurement of the field of vision
perimysium /ˌpɜrɪˈmɪsɪəm/ noun a sheath which surrounds a bundle of muscle fibres
perinatal /ˌpɜrɪˈnɛtləl/ adjective referring to the period just before and after childbirth
perinatal mortality rate /ˌpɜrɪˈnɛtləl ˈmɔrtələti/ rate the number of babies born dead or who die during the period immediately after childbirth, shown per thousand babies born
perinatal period /ˌpɜrɪˈnɛtəl ˈpɪəriəd/ noun the period of time before and after childbirth, from the 28th week after conception to the first week after delivery
perinatologist /ˌpɜrɪnəˈteɪdʒəlɪst/ noun an obstetrician who is a specialist in perinatology
perinatology /ˌpɜrɪnəˈteɪdʒələti/ noun a branch of medicine which studies and treats physiological and pathological conditions affecting the mother and/or infant just before and just after the birth of a baby
perineal /ˌpɜrɪˈniːəl/ adjective referring to the perineum
perineoplasty /ˌpɜrɪˈnɪəpələstɪ/ noun a surgical operation to repair the perineum by grafting tissue
perineorrhaphy /ˌpɜrɪˈnɪərərəfəri/ noun a surgical operation to stitch up a perineum which has torn during childbirth
perinephric /ˌpɜrɪˈnɛfrɪk/ adjective around the kidney
perinephritis /ˌpɜrɪˈnɛfrɪtɪs/ noun inflammation of tissue round the kidney, which spreads from an infected kidney
perineum /ˌpɜrɪˈniːəm/ noun the skin and tissue between the opening of the urethra and the anus
perineurium /ˌpɜrɪˈnjʊərɪəm/ noun connective tissue which surrounds bundles of nerve fibres
periorchial /ˌpɜrɪəˈrɔkʃəl/ adjective around the eyelid
periodic /ˌpɜrɪˈdɪkəl/ adjective occurring from time to time ○ He has periodic attacks of migraine. ○ She has to go to the clinic for periodic checkups.
periodic fever /ˌpərɪˈdɪk fəvər/ noun a disease of the kidneys, common in Mediterranean countries

periodic paralysis /ˌpərɪˈdɪk pəˈræləsɪs/ noun recurrent attacks of weakness where the level of potassium in the blood is low

periodontal /ˌpərɪˈdɒn(t)l/ or periodontic /ˌpərɪˈdɒntɪk/ adjective referring to the area around the teeth

periodontal membrane /ˌpərɪˈdɒnt(ə)n/ or ‘membranə/, periodontal /ˌpərɪˈdɒntl/ ligament /ˌpərɪˈdɒntl lɪˈɡəmn/ or ‘ligəmənt/ noun a ligament which attaches a tooth to the bone of the jaw

periodontics /ˌpərɪˈdɒntɪks/, periodontia /ˌpərɪˈdɒntiə/ noun the study of diseases of the periodontal membrane

periodontist /ˌpərɪˈdɒntɪst/ noun a dentist who specialises in the treatment of gum diseases

periodontitis /ˌpərɪˈdɒntətɪtɪs/ noun an infection of the periodontal membrane leading to pyorrhoea, and resulting in the teeth falling out if untreated

periodontium /ˌpərɪˈdɒntjʊm/ noun 1. the gums, bone and periodontal membrane around a tooth 2. same as periodontal membrane

perionychia /ˌpɜːrɪˈɒnɪkʃə, perionyxis /ˌpɜːrɪˈɒnɪksɪs/ noun a painful swelling round a fingernail

periopeative /ˌpɜːrɪˈɒpiətɪv/ or ‘ɒpiətɪv/ adjective before and after a surgical operation

periorbital /ˌpɜːrɪˈɔːrɪbɪt(ə)l/ adjective around the eye socket

periosteal /ˌpɜːrɪˈɒstɪəl/ adjective referring to, or attached to, the periosteum

periosteotome /ˌpɜːrɪˈɒstɪət(ə)m/ noun a surgical instrument used to cut the periosteum

periostium /ˌpɜːrɪˈɒstjʊm/ noun a dense layer of connective tissue around a bone. See illustration at Bone structure in Supplement

periosteum elevator /ˌpɜːrɪˈɒstɪəm ˈeləvətər/ noun a surgical instrument used to remove the periosteum from a bone

periostitis /ˌpɜːrɪˈɒstɪtɪs/ noun inflammation of the periosteum

period /ˌpɜːrɪˈdɪd/ or periodical /ˌpɜːrɪˈdɪkl/ adjective at the edge

peripheral nerves /ˈpɜːrɪfərl nɜrvz/ plural noun the parts of the body which are linked and governed by the central nervous system. Abbreviation PNS

peripheral nervous system /ˈpɜːrɪfərl ˈnɜvrəs sɪstəm/ noun all the nerves in different parts of the body which branch from the brain and spinal cord

peripheral resistance /ˌpɜːrɪfərl ˈrɛsɪstəns/ noun the ability of the peripheral blood vessels to slow down the flow of blood inside them

peripheral vascular disease /ˌpɜːrɪfərl ˈvæskjʊlər dɪˈziːs/ noun a disease affecting the blood vessels which supply the arms and legs

peripheral vasodilator /ˌpɜːrɪfərl ˈvæsədɪˈleɪtər/ noun a chemical substance which acts to widen the blood vessels in the arms and legs and so improves bad circulation

periophery /ˌpɜːrɪˈɒfəri/ noun 1. the regions of the body where the nerves end, such as the sense organs or the muscles 2. the surface of something

periprosthetic /ˌpɜːrɪˈprɒstɪtɪk/ or ‘ɒstɪtɪk/ swelling of the tissues around the prosthesis

peristalsis /ˌpɜːrɪˈstælɪs/ noun the movement, like waves, produced by alternate contraction and relaxation of muscles along an organ such as the intestine or oesophagus, which pushes the contents of the organ along it. Compare antiperistalsis

peristaltic /ˌpɜːrɪˈstælɪtɪk/ adjective occurring in waves, as in peristalsis

peritendinitis /ˌpɜːrɪtɛndɪˈnɪtɪs/ noun same as tenosynovitis

peritoneal /ˌpɜːrɪˈtəʊnɪˈeɪl/ adjective referring to, or belonging to, the peritoneum

peritoneal cavity /ˌpɜːrɪˈtəʊnɪˈeɪl ˈkeɪvətɪ/ noun a space between the layers of the peritoneum, containing the major organs of the abdomen

peritoneal dialysis /ˌpɜːrɪˈtəʊnɪˈeɪl ˈdaɪələsɪs/ noun removing waste matter from someone’s blood by introducing fluid into the peritoneum which then acts as a filter, as opposed to haemodialysis

peritoneoscope /ˌpɜːrɪˈtəʊnɪˌsɒskəp/ noun same as laparoscope

peritoneoscopy /ˌpɜːrɪˈtəʊnɪˌskəspi/ noun same as laparoscopy

peritonsillar abscess /ˌpɜːrɪtɒnˈsɪlər ˈæbəsəs/ noun same as quinsy

peritonsillar abcess /ˌpɜːrɪtɒnˈsɪlər ˈæbəsəs/ noun same as quinsy

permeability /ˌpɜːrɪˈmɪəbɪləti/ noun (of a membrane) the ability to allow some substances to pass through
permeable membrane

permeable membrane (pər'miəb(ə)l 'membroʊn/ noun a membrane which allows some substances to pass through it

pernicious (pər'nɪs/əs/ adjective harmful or dangerous, or unusually severe and likely to end in death

pernicious anaemia (pər'nɪs/əs/ a'nɪmə/ noun a disease where an inability to absorb vitamin B₁₂ prevents the production of red blood cells and damages the spinal cord. Also called Addison's anemia

perniosis (pər'nɪs/əs/ noun any condition caused by cold which affects blood vessels in the skin

pero- (pər/əʊ/) prefix malformed or impaired

peroneal (pərə'nɪsəl/ adjective referring to the outside of the leg

peroneal muscle (pərə'nɪsəl /məsk(ə)/, peroneus (pərə'nɪsəs/ noun one of three muscles, the peroneus brevis, longus and tertius, on the outside of the lower leg which make the leg turn outwards

peroperative (pər'əpərətɪv/ adjective taking place during a surgical operation

peroral (pər'ərəl/ adjective through the mouth

per os (pər 'əʊs/ adverb referring to a drug or other substance to be taken through the mouth

persistent vegetative state (pər'sɪstənt 'vədʒʊətrəv stət/ noun a condition in which someone is alive and breathes, but shows no brain activity, and will never recover consciousness. Abbreviation PVS

personal care (pər'sənl keə/ noun the act of washing, toileting and dressing someone who cannot do these things for themselves

personal digital assistant (pər'sənl dɪ'æsənt/ di'æsənt/ noun full form of PDA

personal hygiene (pər'sənl hɪ'ʒɪn/ noun the standards someone has of looking after parts of their body such as hair, skin, teeth and breath, hands and nails, and keeping them clean

personality (pər'sənləti/ noun all the characteristics which are typical of one particular person and the way he or she thinks and behaves, and which make him or her different from other people

personality disorder (pər'sənləti dɪ'sɔr/ noun a disorder which affects the way a person behaves, especially in relation to other people

perspiration (pər'səpərə'shən/ noun sweat or the action of sweating ○ Perspiration broke out on her forehead.

Perthes' disease (pər'thiz də'tiz/, Perthes' hip (pər'thiz hɪp/ noun a disease found in young boys, in which the upper end of the femur degenerates and does not develop as expected, sometimes resulting in a permanent limp

pertussis (pər'təsis/ noun same as whooping cough

perversion (pər'vers/ən/ noun a form of behaviour which is thought to be unnatural, dangerous or disgusting ○ He is suffering from a form of sexual perversion.

pes (pēz/ noun a foot

PESA abbreviation percutaneous epididymal sperm aspiration

pes cavus (pēz 'kevəs/ noun same as claw foot

pes planus (pēz 'plənəs/ noun same as flat foot

pessary (pēs'sar/ noun 1. a drug in soluble material which is pushed into the vagina and absorbed into the blood there. Also called vaginal suppository 2. a contraceptive device worn inside the vagina to prevent spermatozoa entering 3. a device like a ring, which is put into the vagina as treatment for prolapse of the uterus

pesticide (pəst'sɪsid/ noun a substance which kills pests

PET abbreviation positron-emission tomography

petechia (pətɛk'shə/ noun a small red spot which does not go white when pressed, caused by bleeding under the skin (NOTE: The plural is petechiae)

pethidine (pəθɪdɪn/ noun a synthetically produced narcotic drug, used to reduce pain and as a sedative

petit mal (pə'tɪt məl/ noun a less severe form of epilepsy, where loss of consciousness attacks last only a few seconds and the person appears simply to be thinking deeply. Compare grand mal

Petri dish (pə'tri ˈdɪʃ/ noun a small glass or plastic dish with a lid, in which a culture is grown

petrisage (pəˈtrɪsədʒ/ noun an action used in massaging the muscles

petrositis (pə'trəsəsɪtəs/ noun inflammation of the petrous part of the temporal bone

petrous (pə'trɔs/ adjective like stone

petrous bone (pə'trɔs bəʊn/ noun the part of the temporal bone which forms the base of the skull and the inner and middle ears

-pexy (pɛks/ɪ/ suffix referring to fixation of an organ by surgery

Peyer's patches (pəˈpɛz φ'ætʃz plural noun patches of lymphoid tissue on the mucous membrane of the small intestine [Described 1677. After Johann Conrad Peyer (1653–1712), Swiss anatomist]

Peyronie's disease (pərərɔnɪz də'tiz, Per'sɔnɪz də'tiz/ noun a condition associated with Dupuytren's contracture in which hard fibre develops in the penis which becomes painful when erect [Described 1743. After François de la Peyronie (1678–1747), Surgeon to Louis XV in Paris, France.]
Vowel

Pharmaceutical

Condition in which a swelling occurs which imitates a tumour, usually at the stump of an amputated limb.

Phantom tumour

Phallus

Phalangeal

Phagocyte

Phagocytosis

Phagocytic

Phagocytosis

Pharyngeal tonsils

Pharmacology

Pharmacological

Pharmacy

Pharmaceutical

Pharmaceuticals

Pharmacist

Pharmacodynamic

Pharmacodynamics

Pharmaceutical Society

Patient-group direction

Pharmaco-
pharyngectomy /fərɪnˈdʒɛktəmi/ noun the surgical removal of part of the pharynx, especially in cases of cancer of the pharynx
pharyngismus /fərɪnˈdʒɪzməs/, pharyngism /fərɪnˈdʒɪzɪm/ noun a spasm which contracts the muscles of the pharynx
pharyngitis /fərɪnˈdʒestɪs/ noun inflammation of the pharynx
pharyngo-/fərɪnˈgəʊ-/ prefix referring to the pharynx
pharyngolaryngeal /fərɪnˈgɔlərɪnˈdʒiəl/ adjective referring to the pharynx and the larynx
pharyngoscope /fərɪnˈɡɒskəʊp/ noun an instrument with a light attached, used by a doctor to examine the pharynx
pharyngotympanic tube /fərɪnˈɡɒtɪmˈpænɪs tjuː/ noun one of two tubes which connect the back of the throat to the middle ear. Also called eustachian tube
pharynx /fərɪnks/ noun a muscular passage leading from the back of the mouth to the oesophagus (NOTE: The plural is pharynges or pharynxes.)
phenazopyridine /fəˈneɪ.zəʊ.ˈpɜːra.dɪn/ noun a drug used to reduce pain in conditions of the urinary tract, such as cystitis
phenobarbitone /fəˈnəʊ.ˈbɑːr.ətən/ noun a barbiturate drug which is used as a sedative, a hypnotic and an anticonvulsant
phenol /fɪˈnɒl/ noun a strong disinfectant used for external use. Also called carbolic acid
phenomenon /fəˈnɒmɪnən/ noun 1. a fact or situation which can be observed 2. someone or something that is considered to be extraordinary and marvellous
phenotype /fɪˈnɒtɪp/ noun the particular characteristics of an organism. Compare genotype
phenylalanine /fɪˈnɛl.ə.ˈlænɪn/ noun an essential amino acid
phenylketonuria /fɪˈnɛl.ˌkɛt.ə.ˈnjʊəriə/ noun a hereditary condition which affects the way in which the body breaks down phenylalanine, which in turn concentrates toxic metabolites in the nervous system causing brain damage
phenytoin /fɪˈnɛti.n/ noun a drug which helps to prevent convulsions, used in the treatment of epilepsy
phial /fəriːl/ noun a small medicine bottle
-philia /fɪˈli.ə/suffix attraction to or liking for something
philtrum /fɪlˈtrʊm/ noun a groove in the centre of the top lip
phimosis /fɪm.əsɪs/ noun a condition in which the foreskin is tight and has to be removed by circumcision
phleb-/flɛb/ prefix same as phlebo- (used before vowels)
phlebectomy /flɛbˈektəmi/ noun the surgical removal of a vein or part of a vein
phlebitis /flɛbˈbɪtɪs/ noun inflammation of a vein
phlebo-/flɛbəʊ-/ prefix referring to a vein
phlebogram /flɛbˈɡræm/ noun an X-ray picture of a vein or system of veins. Also called venogram
phlebography /flɛbˈɡrɑːfɪ/ noun an X-ray examination of a vein using a radio-opaque dye so that the vein will show up on the film. Also called venography
phlebolith /flɛbəʊˌlɪθ/ noun a stone which forms in a vein as a result of an old thrombus becoming calcified
phlebothrombosis /flɛbəˌθrəʊmˈbɒsɪs/ noun a blood clot in a deep vein in the legs or pelvis, which can easily detach and form an embolus in a lung
phlebotomy /flɛbˈtəmi/ noun an operation where a vein or an artery is cut so that blood can be removed, as when taking blood from a donor
plem /flɛm/ noun same as sputum ○ She was coughing up phlegm into her handkerchief.
phlegmasia alba dolens /flɛɡˈme.ziə, ˈeɪlbə 'dɔləns/ noun same as milk leg
phlycten /flɪkˈtɛn/ noun a small blister caused by a burn 2. a small vesicle on the conjunctiva
phlyctenule /flɪkˈten.jʊl/ noun a tiny blister on the cornea or conjunctiva
phobia /fəˈboiə/ noun an unusually strong and irrational fear ○ She has a phobia about or of dogs. ○ Fear of snakes is one of the commonest phobias.
-phobia /-fəˈboiə/suffix neurotic fear of something ○ agoraphobia ○ claustrophobia
phobic /fəˈbɪk/ adjective referring to a phobia
-phobic /-fəˈbɪk/ suffix a person who has a phobia of something
phocomelia /fəˈkɒmə.ˈlɪliə, ˈphək.ˌmɛliə/ noun the production of vocal sounds, especially speech phonetics /fəˈnɪt.ɪkstrɪk/ noun the study of speech and disorders related to it
phon- /fən/ prefix referring to sound or voice
phonocardiogram /fəˈnɒk.ˈkɑːdiˌɡreɪm/ noun a chart of the sounds made by the heart
phonocardiography /fəˈnɒk.ˌkɑːr.dɪˈɡrɑːfi/ noun the process of recording the sounds made by the heart
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phonology /fəˈnɒlədʒi/ noun the study of the system of speech sounds used in a particular language or in human speech generally

phonosurgery /fəʊnəʊˈɜːrədʒi/ noun surgery performed to alter the quality of the voice

phosphatase /ˈfɒsfaɪtəz/ noun a group of enzymes which are important in the cycle of muscle contraction and in the calcification of bones

phosphate /ˈfɒsfɪt/ noun a salt of phosphoric acid

phosphaturia /fəʊsfaɪˈtʊriə/ noun the presence of excess phosphates in the urine

phosphorus /fəʊsfaɪˈrəs/ noun a toxic chemical element which is present in very small quantities in bones and nerve tissue. It causes burns if it touches the skin, and can poison if swallowed. (NOTE: The chemical symbol is P)

phosphorylase /ˈfɒsfərɪklas/ noun an enzyme that aids the process of carbohydrate metabolism

phot- /ˈfəʊt-/, fəʊt/ prefix same as photo- (used before vowels)

photalgia /fəʊtəlˈdʒiə/ noun pain in the eye caused by bright light

photocoagulation /ˌfəʊtəkoʊˈeɪɡjʊə/ noun the process in which tissue coagulates from the heat caused by light, used to treat a detached retina

photodermatosis /ˌfəʊtdərˈmætəsɪs/ noun a lesion of the skin after exposure to bright light

photogenic /ˌfəʊtəˈdʒɪnɪk/ adjective 1. produced by the action of light 2. producing light

photophobia /ˌfəʊtəˈfəʊbiə/ noun a condition in which the eyes become sensitive to light and responsiveness may be affected (NOTE: It can be associated with measles and some other infectious diseases.)

photophalmitis /ˌfəʊtəˈθæmləs/ noun inflammation of the eye caused by bright light, as in snow blindness

photopic vision /ˌfəʊtəˈtɒpɪk/ noun vision which is adapted to bright light such as daylight, using the cones in the retina instead of the rods, which are used in scotopic vision. 2. light adaptation

photopsia /ˌfəʊtəˈpɒsɪs/ noun a condition of the eye in which someone sees flashes of light

photorceptor neurone /ˌfəʊtərˈkɛpər,septərˈkɛpər/ noun a rod or cone in the retina, which is sensitive to light or colour

photoretinitis /ˌfəʊtərəˈretɪtɪs/ noun damage to a retina caused by looking directly at the sun. Also called sun blindness

photosensitive /ˌfəʊtəsəˈsɛnsɪtɪv/ adjective sensitive to light, or stimulated by light

photosensitivity /ˌfəʊtəsəsˈsɛnsɪtɪvɪtɪ/ noun the fact of being sensitive to light

phototherapy /ˌfəʊtəˈθɛrəpi/ noun a treatment for jaundice and vitamin D deficiency, which involves exposing the person to ultraviolet rays

phren- /fren/ prefix same as phreno- (used before vowels)

-phrenia /freniə/ suffix disorder of the mind

phrenic /ˈfrenɪk/ adjective referring to the diaphragm

phrenic nerve /ˈfrenɪk ˈnɜːv/ noun a pair of nerves which controls the muscles in the diaphragm

phreno- /frenəʊ/ prefix 1. referring to the brain 2. referring to the phrenic nerve

pH test /piː ˈɛst/ test/ noun a test to see how acid or alkaline a solution is

phthiriasis /fəθəriəˈsɪs/ noun infestation with the crab louse

Phthirius pubis /fəθəriəs ˈpjuːbɪs/ noun a louse which infests the pubic region. Also called pubic louse, crab

physi- /fɪˈziː/ prefix same as physio- (used before vowels)

physical /fɪzɪk(ə)l/ adjective referring to the body, as opposed to the mind.I noun a physical examination O He has to pass a physical before being accepted by the police force.

physical drug dependence /fɪzɪk(ə)l ˈdrʌg dɪˈpendəns/ noun a state where a person is addicted to a drug such as heroin and suffers physical effects if he or she stops or reduces the drug

physical education /fɪzɪk(ə)l ˈɛdjuˌkeɪʃən/ noun the teaching of sports and exercises in school

physical examination /fɪzɪk(ə)l ɪgˈzæmən/ noun an examination of someone’s body to see if he or she is healthy

physical genetic trait /fɪzɪk(ə)l ˈdʒɛnetɪk ˈtreɪt/ noun a characteristic of the body of a person, e.g. red hair or big feet, which is inherited

physical medicine /fɪzɪk(ə)l ˈmɛd(ə)si/ noun a branch of medicine which deals with physical disabilities or with treatment of disorders after they have been diagnosed
Physical sign

Physical sign /fiziik(ə)l/ 'saim/ noun a symptom which can be seen on someone’s body or which can be produced by percussion and palpitation

Physical therapy /fiziik(ə)l/ ‘terapᵢ/ noun the treatment of disorders by heat, by massage, by exercise and other physical means

Physician /fiziiz(ə)zn/ noun a registered doctor who is not a surgeon

Physio /fiziiz(ə)vn (informal) 1. a session of physiotherapy treatment 2. a physiotherapist

Physio-/fiziiz(ə)pn/ prefix 1. referring to physiology 2. physical

Physiological /fiziizˈlɪdʒɪk(ə)l/ adjective referring to physiology and the regular functions of the body

Physiological saline /fiziizˈlɪdʒɪk(ə)l ˈsɛlənəʊ/ physiological solution /fiziiz ˈlɪdʒɪk(ə)l ˈsɛləˈluː̆n/ noun any solution used to keep cells or tissue alive

Physiological tremor /fiziizˈlɪdʒɪk(ə)l ˈtrɛmər/ noun a small movement of the limbs which takes place when a person tries to remain still

Physiologist /fiziizˈlɪdʒɪst/ noun a scientist who specialises in the study of the functions of living organisms

Physiology /fiziizˈlɪdʒi/ noun the study of regular body functions

Physiotherapist /fiziizˈθɛrəpɪst/ noun a trained specialist who gives physiotherapy

Physiotherapy /fiziizˈθɛrəpᵢ/ noun the treatment of a disorder or condition by exercise, massage, heat treatment, infrared lamps or other external means, e.g. to restore strength or function after a disease or injury

Physiotherapy clinic /fiziizˈθɛrəpᵢ kˈlɪnɪk/ noun a clinic where people can have physiotherapy

Physique /fiziik/ noun the shape and size of a person’s body

Physyo-/faisə/ prefix 1. tending to swell 2. relating to air or gas

Phyt-/flɔt, phyt/o- /faisəl ˈprɛsɪŋ/ referring to plants or coming from plants

PI abbreviation pressure index

Pia /ˈpiːə/ pia mater /ˈpiːə ˈmeɪtə/ noun the delicate innermost membrane of the three which cover the brain.  

Pacemaker /ˌpəkˈmɛːkər/ noun a device that produces a regular amount of electricity

Pica /ˈpiːkə/ noun a desire to eat things which are not food, e.g. wood or paper, often found in pregnant women and small children

Pick’s disease /ˈpɪks diˌzɪk/ noun a rare form of presenile dementia, in which a disorder of the lipid metabolism causes mental impairment, anaemia, loss of weight and swelling of the spleen and liver

Pico-/piˌkəʊ/ prefix one millionth (10⁻⁹). Symbol p

Picomole /ˌpiˌkəʊˈməʊl/ noun a unit of measurement of the amount of substance equal to one millionth of a mole. Symbol pmol

Pierre Robin syndrome /ˌpɪər ˈrɒbᵢn/ syndrome noun a combination of facial features including a small lower jaw and a cleft palate that exist at birth, causing breathing and feeding problems early in a child’s life

Pigeon breast /ˈpɪdʒən brest/ pigen chest /ˈpɪdʒən tʃest/ noun same as pectus carinatum

Pigeon toes /ˈpɪdʒən tʃəʊs plural noun a condition in which the feet turn towards the inside when a person is standing upright

Pigment /ˈpɪɡmənt/ noun a substance which gives colour to part of the body such as blood, the skin or hair

Pigmentation /ˈpɪɡməntˈteɪʃən/ noun the colouring of the body, especially that produced by deposits of pigment

PIH abbreviation pregnancy-induced hypertension

Piles /ˈpailz plural noun same as haemorrhoids

Pill /ˈpail/ a arrector pill

Pill /pil/ noun a small hard round ball of medication that is taken by swallowing. He has to take the pills twice a day.

Morning-after pill /ˈmɔrɪŋ-əˈfɛər pil/ on the pill taking a regular course of contraceptive pills

Pillar /ˈpɪlər noun a part that is long and thin

Pilo-/pailəʊ/ prefix referring to hair

Pilocarpine /ˌpailəʊˈkɑːrpɪn/ noun an organic compound of plant origin which is used in eye drops to treat glaucoma

Pilomotor /ˌpailoʊˈməʊtər/ adjective referring to something that moves the hairs of the skin

Pilomotor nerve /ˌpailoʊˈməʊtər ˈnɜːv/ noun a nerve which supplies the arrector pili muscles attached to hair follicles

Pilomotor reflex /ˌpailoʊˈməʊtər ˈrɪflɛks/ noun a reaction of the dermal papilla of the skin to cold and fear which causes the hairs on the skin to become erect

Pilonidal /ˌpailənˈdɪdəl/ adjective relating to a cyst or cavity which has a growth of hair

Pilonidal cyst /ˌpailənˈdɪdəl ˈsɪst/ noun a cyst containing hair, usually found at the bottom of the spine near the buttocks

Pilonidal sinus /ˌpailənˈdɪdəl ˈsʌɪnəs/ noun a small depression with hairs at the base of the spine

Pilosus /ˌpailəʊˈsəʊsəs, piloˈsɪsəs/ pilosism /ˌpailoʊˌsɪzɪm/ noun a condition in which someone has an unusual amount of hair or where hair is present in an unusual place

Pilot study /ˈpailət ˈstʌdi noun a small version of a project which is carried out first, in order
to discover how well it works and to solve any problems, before going ahead with the full version.

**Pilus** /pi:liz/ noun one hair (NOTE: The plural is pilii.)

**Pimple** /pi:mpl/ noun a small swelling on the skin, containing pus. He had pimples on his neck.

**Pineal** /pi:nl/ adjective relating to or released by the pineal gland

**Pineal body** /pi:nsl, b6di/, **pineal gland** /pi:nsl glands/ noun a small cone-shaped gland situated below the corpus callosum in the brain, which produces melatonin and is believed to be associated with the circadian rhythm. See illustration at *Brain* in Supplement

**Pinguecula** /pi:ngwikjula/, **Pinguicula** /pi:n/ 'gwikjula/ noun a condition affecting elderly people, in which the conjunctiva in the eyes has small yellow growths near the edge of the cornea, usually on the nasal side

**Pinnaplasty** /pi:nplastli/ noun a cosmetic surgical procedure to correct the shape of the ear

**Pinocytosis** /pi:no'siziss/ noun the process by which a cell surrounds and takes in fluid

**Pins and needles** /pi:nz an `nIdz(rolleyz)/ noun an unpleasant tingling sensation, usually occurring after a temporarily restricted blood supply returns to an arm or leg (informal) & paraesthesia

**PIP** abbreviation proximal interphalangeal joint

**Piriform fossa** /pi:ri:fom fo:sa/ plural noun the two hollows at the sides of the upper end of the larynx

**Piriform** /pi:`ritarn/ a trade name for chlorpheniramine

**Piroxicam** /pi:roksi:kam/ noun a non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drug used in the treatment of rheumatoid arthritis and osteoarthritis

**PKS** abbreviation performance indicators

**Piliform** /pi:li:fom/, **Piliform bone** /pi:li:fom b6ni/ noun one of the eight small carpal bones in the wrist. See illustration at *Hand* in Supplement

**Pit** /pit/ noun a hollow place on a surface

**Pitting** /`pitii/ noun the formation of hollows in the skin

**Pituitary fossa** /pi:`ju:ti:s(ori)` f6sai/ noun same as **Sella turcica**

**Pituitary gland** /pi:`ju:ti:s(ori) gland/ noun the main endocrine gland in the body which secretes hormones that stimulate other glands. Also called **Pituitary body, Hypophysis cerebri**. See illustration at *Brain* in Supplement

**COMMENT:** The pituitary gland is about the size of a pea and hangs down from the base of the brain, inside the sphenoid bone, on a stalk which attaches it to the hypothalamus.

The front lobe of the gland (the adenohypophysis) secretes several hormones (TSH, ACTH) which stimulate the adrenal and thyroid glands, or which stimulate the production of sex hormones, melanin and milk. The posterior lobe of the pituitary gland (the neurohypophysis) secretes the antidiuretic hormone (ADH) and oxytocin.

**Pituitrin** /pi:`ju:ti:tren/ noun a hormone secreted by the pituitary gland

**Pityriasis** /pi:ti:`ri:zi:si:s/ noun any skin disease in which the skin develops thin scales

**Pityriasis alba** /pi:ti:`ri:zi:si:s `alba/ noun a disease affecting children which results in flat white patches on the cheeks that usually heal naturally

**Pityriasis capitis** /pi:ti:`ri:zi:si:s `kapits/ noun dandruff

**Pityriasis rosea** /pi:ti:`ri:zi:si:s `rouziə/ noun a mild irritating rash affecting young people, which appears especially in the early part of the year and has no known cause

**Pityriasis rubra** /pi:ti:`ri:zi:si:s `rubra/ noun a serious, sometimes fatal, skin disease, a type of exfoliative dermatitis in which the skin turns dark red and is covered with white scales

**Pivovar’s** /pi:`vo:varz/ noun a stem used to attach an artificial crown to the root of a tooth & verb to rest and turn on a point & The atlas bone pivots on the second vertebra

**Pivovar joint** /pi:`vo:var d3zi:m/ noun same as **Trochoid joint**

**PKD** abbreviation polycystic kidney disease

**PKU** abbreviation phenylketonuria

**Placebo** /pləu:`so:bu/ noun a tablet which appears to be a drug, but has no medicinal substance in it

**Placebo effect** /pləu:`so:bu 1`efekt/ noun the apparently beneficial effect of telling someone that he or she is having a treatment, even if this is not true, caused by the hope that the treatment will be effective

**Placenta** /pla:`senta/ noun the tissue which grows inside the uterus during pregnancy and links the baby to the mother

**Plactal** /pla:`sental/ adjective referring to the placenta

**Plental barrier** /pla:`sen(t)al `barriə/ noun a barrier which prevents the blood of a fetus and
placental insufficiency
that of the mother from mixing, but allows water, oxygen and hormones to pass from mother to fetus

placental insufficiency /pla'sentl/ins/f noun a condition in which the placenta does not provide the fetus with the necessary oxygen and nutrients

placenta praevia /pla'sentə 'prɛviə/ noun a condition in which the fertilised egg becomes implanted in the lower part of the uterus, which means that the placenta lies across the cervix and may become detached during childbirth and cause brain damage to the baby

plagiocephaly /pla'zjəʊ kɛfəli/ noun a condition in which a person has a distorted head shape, from irregular closure of the cranial sutures

plaque /pleʊk/ noun an infectious disease which occurs in epidemics where many people are killed

placenta /ˈplæsəntə/ noun a flat surface, especially that of the body seen from a specific angle

planning /ˈplænɪŋ/ noun the work of deciding and arranging how something should be done

planta /ˈplæntə/ noun the sole of the foot

plantar /ˈplæntər/ adjective referring to the sole of the foot

plantar arch /ˈplæntər ˈɑːtʃ/ noun the curved part of the sole of the foot running along the length of the foot. Also called longitudinal arch

plantar flexion /ˈplæntər ˈfleksʃən/ noun the bending of the toes downwards

plantar reflex /ˈplæntər ˈrɛflɛks/, plantar response /ˈplæntər ˈrɛspɔns/ noun the usual downward movement of the toes when the sole of the foot is stroked in the Babinski test

plantar region /ˈplæntər ˈrɪdzjən/ noun the sole of the foot

plantar surface /ˈplæntər ˈsɜːfəs/ noun the skin of the sole of the foot

planus /ˈpleɪnəs/ lichen planus

plaque /ˈpleɪk, ˈplɑːk/ noun 1. a flat area 2. a film of saliva, mucus, bacteria and food residues that builds up on the surface of teeth and can cause gum damage

-plasia /ˈpleɪzəs/ suffix referring to something which develops or grows

plasmin /ˈplæzmaɪn/ noun same as fibrinolysin

plasminogen /ˈplæzmaɪnəʊɡən/ noun a substance in blood plasma which becomes activated and forms plasmin

plasma protein /ˈplæzmə ,prəʊtəˈmɛn/ noun a protein in plasma, e.g. albumin, gamma globulin or fibrinogen

plasmin /ˈplæzmaɪn/ noun same as fibrinolysin

plasminogen /ˈplæzmaɪnəʊɡən/ noun a substance in blood plasma which becomes activated and forms plasmin

plasmo-/ˈpleɪzməʊ/ prefix referring to blood plasma

Plasmodium /ˈplæzmaʊdɪəm/ noun a type of parasite which infects red blood cells and causes malaria

plaster /ˈplæstər/ noun a white powder which is mixed with water and used to make a solid support to cover a broken limb O After his accident he had his leg in plaster for two months.

plaster cast /ˈplæstər ˈkæst/ noun a hard support made of bandage soaked in liquid plaster of Paris, which is allowed to harden after being wrapped round a broken limb and which prevents the limb moving while the bone heals

plaster of Paris /ˈplæstər əv ˈparɪs/ noun a fine white plaster used to make plaster casts

plastic /ˈplæstɪk/ noun an artificial material made from petroleum, and used to make many objects, including replacement organs O adjective able to change shape or develop in different shapes

plastic lymph /ˈplæstɪk lɪmf/ noun a yellow liquid produced by an inflamed wound which helps the healing process

plastic surgeon /ˈplæstɪk ˈsɜːdʒən/ noun a surgeon who specialises in plastic surgery

plastic surgery /ˈplæstɪk ˈsɜːdʒərɪ/ noun surgery to repair damaged or malformed parts of the body (informal)

COMMENT: Plastic surgery is especially important in treating accident victims or people who have suffered burns. It is also used to correct congenital disorders such as a cleft palate. When the aim is simply to improve the patient’s appearance, it is usually referred to as ‘cosmetic surgery’.

plastin /ˈplæstən/ noun same as fibrinolysin

-plasty /ˈplæstɪ/ suffix referring to plastic surgery

plate /ˈpleɪt/ noun a flat sheet of metal or bone O The surgeon inserted a plate in her skull

platelet /ˈplætəl/ noun a small blood cell which releases thromboplastin and which multiplies rapidly after an injury, encouraging the coagulation of blood. Also called thrombocyte

platelet count /ˈplætəlit ˈkɒnt/ noun a test to count the number of platelets in a specific quantity of blood

-platey /ˈplætə/ prefix flat

pledget /ˈpledʒt/ noun a small piece of gauze or cotton wool used to protect or apply medica-
tion to a small enclosed space, such as the ear passage.

-plegia /pliːdʒə/ suffix paralysis
pleio- /pliːəʊ/ prefix same as pleio-
pleo- /pliːəʊ/ prefix too many
pleocytosis /pliːəʊsɪtəs/ noun a condition in which there are an unusual number of leukocytes in the cerebrospinal fluid
pleoptics /pliːəʊptɪks/ noun treatment to help the partially sighted
plessor /plɛsər/ noun a little hammer with a rubber tip, used by doctors to tap tendons to test for reflexes or for percussion of the chest. Also called plexor
pleura- /pliːəʊər/ prefix same as pleuro- (used before vowels)
pleura /pliːəʊərə/ noun one of two membranes lining the chest cavity and covering each lung (NOTE: The plural is pleura or pleuræ.)
pleuracentesis /pliːəʊərsəntɪsəs/ noun same as pleurocentesis
pleural /pliːəʊələr/ adjective referring to the pleura
pleural cavity /pliːəʊələr ˈkævəti/ noun a space between the inner and outer pleura of the chest. See illustration at LUNGS in Supplement
pleural effusion /pliːəʊələr ˈɛfəsən/ noun an excess of fluid formed in the pleural sac
pleural fluid /pliːəʊələr ˈfljuːɪd/ noun a fluid which forms between the layers of the pleura in pleurisy
pleural membrane /pliːəʊələr ˈmembərn/ noun same as pleura
pleurectomy /pliːəʊrəkˈtɒmɪ/ noun the surgical removal of part of the pleura which has been thickened or made stiff by chronic empyema
pleurisy /pliːəʊərɪsɪs/ noun inflammation of the pleura, usually caused by pneumonia
pleuritis /pliːəʊrərɪtɪs/ noun same as pleurisy
pleuro- /pliːəʊərəʊ/ prefix referring to the pleura
pleurocentesis /pliːəʊərəsɛntɪsɪs/ noun an operation in which a hollow needle is put into the pleura to drain liquid. Also called pleuracentesis
pleurodesis /pliːəʊərədɛsɪs/ noun treatment for a collapsed lung, in which the inner and outer pleura are stuck together
pleurodynia /pliːəʊərəˈdɜːnɪə/ noun pain in the muscles between the ribs, due to rheumatic inflammation
pleuropneumonia /pliːəʊərəˈnjuːmənɪə/ noun acute lobar pneumonia, the classic type of pneumonia

pneumococcus /pniːəʊməˈkɒkəs/ noun a bacterium which causes respiratory tract infec-
pneumococcal pneumonia (NOTE: The plural is pneumococci.)

pneumococcal pneumonia /ˈnjuːməʊkɒkəl/ noun a lung disease in which fibrous tissue forms in the lungs because the person has inhaled particles of stone or dust over a long period of time

pneumocystis carinii pneumonia /ˌnjuːməʊkɔɪstɪs kærəˈniː/ noun a form of pneumonia found in people with impaired immune systems after radiotherapy or with AIDS. Abbreviation PCP

pneumocystis jiroveci /ˌnjuːməʊkɔɪstɪs dʒɪroʊˈvɛkti/ noun a cell of the walls between the air sacs in the lung

pneumoencephalography /ˌnjuːməʊˈɛnsifikələrɪ/ noun an X-ray examination of part of the brain

pneumogastric /ˌnjuːməʊɡəˈstrɪk/ adjective referring to the lungs and the stomach

pneumograph /ˌnjuːməɡrɑːf/ noun an instrument which records chest movements during breathing

pneumohemothorax /ˌnjuːməˌhɪmoʊθɔrəks/ noun blood or air in the pleural cavity. Also called haemopneumothorax

pneumomycosis /ˌnjuːməʊmɪsəs/ noun an infection of the lungs caused by a fungus

pneumon- /ˈnjuːmən-/ prefix same as pneumono- (used before vowels)

pneumonectomy /ˌnjuːmənˈektəmɪ/ noun the surgical removal of all or part of a lung. Also called pulmonectomy

pneumonia /ˈnjuːməniə/ noun inflammation of a lung, where the tiny alveoli of the lung become filled with fluid. He developed pneumonia and had to be hospitalised. She died of pneumonia.

pneumonitis /ˌnjuːmənˈaɪtɪs/ noun inflammation of the lungs

pneumono- /ˈnjuːmənəʊ-/ prefix referring to the lungs

pneumoperitoneum /ˌnjuːməpərɪˈtəʊn/ noun air in the peritoneal cavity

pneumoradiography /ˌnjuːməˈreɪdʒərɪ/ noun an X-ray examination of part of the body after air or a gas has been inserted to make the organs show more clearly

pneumothorax /ˌnjuːməˌθɔrəks/ noun a condition in which air or gas is in the thorax. Also called collapsed lung

-pnea /-ˈnɪə/ suffix referring to breathing

PNS abbreviation peripheral nervous system

pock /pɒk/ noun a localised lesion on the skin, due to smallpox or chickenpox

pod- /pɒd-/ prefix referring to the foot

podagra /ˈpɒdəɡrə/ noun gout

podalic /ˈpɒdəlɪk/ adjective relating to the foot

podalic version /ˈpɒdəlɪk ˈvərsən/ noun the procedure of turning a fetus in the uterus by its feet

podarthritism /ˌpɒdɑːˈθrɪtɪzəm/ noun the swelling of one or more joints of the foot

podiatrist /ˌpɒdiəˈstrɪst/ noun a person who specialises in the care of the foot and its diseases

podiatry /ˌpɒdiəˈtrɪ/ noun the study of minor diseases and disorders of the feet

poliesis /ˌpɒliˌɛsɪs/ suffix referring to something which forms

poikilo- /ˌpoɪkɪˌləʊ/ prefix irregular or varied

poison /ˈpɔɪzn/ noun a substance which can kill or harm body tissues if eaten or drunk. ■ verb to harm or kill someone with a poison

poisoning /ˈpɔɪznɪŋ/ noun a condition in which a person is made ill or is killed by a poisonous substance

poison ivy /ˌpɔɪzn ɪˈvi/, poison oak /ˌpɔɪzn ɑʊk/ noun American plants whose leaves can cause a painful rash if touched

Poisons Act /ˈpɔɪznz ˈeɪkt/ noun in the UK, one of several Acts of Parliament which regulate the making, prescribing and selling of drugs, e.g., the Pharmacy and Poisons Act 1933, Misuse of Drugs Act 1971, or Poisons Act 1972

polar /ˈpɔlər/ adjective with a pole

polary /ˌpɒləri/ noun a small cell which is produced from an oocyte but does not develop into an ovum

pole /pəul/ noun the end of an axis

poli-/pəli/ prefix same as polio- (used before vowels)

polio /ˌpɒliəʊ/ noun same as poliomyelitis (informal)

polio-/pəliəʊ-/ prefix grey matter in the nervous system

poliomyelitis /ˌpɒliəʊmɪlɪtɪs/ noun a type of viral encephalitis, an inflammation of the grey matter in the brain caused by the same virus as poliomyelitis

poliomyelitis /ˌpɒliəʊmɪlɪtɪs/ noun a type of viral encephalitis, an inflammation of the grey matter in the brain caused by the same virus as poliomyelitis

poliomyelitis /ˌpɒliəʊmɪlɪtɪs/ noun which also affects the spinal cord

poliomyelitis /ˌpɒliəʊmɪlɪtɪs/ noun an infection of the anterior horn cells of the spinal cord caused by a virus which attacks the motor neurones and can lead to paralysis. Also called polio, infantile paralysis

poliovirus /ˌpɒliəʊvɜːrəs/ noun a virus which causes poliomyelitis

Politzer bag /ˌpɒlɪˈtɪzar bɑɡ/ noun a rubber bag which is used to blow air into the middle ear to unblock a Eustachian tube [Described 1863. After Adam Politzer (1835–1920), Professor of Otology in Vienna, Austria.]
arteritis nodosa

polydipsia

polydactylism

polycythaemia

polycystic ovary disease

polycystic ovary disease

polycystic ovary disease

polycystic kidney disease

polycystic ovary syndrome

polycystic ovarian disease

polyarthritis

polyneuropathy

polyphagia

polyspermia

polyspermism

polyps

polyneuropathies

polyuria

polysaccarides

polyopia
pontine /ˈpɒntɪn/ adjective referring to a pons

PPOP /ˈpɒplɪtəl/ adjective referring to the back of the knee

popliteal artery /ˌpɒplɪtˈɪkəl ˈɑːtəri/ noun an artery which branches from the femoral artery behind the knee and leads into the tibial arteries

popliteal fossa /ˌpɒplɪtˈɪkəl ˈfʊsə/ noun a space behind the knee between the hamstring and the calf muscles. Also called popliteal space

popliteal muscle /ˌpɒplɪtˈɪkəl ˈmʌskəl/ noun same as popliteus

popliteal space /ˌpɒplɪtˈɪkəl ˈspeɪs/ noun same as popliteal fossa

popliteus /ˌpɒplɪtˈiːəs/ noun a muscle at the back of the knee. Also called popliteal muscle

population /ˌpɒpəˈleɪʃn/ noun 1. the number of people living in a country or town. 2. Population statistics show that the birth rate is slowing down. 3. The government has decided to screen the whole population of the area. 4. The number of patients in hospital. 5. The hospital population in the area has fallen below 10,000.

pore /pɔːr/ noun a tiny hole in the skin through which the sweat passes

porphyria /pɔːrˈfɪərɪə/ noun a hereditary disease affecting the metabolism of porphyrin pigments. It causes abdominal pains and attacks of mental confusion. The skin becomes sensitive to light and the urine becomes coloured and turns dark brown when exposed to the light.

porphyrin /pɔːrˈfɪrɪn/ noun a member of a family of metal-containing biological pigments, the commonest of which is protoporphyrin IX

porphyrinuria /pɔːrˈfɪrɪnjuːrɪə/ noun the presence of excess porphyrins in the urine, a sign of porphyria or of metal poisoning

porta /ˈpɔrtə/ noun an opening which allows blood vessels to pass into an organ. (Note: The plural is portae.)

Portacath /ˈpɔrtəkæθ/ noun a type of catheter put in place under a person’s skin to make it easier to have chemotherapy, transfusions and blood tests. It is accessed by the use of a special needle and flushed regularly with sterile saline.

portacaval /ˌpɔrtəˈkeɪvəl/ adjective another spelling of portocaval

portae /ˈpɔrtə/ plural of porta

porta hepatitis /ˈpɔrtə ˌhepətɪs/ noun an opening in the liver through which the hepatic artery, hepatic duct and portal vein pass. (Note: The plural is portae hepaticae.)

portal /ˈpɔrtəl/ adjective referring to a porta, especially the portal system or the portal vein

portal hypertension /ˈpɔrtəl ˌhaɪpərˈtɒŋsɪən/ noun high pressure in the portal vein, caused by cirrhosis of the liver or a clot in the vein and causing internal bleeding

portal system /ˈpɔrtəl ˌsɪstəm/ noun a group of veins which have capillaries at both ends and do not go to the heart

portal vein /ˈpɔrtəl ˌveɪn/ noun a vein which takes blood from the stomach, pancreas, gall bladder, intestines and spleen to the liver. (Note: For other terms referring to the portal vein, see words beginning with pyel-)

portacaval /ˌpɔrtəˈkeɪvəl/ adjective linking the portal vein to the inferior vena cava

portacaval anastomosis /ˌpɔrtəˈkeɪvəl əˈnæstəməsɪs/ noun a surgical operation to join the portal vein to the inferior vena cava and divert blood past the liver

portacaval shunt /ˌpɔrtəˈkeɪvəl ˈʃʌnt/ noun an artificial passage made between the portal vein and the inferior vena cava to relieve portal hypertension

port wine stain /ˈpɔrt ˌwɪn ə stɛn/ noun a purple birthmark

position /pəˈzɪʃn/ noun 1. the place where something is. 2. The exact position of the tumour is located by an X-ray. 3. The way a person’s body is arranged. 4. In a sitting position. 5. The accident victim had been placed in the recovery position.

positive /ˈpəʊzɪtɪv/ adjective 1. indicating the answer ‘yes’. 2. indicating the presence of something being tested for. (Note: Her cervical smear was positive. Opposite negative)

positive end-expiratory pressure /ˌpəʊzɪtɪv ˌɛnd ɪkˈspɛrətri pəˈreɪʒ/ noun the procedure of forcing a person to breathe through a mask in cases where fluid has collected in the lungs. Abbreviation PEEP

positive feedback /ˌpəʊzɪtɪv ˈfiːdbæk/ noun a situation in which the result of a process stimulates the process which caused it

positive pressure respirator /ˌpəʊzɪtɪv ˈpreɪʒ ˌresɪpərətər/ noun a machine which forces air into the lungs through a tube inserted in the mouth

positive pressure ventilation /ˌpəʊzɪtɪv ˈpreɪʒ ˈvɛntɪlətʃən/ noun the act of forcing air into the lungs to encourage the lungs to expand. Abbreviation PPV

positron-emission tomography /ˌpəʊzɪˈtrɒn ɪˈmɪʃn ˈtɒmɒɡrəfi/ noun a method of scanning the tissues of the brain, chest and abdomen for unusual metabolic activity after injecting a radioactive substance into the body. Abbreviation PET

posology /pəˈsɒlədʒi/ noun the study of doses of medicine

The hospital (noun) is arranged in a sitting position (verb) to allow the patient to be scanned for (thing being tested for) by the positron-emission tomography (noun) machine. Abbreviation PET (abbreviation).
postoperative /pəʊˈstəʊprəʊ/ /ˈprəʊtəpərətɪv/ adjective referring to the period after a surgical operation.

postoperative pain /pəʊˈstəʊprəʊˈpeɪn/ noun pain felt after a surgical operation.

postpartum /pəʊˈstɔːprətəm/ /ˈpəʊtəprətəm/ adjective referring to the period after the birth of a child.

postmenopausal /pəʊstˈmɛnəpəʊsəl/ adjective happening or existing after the menopause. She experienced some postmenopausal bleeding.

postmeningitis /pəʊstˈmɛnɪdʒɪtɪs/ noun an inflammation of the meninges.

postmenstrual depression /pəʊstˈmɛnstrʊəl dɪˈpreʃən/ noun depression which sometimes affects a woman after childbirth.

postmenstrual syndrome /pəʊstˈmɛnstrʊəl ˈsɪndrəʊm/ noun a group of symptoms which can occur after eating in people who have had stomach operations. It is caused by a lot of food passing into the small intestine too fast and can cause dizziness, nausea, sweating and weakness. Also called dumping syndrome.

postnasal drip /pəʊstˈnæzdrip/ noun an obstruction to the nose.

postnatal /pəʊstˈneɪtəl/ adjective referring to the period after the birth of a child.

postnatal care /pəʊstˈneɪtəl kɛə/ noun the care given to a woman after the birth of her child.

postnatal depression /pəʊstˈneɪtəl dɪˈpreʃən/ noun depression which sometimes affects a woman after childbirth.

postnecrotic cirrhosis /pəʊstˈnɛkroʊtɪk ˈsɜːrhrəʊsɪs/ noun fibrosis of the liver caused by viral hepatitis.

postoperative /pəʊstˈɒpərətɪv/ adjective referring to the period after a surgical operation. The patient has suffered postoperative nausea and vomiting. Occision may appear as postoperative angina pectoris.

postoperative pain /pəʊstˈɒpərətɪv ˈpeɪn/ noun pain felt after a surgical operation.

postoperative shingles /pəʊstˈɒpərətɪv ˈʃɪŋɡlz/ noun postoperative pain felt after a surgical operation.

postoperative syndrome /pəʊstˈɒpərətɪv ˈsɪndrəʊm/ noun a group of symptoms that can occur after surgery such as a telephone (NOTE: The name is derived from the first letters of patient-operated selector mechanism).

postoperative pain /pəʊstˈɒpərətɪv ˈpeɪn/ noun pain felt after an attack of shingles.

postoperative jaundice /pəʊstˈɒpərətɪv ˈdʒɔʊndɪs/ noun same as obstructive jaundice.

postoperative pain /pəʊstˈɒpərətɪv ˈpeɪn/ noun pain felt after an attack of shingles.

postoperative jaundice /pəʊstˈɒpərətɪv ˈdʒɔʊndɪs/ noun jaundice occurring after death.

postoperative pain /pəʊstˈɒpərətɪv ˈpeɪn/ noun pain felt after an attack of shingles.

postoperative pain /pəʊstˈɒpərətɪv ˈpeɪn/ noun pain felt after an attack of shingles.
postpartum fever /pəˈstɑːt۶ partam 'fi:və/ noun same as puerperal infection
postpartum haemorrhage /pəˈstɑːt۶ partam 'heɪmərɔrʒ/ noun heavy bleeding after childbirth. Abbreviation PPH
post-primary tuberculosis /pəˈstɑːt۶ prəˈmɔːrni ˈfɪə,bræk,joʊ ləʊs/ noun the reappearance of tuberculosis in a person who has been infected with it before
post-registration education and practice /pəˈstɑːt۶ ˈredʒɪstrəʃ(ə)n edʒə,ki/ noun an educational activity and practice for registered nurses and midwives to undertake educational activities and keep up with contemporary practice, and also for their employers to address the learning needs of staff. It was started by the UKCC in 1993. Abbreviation PREP
post-traumatic /pəˈstɑːt۶ tɾəˈmætrɪk/ adjective appearing after a trauma, e.g. after an accident, rape or fire
post-traumatic amnesia /pəˈstɑːt۶ tɾəˈmætrɪk əˈmɪznə/ noun amnesia which follows a trauma and appears after a trauma, e.g. after an accident, rape or fire
post-traumatic stress disorder /pəˈstɑːt۶ tɾəˈmætrɪk ˈstres dɪs,ɔdə/ noun a psychological condition affecting people who have suffered severe emotional trauma, e.g. occasioned by war or natural disaster. Its symptoms include chest pain, dizziness, sleep disturbances, flashbacks, anxiety, tiredness, and depression. Abbreviation PTSD
postural /pəˈstɑːrəl/ adjective referring to posture or a study of postural disorders
postural drainage /pəˈstɑːrəl 'dɾɛmɪdʒ/ noun a procedure for removing matter from infected lungs by making the person lie down with the head lower than the feet, so that he or she can cough more easily
postural hypotension /pəˈstɑːrəl ˈhaɪpə tʃən/ noun low blood pressure when standing up suddenly, causing dizziness
posture /pəˈstɑːr/ noun the position in which a body is arranged, or the way a person usually holds his or her body when standing or lying down, that can cause pain in the back. She has to do exercises to correct her bad posture.
postviral /pəˈstɑːvərəl/ adjective occurring after a viral infection
postviral fatigue syndrome /pəˈstɑːvərəl fəˈtɪɡ ˈsnɔːrdʒəm/ noun same as myalgic encephalomyelitis
potassium /pəˈtɑːsɪəm/ noun a metallic element (Note: The chemical symbol is K.)
potassium permanganate /pəˈtɑːsɪəm pə ˈmæŋɡənət/ noun a purple-coloured poisonous salt, used as a disinfectant
Pott’s fracture /pətts ˈfrækʃən/ noun a fracture of the lower end of the fibula together with displacement of the ankle and foot outwards [Described 1765. After Sir Percivall Pott (1714–88), London surgeon.]
pouch /pəʊʃ/ noun a small sac or pocket attached to an organ
poulence /pəʊnts/ noun a compress made of hot water and flour paste or other substances which is pressed onto an infected part to draw out pus, to relieve pain or to encourage the circulation. Also called fomentation
Poupart’s ligament /pəʊpɔːrts ˈlɪgəmənt/ noun same as inguinal ligament [Described 1705. After François Poupart (1616–1708), French surgeon and anatomist.]
powder /pəʊdər/ noun a medicine in the form of a fine dry dust made from particles of drugs. He took a powder to help his indigestion or He took an indigestion powder.
pox /pɔks/ noun same as syphilis (old)
poxvirus /pɔks, vɔrəs/ noun any of a group of viruses which cause cowpox, smallpox and related diseases
p.p. abbreviation after a meal. Full form post prandium
PPH abbreviation postpartum haemorrhage
PPV abbreviation positive pressure ventilation
PQRST complex noun the set of deflections on an electrocardiogram, labelled P to T, which show ventricular contraction
p.r. adverb (of an examination) by the rectum. Full form per rectum
practice /ˈpræktɪs/ noun 1. the business, or the premises occupied by, a doctor, dentist, or a group of doctors or dentists working together. After qualifying she joined her father’s practice. 2. in practice working the work of a doctor or dentist. He has been in practice for six years. 2. the fact of doing something, as opposed to thinking or talking about it. Theory and practice. 3. a usual way of doing something. Such practices are now regarded as unsafe.
pactice nurse /ˈpræktɪs nəs/ noun a nurse employed by a GP or primary care trust to work in a GP’s practice providing treatment, health promotion, screening and other services to patients of the practice
practitioner /ˈpræktɪʃ(ə)n/ noun a qualified person who works in the medical profession
prævia /ˈpræviə/ noun a placenta praevia
pravastatin /ˈprævəstətən/ noun a drug used to reduce unusually high levels of blood cholesterol
prazosin /ˈpræzoʊsɪn/ noun a drug which relaxes or widens the blood vessels, used to treat hypertension
pre- /prɪ/ prefix before or in front of preadmission information /priˈɛdəməʃ(ə)n ɪnˈfɔrməʃ(ə)n/ noun information given to a person before he or she is admitted to hospital
preanaesthetic round /pri:/n noun an examination of patients by the surgeon before they are anaesthetised
precancerous /pri:kænəsərəs/ adjective referring to a growth which is not malignant now, but which can become cancerous later
preceptor /pri:sep'tər/ noun a specialist who gives practical training to a student
preceptorship /pri:sep'tərship/ noun a period of time during which a recently trained nurse, midwife or health visitor can gain practical experience working with a specialist who advises and guides them
precipitate /pri:s'prɪtɪt/ noun a substance which is precipitated during a chemical reaction
|web 1. to make a control separate from a chemical compound and fall to the bottom of a liquid during a chemical reaction |Casein is precipitated when milk comes into contact with an acid. 2. to make something start suddenly [NOTE: all verb senses] precipitating – precipitated
precipitate labour /pri:s'prɪtɪt leɪbə/noun unusually fast labour, lasting two hours or less. It can be dangerous both to the mother and to the child.
prefect /pri:fekt/ noun an antibody which reacts to an antigen and forms a precipitate, used in many diagnostic tests
precocious /pri:kəʊʃəs/ adjective more physically or mentally developed than is usual for a specific age
precocious puberty /pri:kəʊʃəs 'pjuːbɹəti/ noun the development of signs of puberty in girls before the age of seven, and in boys before the age of nine. If untreated, affected boys typically grow no taller than 1.6 metres and girls rarely reach 1.5 metres.
precocity /pri:'kɒsɪti/ noun the state or fact of being precocious
precordia /pri:'kɔːdiə/ plural noun plural of precordium
precordial /pri:'kɔːdiəl/ adjective referring to the precordium
precordium /pri:'kɔːdɪəm/ noun the part of the thorax over the heart [NOTE: The plural is precordia.]
precursor /pri:'kəzər/ noun a substance or cell from which another substance or cell is developed, e.g. dopa, the precursor for dopamine, which is converted to dopamine by the enzyme dopa decarboxylase
predisposing factor /pri:diˈspɔzɪŋ fæktə/ noun a factor which will increase the risk of disease
predisnolone /priˈdɛsnələʊn/ noun a synthetically produced steroid hormone, similar to cortisone, used to treat allergies and rheumatoid arthritis
prem /prem/ (informal) adjective same as premature
premature /premətər/ adjective before the expected or desirable time ○The baby was five weeks premature.
premature baby /premˈətər bəˈbi/ noun a baby born earlier than 37 weeks from conception, or weighing less than 2.5kg, but capable of independent life
premature birth /premˈətər bəˈbɜθ/ noun the birth of a baby earlier than 37 weeks from conception
premature ejaculation /premˈətər ɪˌdʒɛkˈʃən/ noun a situation in which a man ejaculates too early during sexual intercourse
premature labour /premˈətər ləˈbər/ noun the condition of starting to give birth earlier than 37 weeks from conception ○After the accident she went into premature labour.
premed /priːmed/ noun a stage of being given premedication (informal) | The patient is in premed.

premedication /ˌpriːmedɪˈkeɪʃən/,
premedicant drug /ˌpriːmedɪˈkeɪtənt ‘drʌɡ/ noun a drug given before an operation in order to block the parasympathetic nervous system and prevent vomiting during the operation, e.g. a sedative

premenstrual /ˌpriːmenstruəl/ adjective happening before menstruation

premenstrual syndrome /ˌpriːmenstruəl ˈsərəʊzn/,
premenstrual tension /ˌpriːmenstruəl ˈtenʃən/ noun nervous stress experienced by a woman for one or two weeks before a menstrual period starts. Abbreviation PMT, PMI

premolar /ˌpriːməʊlər/ noun a tooth with two points, situated between the canines and the first proper molar. See illustration at TEETH in Supplement

prenatal /ˌpriːnɛtəl/ adjective during the period between conception and childbirth

prenatal diagnosis /ˌpriːnɛtəl ˈdɪznəs/ noun same as antenatal diagnosis

pre-op /ˌpriːəˈɒp/ adjective same as preoperative (informal)

preoperative /ˌpriːəˈɒpərətɪv/ adjective during the period before a surgical operation

preoperative medication /ˌpriːəˈɒpərətɪv ˌmɛdɪˈkæʃən/ noun a drug given before an operation, e.g.a sedative

PREP /prɛp/ abbreviation post-registration education and practice

prepatellar bursitis /ˌpriːprəˈtelər ˈbɜːsətɪs/ noun an illness in which the fluid sac at the knee becomes inflamed, caused by kneeling on hard surfaces. Also called housemaid’s knee

prepubertal /ˌpriːprəˈbərətəl/ adjective referring to the period before puberty

prepuce /ˌpriːpjuːs/ noun same as foreskin

presby- /prezbi/ prefix same as presbyo- (used before vowels)

presbyacusis /ˌprezbiˈəkəsɪs/ noun a condition in which the action of squeezing the ear

presbyacousis /ˌprezbiˈəkəsɪs/ noun a condition in which the fluid sac at the knee

presbyopia /ˌprezbiˈɒpiə/ noun a condition in which an elderly person’s sight fails gradually, through hardening of the lens

prescribed disease /ˌpriːskrɪbd dɪˈzɪz/ noun an illness caused by the type of work a person does which is on an annually reviewed official list, entitling the person to claim benefit. Examples are deafness, pneumoconiosis and RSI.

prescribing analyses and cost /ˌpriːskrɪbɪŋ əˌnɛlsəz ʌnd ˈkɒst/ plural noun data on the prescribing of drugs in primary care. Abbreviation PACT

prescription /ˌpriːskrɪpʃən/ noun an order written by a doctor to a pharmacist asking for a drug to be prepared and given or sold to a person

present /ˈprezənt/ verb /ˈprezənt/ 1. (of a patient) to show particular symptoms | The patient presented with severe chest pains. 2. (of a symptom) to be present | The doctors’ first task is to relieve the presenting symptoms. | The condition may also present in a baby. 3. (of a baby) to appear in the vaginal channel | See illustration of the disease are present

presentation /ˌprezənˈteɪʃən/ noun the way in which a baby will be born, in respect of the part of the baby’s body which will appear first in the vaginal channel

presenting part /ˌpriːzɛntɪŋ pɑːt/ noun the part of a baby which appears first during birth

pressor /ˈpreʃər/ adjective 1. referring to a nerve which increases the action of part of the body | raising blood pressure

pressure /ˈpreʃər/ noun the action of squeezing or forcing something

pressure area /ˈpreʃər ˈɛərə/ noun an area of the body where a bone is near the surface of the skin, so that if the skin is pressed the circulation will be cut off

pressure bandage /ˈpreʃər ˈbændɪdʒ/ noun a bandage which presses on a part of the body

pressure index /ˈpreʃər ˈɪndəks/ noun a method for determining the extent of obstruction to the artery in the leg by measuring the blood pressure in the arms and legs and then dividing the systolic pressure in the leg by that in the arm. Abbreviation PI

pressure point /ˈpreʃər pɔrnt/ noun a place where an artery crosses over a bone, so that the blood can be cut off by pressing with the finger

prestode /ˌpriːstəʊd/ noun the period before systole in the cycle of heartbeats

preterm /ˌpriːtɛrm/ adjective referring to the birth of a child which takes place before the expected time.
preterm birth /prɪˈtɜːrn/ noun the birth of a baby before 37 completed weeks of pregnancy, which presents a greater risk of serious health problems (NOTE: About 12 per cent of births in the UK are preterm births.)

preventative /prɪˈventɪtɪv/ adjective same as preventive

preventive /prɪˈventɪv/ adjective referring to an action taken to stop something happening, especially to stop a disease or infection from spreading ○ preventive treatment ○ preventive action

preventive medicine /prɪˈventɪtɪv ˈmedɪk(ə)nl/ noun action carried out to stop disease from occurring, e.g. by education in health-related issues, immunisation and screening for known diseases

Priadel /prɪˈdeɪdəl/ a trade name for lithium priapism /prɪˈæpɪz(ə)m/ noun an erection of the penis without sexual stimulus, caused by a blood clot in the tissue of the penis, injury to the spinal cord or stone in the urinary bladder

prickly heat /ˈprɪkli hɛt/ noun same as miliaria

-pril /prɪl/ suffix used for ACE inhibitors ○ Captopril

prilocaine /prɪˈloʊkən/ noun a local anaesthetic used especially in dentistry

primaquine /prɪˈmeɪkwiːn/ noun a synthetically produced drug used in the treatment of malaria

primary /prɪˈmeəri/ adjective 1. happening first, and leading to something else 2. most important

primary amenorrhoea /prɪˈmeəri əˈmɛnəri/ noun a condition in which a woman has never had menstrual periods

primary bronchi /prɪˈmeəri ˈbrɒŋkɪ/ plural noun same as main bronchi

primary care /prɪˈmeəri ˈkeər/ noun in the UK, health services offered directly to individuals by GPs, dentists, opticians and other health professionals who may also refer a patient on to specialists for further treatment. Also called primary health care, primary medical care. Compare secondary care, tertiary care

primary care group /prɪˈmeəri ˈkeər gruːp/ noun an organisation responsible for overseeing the provision of primary healthcare and the commissioning of secondary care in a district. Key members include GPs, community nurses, social services and lay members. Abbreviation PCG

primary care team /prɪˈmeəri ˈkeər ˈtiːm/ noun same as primary health care team

primary care trust /prɪˈmeəri ˈkeər ˌtrʌst/ noun in the UK, the top level of the primary care group with extra responsibilities such as direct employment of community staff. Abbreviation PCT

primary haemorrhage /prɪˈmeəri ˈhæmərərɪdʒ/ noun bleeding which occurs immediately after an injury has taken place

primary health care /prɪˈmeəri ˈhelθ keə/ noun same as primary care

primary health care team /prɪˈmeəri ˈhelθ keə ˈtiːm/ noun a group of professional medical workers who have first contact with someone needing medical attention and are responsible for delivering a range of health care services. Abbreviation PHCT

primary medical care /prɪˈmeəri ˈmedɪk(ə)l/ noun nurse who is responsible for planning a person’s nursing care in consultation with that person and his or her family. In the absence of the primary nurse, associate nurses provide care based on the plan designed by the primary nurse.

primary nursing /prɪˈmeəri ˈnɜːrnɪŋ/ a model of nursing that involves the delivery of comprehensive, continuous, co-ordinated and individualised patient care through a primary nurse, who has autonomy, accountability and authority in relation to his or her patient’s care

primary tooth /prɪˈmeəri tuːθ/ noun any one of the twenty teeth which develop in children between about six months and two-and-a-half years of age, and are replaced by the permanent teeth at around the age of six. Also called milk tooth, deciduous tooth

primary tuberculosis /prɪˈmeəri ˈtʌbərəkləsɪəs/ noun a person’s first infection with tuberculosis

primary tumour /prɪˈmeəri ˈtjuːmər/ noun a site of the original malignant growth from which cancer spreads

prime /prəm/ adjective 1. of the greatest importance or the highest rank 2. of the highest quality ○ noun the best state or period of something, especially the most active and enjoyable period in adult life ○ verb to make something ready for use, or to become ready for use (NOTE: priming – primed)

prime mover /prəm ˈm涮vər/ noun 1. same as agonist 2. somebody or something which has the most influence over the starting of a process or activity

primigravida /prəmɪˈgreɪvɪdə/ primigravid patient /prəmɪˈgreɪvɪd ˈpentɪʃ(ə)n/ noun a woman who is pregnant for the first time (NOTE: The plural is primigravidas or primigravidae.)

primipara /prəmɪˈpærə/ noun a woman who has given birth to one child. Also called unipara (NOTE: The plural is primiparas or primiparae.)

primordial /prɪˈmɜːrɪdʒəl/ adjective in the very first stage of development
Primordial follicle /ˌprɪməˈɒr(d)l/ noun the first stage of development of an ovarian follicle.

P-R interval /ˌpiːr ɪnˈtrəvəl/ noun the time recorded on an electrocardiogram between the start of atrial activity and ventricular activity.

Prion /ˈprɪzn/ noun a particle of protein which contains no nucleic acid, does not trigger an immune response and is not destroyed by extreme heat or cold. Prions are considered to be the cause of mad cow disease.

Problem despatch /ˌprɒbəm ˈdɛspætʃ/ noun the process of talking to people who need medical help on the telephone in order to make sure that ambulance are sent to the most urgent cases first.

Priority matrix /ˌprɪətri ˌmɛtrɪkz/ noun a way of trying to make sure that each community has a fair number of services for its particular health needs.

Private hospital /ˈprɪvət ˈhɒspɪtəl/ noun a hospital which takes only paying patients.

Privy parts /ˈprɪvət ˈpaːts/ plural noun the genital area (informal). Also called privates.

P.R.N. adverb (written on a prescription) as and when required. Full form pro re nata.

Pro-/prɒ/ prefix before or in front of

Probe /prəʊb/ noun an instrument used to explore inside a cavity or wound in order to investigate the inside of something. The surgeon probed the wound with a scalpel. (NOTE: Probing – probed)

Problem /ˈprɒbləm/ noun 1. something which is difficult to find an answer to. Scientists are trying to find a solution to the problem of drug-related diseases. 2. a medical disorder. 3. he has an alcohol problem or a drugs problem he is addicted to alcohol or drugs.

Problem child /ˈprɒbləm ˈtʃaɪld/ noun a child who is difficult to control.

Problem drinking /ˌprɒbləm ˈdrɪŋkɪŋ/ noun alcoholism or heavy drinking which has a bad effect on a person’s behaviour or work.

Problem-oriented record /ˌprɒbləm ˌɔrɪˈentɪd ˈrekɔrd/ noun a record of patient care which links patients’ clinical data with their problems, so that all aspects of the care process are focused on resolving those problems.

Problem-solving approach /ˌprɒbləm ˌsɔlvɪŋ əˈprɒsəl/ noun the provision of nursing care based on assessment, problem identification (nursing diagnosis), planning implementation (nursing intervention) and evaluation (nursing evaluation).

Process /ˈprəʊss/ noun 1. a technical or scientific action. A new process for testing serum samples has been developed in the research laboratory. 2. a projecting part of the body.

Proct- /prɒkt/ prefix same as procto-(used before vowels)

Proctalgia /ˌprɒktəˈlædʒiə/ noun pain in the lower rectum or anus, caused by neuralgia.

Proctalgia fugax /ˌprɒktəˈlædʒiə ˈfjuːgæks/ noun a condition in which a person has sudden pains in the rectum during the night, usually relieved by eating or drinking.

Proctectomy /ˌprɒktəˈtektsiə/ noun a surgical operation to remove the rectum. (NOTE: The plural is proctectomies.)

Proctitis /ˌprɒktəˈtɪtɪs/ noun inflammation of the rectum.

Procto-/prɒktə/ prefix the anus or rectum

Proctocele /ˌprɒktəˈsɪli/ noun same as rectocele.

Proctocolectomy /ˌprɒktəkəlˈtəkəmi/ noun a surgical operation to remove the rectum and the colon. (NOTE: The plural is proctocolectomies.)

Proctocolitis /ˌprɒktəkəlˈtɪtɪs/ noun inflammation of the rectum and part of the colon.

Proctodynia /ˌprɒktəˌdɪniə/ noun a sensation of pain in the anus.

Proctogram /ˌprɒktəˈɡræm/ noun an X-ray photograph of the rectum taken after a contract agent is introduced.

Proctologist /ˌprɒktəˈlɒdʒɪst/ noun a specialist in proctology.

Proctology /ˌprɒktəˈlɒdʒi/ noun the scientific study of the rectum and anus and their associated diseases.

Proctorrhaphy /ˌprɒktəˈrɔrəfi/ noun a surgical operation to stitch up a tear in the rectum or anus. (NOTE: The plural is proctorrhaphies.)
proctoscope /ˈprɒktəskəʊp/ noun a surgical instrument consisting of a long tube with a light in the end, used to examine the rectum

proctoscopy /ˈprɒktəskəʊpi/ noun an examination of the rectum using a proctoscope (NOTE: The plural is proctoscopies.)

proctosigmoiditis /ˌprɒktəsɪdəʊˈmɪdətɪs/ noun inflammation of the rectum and the sigmoid colon

proctotomy /ˌprɒktətəʊmɪ/ noun a surgical operation to divide a structure of the rectum or anus (NOTE: The plural is proctotomies.)

profundal /ˈprɒrdədəl/ adjective occurring between the appearance of the first symptoms of a disease and the major effect, e.g. a fever or rash

profundal rash /ˈprɒrdədəl rɑʃ/ noun a rash which appears as a symptom of a disease before the major rash

prodrome /ˈprɒdrəʊm/ noun, adjective an early symptom of an attack of a disease

productive cough /ˈprɒdəktɪv kɒf/ noun a cough where phlegm is produced

profession /ˈprəfəʊʃən/ noun a type of job for which special training is needed

professional /ˈprəfəʊʃənl/ adjective referring to a profession

professional body /ˈprəfəʊʃənl bɑdi/ noun an organisation which acts for all the members of a profession

Professional Conduct Committee /ˈprəfəʊʃənl kənˈkwɜntekst kəˌmiːti/ noun a committee of the General Medical Council which decides on cases of professional misconduct. Abbreviation PCC

Professional Executive Committee /ˈprəfəʊʃənl ɪkˈskjuːzɪtɪv kəˌmiːti/ noun full form of PEC

profile /ˈprəʊfəʊrəl/ noun 1. a brief description of the characteristics of a person or thing 2. a set of data, usually in graph or table form, which indicates to what extent something has the same characteristics as a group tested or considered standard 3. the amount that other people notice somebody or something in verb to give a short description or assessment of somebody or something (NOTE: profiling – profiled)

profundy /ˈprɒfəndə/ adjective referring to blood vessels which lie deep in tissues

profundoplasty /ˈprɒfəndəplæstɪ/ noun a surgical operation to widen a junction of the femoral artery, in order to relieve narrowing by atherosclerosis (NOTE: The plural is profundaplasties)

progeny /ˈprədʒəni/ noun a person’s child or children (NOTE: Takes a singular or plural verb.)

progeria /ˈprɔdʒəriə/ noun a condition of premature ageing. Also called Hutchinson-Gilford syndrome

progesterone /ˈprɔdʒəstərəʊn/ noun a hormone which is produced in the second part of the menstrual cycle by the corpus luteum and which stimulates the formation of the placenta if an ovum is fertilised (NOTE: Progesterone is also produced by the placenta itself.)

progestogen /ˈprɔdʒəstədʒən/ noun any substance which has the same effect as progesterone

prognathic jaw /ˈprɔgnəθɪk ʤəʊ/ noun a jaw which protrudes further than the other

prognostication /ˌprɔgnəsˈtɪkeɪʃən/ noun a condition in which one jaw, especially the lower jaw, or both jaws protrude

prognosis /ˈprɔnəgəsɪs/ noun an opinion of how a disease or disorder will develop ○ This cancer has a prognosis of about two years. ○ The prognosis is not good. (NOTE: The plural is prognoses.)

progressive /ˈprɔgresɪv/ adjective developing all the time ○ Alzheimer’s disease is a progressive disorder which sees a gradual decline in intellectual functioning.

progressive deafness /ˈprɔgresɪv dɪˈfɛns/ noun a condition, common in people as they get older, in which a person gradually becomes more and more deaf

progressive muscular atrophy /ˈprɔgresɪv ˈmjuːskjʊlər əˈtrafi/ noun muscular dystrophy, with progressive weakening of the muscles, particularly in the pelvic and shoulder girdles

progynon /ˈprɔgzɪnən/ noun a drug used in the prevention and treatment of malaria

project /ˈprədʒekt/ verb to protrude or stick out

Project 2000 /prədʒekt/ noun a revision of nursing education introduced by the UKCC in 1989. It included new courses which prepare individuals to work in all settings, both in hospitals and in the community, and gave a student the ability to qualify as a midwife without first qualifying as a nurse and the chance to gain specialist qualifications in all areas of practice

projection /ˈprədʒekʃən/ noun 1. a part of the body which sticks out or stands out. Also called prominence. Compare promontory 2. (in psychology) mental action in which a person blames another person for his or her own faults

prolactin /ˈprɔlæktən/ noun a hormone secreted by the pituitary gland which stimulates the production of milk. Also called lactogenic hormone

prolapse /ˈprələps/ noun a condition in which an organ has moved downwards out of its usual position in verb to move downwards out of the usual position (NOTE: prolapsing – prolapsed)
prolapsed intervertebral disc /prə,ˈleptərəvərtebrəl/ noun a condition in which an intervertebral disc becomes displaced or where the soft centre of a disc passes through the hard cartilage of the exterior and presses onto a nerve.

Abbreviation PID. Also called slipped disc

prolapse of the rectum /prəˈleptəm/ noun a condition in which mucous membrane of the rectum moves downwards and passes through the anus

prolapse of the uterus /prəˈleptəs/ noun a movement of the uterus downwards due to weakening of the structures of the pelvic floor, e.g. because of age or a difficult childbirth. Also called metropotis, prolapsed uterus, uterine prolapse

proliferate /prəˈlɪfərət/ verb to produce many similar cells or parts, and so grow (NOTE: proliferating – proliferated)

proliferation /prəˌlɪfərəʃən/ noun the process of proliferating

promethazine /prəˌmiθəˈziən/ noun an antihistamine drug used in the treatment of allergies and motion sickness

prominence /ˈprɒminəns/ noun a part of the body which sticks out or stands out. Also called projection. Compare prominence

promontory /ˈprɒməntɔrɪ/ noun a section of an organ, especially the middle ear and sacrum which stands out above the rest. Compare projection, prominence

pronation /prəˈneɪʃən/ noun the act of turning the hand round so that the palm faces downwards. Opposite supination. See illustration at ANATOMICAL TERMS in Supplement

pronator /prəˈnəʊtər/ noun a muscle which makes the hand turn face downwards

prone /prəʊn/ adjective lying face downwards. Opposite supine

phase /feɪfəz/ noun the first stage of mitosis when the chromosomes are visible as long thin double threads

prophylactic /ˌprɒfɪˈlæktɪk/ noun a substance which helps to prevent the development of a disease. adjective preventive

prophylaxis /ˌprɒfɪˈlæksɪs/ noun the prevention of disease (NOTE: The plural is prophylaxes.)

propranolol /prəˌprænəˈloʊl/ noun a drug that slows heart rate and heart output, used in the treatment of angina pectoris, irregular heart rhythms, migraine and high blood pressure

proprietary /ˈprɒprɪətri/ adjective belonging to a commercial company

proprietary medicine /prəˌprænəˈriː/med/ˈriː/ adjective possessing or belonging to a commercial company

proprietary drug /prəˌprænəˈdrʌɡ/ noun a drug which is sold under a trade name. © patent medicine

prophylactic /ˌprɒfɪˈlæktɪk/ noun a drug used in the treatment of a condition where it helps to prevent the development of a disease

proprioception /prəˌprɒsɪˈʃɪpʃən/ noun the reaction of nerves to body movements and the relaying of information about movements to the brain

proprioceptor /prəˌprɒsɪˈpɜːtər/ noun the end of a sensory nerve which reacts to stimuli from muscles and tendons as they move

proposis /prəˌpoʊsɪs/ noun forward displacement of the eyeball

prosop- /prəˌsɒp-/ prosop- /prəˌsɒp-/ prefix referring to the face

prostaglandin /ˌprɒstəˈɡlændɪn/ noun any of a class of unsaturated fatty acids found in all mammals which control smooth muscle contraction, inflammation and body temperature, are associated with the sensation of pain and have an effect on the nervous system, blood pressure and in particular the uterus at menstruation

prostate /proʊstet/ noun same as prostate gland (NOTE: Do not confuse with prostate.) □ prostate trouble inflammation or enlargement of the prostate gland (informal)

prostate cancer /proʊstet ˌkænsər/ noun a malignant tumour of the prostate gland, found especially in men over 55

prostate gland /proʊstet ˈɡlænd/ noun an O-shaped gland in males which surrounds the urethra below the bladder and secretes a fluid containing enzymes into the sperm. See illustration at UROGENITAL SYSTEM (MALE) in Supplement. Also called prostate

COMMENT: As a man grows older, the prostate gland tends to enlarge and constrict the point at which the urethra leaves the bladder, making it difficult to pass urine.

prostatic /proʊstəˈtɪk/ adjective referring to or belonging to the prostate gland

prostatic hypertrophy /proʊstəˈtɪrfəl/ noun an enlargement of the prostate gland

prostatitis /ˌprɒstəˈtɪtɪs/ noun inflammation of the prostate gland

prostatorrhoea /ˌprɒstəˈtɒrəhɪə/ noun discharge of fluid from the prostate gland (NOTE: The US spelling is prostatitis)

prosthesis /ˌprɒstheɪˈsɪs/ noun a device which is attached to the body to take the place of a part which is missing, e.g. an artificial leg or glass eye (NOTE: The plural is prostheses.)

prosthetic /ˌprɒstəˈtɪk/ adjective replacing a part of the body which has been amputated or removed. ☞ He was fitted with a prosthetic hand.
noun in blood which helps blood to coagulate and is formed during hydrolytic processes is called prothrombin.

Proteose /ˌprəʊtəˈsiːs/ noun a water-soluble compound formed during hydrolytic processes such as digestion.

Proteus /ˈprəʊtɪəs/ noun a genus of bacteria commonly found in the intestines.

Prothrombin /ˌprəʊθrəˈmɪn/ noun a protein in blood which helps blood to coagulate and which needs Vitamin K to be effective. Also called Factor II.

Prothrombin time /ˌprəʊθrəˈmɪn taim/ noun the time taken in Quick test for clotting to take place.

Proto /ˈprəʊtəʊʊ/ first or at the beginning

Proton pump /ˈproʊtən pamp/ noun an enzyme system within the gastric mucosa that secretes gastric acids. The drug acts on the proton pump mechanism.

Proton-pump inhibitor /ˌproʊtən pamp inˈhɪbətər/ noun a drug which suppresses the final stage of gastric acid secretion by the proton pump in the gastric mucosa.

Protoplast /ˌprəʊtəˈplæst/ noun a substance like a jelly which makes up the largest part of each cell.

Protozoa /ˌprəʊtəʊˈzuə/ plural of protozoon

Protozoan /ˌprəʊtəˈzuən/ adjective referring to protozoa.

Protozoon /ˌprəʊtəˈzuən/ noun a tiny simple organism with a single cell. (NOTE: The plural is protozoa or protozoons.)

Protozoan /ˌprəʊtəˈzuən/ noun a rounded part of the body which projects above the rest.

Proud flesh /ˈprəʊd ˈfleʃ/ noun new vessels and young fibrous tissue which form when a wound, incision or lesion is healing.

Provider /ˈprəʊvər/ noun a hospital which provides secondary care which is paid for by another body such as a PCG or social services.

Provision /ˌprəʊvəˈzjuːn/ noun a chemical compound which is converted to a vitamin during usual biochemical processes, e.g. the amino acid tryptophan, which is converted to niacin, and beta carotene, which is converted into vitamin A.

Proximal /ˌprɔksɪməl/ adjective near the midline, the central part of the body.

Proximal convoluted tubule /ˌprɔksɪməl ˈkɒnvɔljuətɪd ˈtʃuːbjuəl/ noun a part of the kidney filtering system between the loop of Henle and the glomerulus.

Proximal interphalangeal joint /ˌprɔksɪməl ɪntəˈfælæŋɡiəl dʒɔɪnt/ noun a joint nearest the point of attachment of a finger or toe. Abbreviation PIP

Prximally /ˌprɔksɪməli/ adverb further towards the centre or point of attachment. Opposite distally.

See illustration at ANATOMICAL TERMS in Supplement.

Prozac /ˈprəʊtsæk/ trade name for fluoxetine

Prurigo /ˈprəʊrɪɡəʊ/ noun an itchy eruption of papules.
pruritus /prəˈrɪtəs/ noun an irritation of the skin which makes a person want to scratch. Also called itching.

pruritus ani /prəˈrɪtəs ˈæni/ noun itching round the anal orifice.

pruritus vulvae /prəˈrɪtəs ˈvʌlvəz/ noun itching round the vulva.

pseudo- prefix same as pseudo- (used before vowels)

pseudarthrosis /ˌsjuːdəˈrθrəʊsɪs/ noun a false joint, as when the two broken ends of a fractured bone do not bind together but heal separately. (Note: The plural is pseudarthroses.)

pseudo- /ˌsjuːdəʊ/ prefix similar to something but not the same.

pseudoaoginga /ˌsjuːdəʊəˈnæʊŋə/ noun pain in the chest, caused by worry but not indicating heart disease.

pseudocytosis /ˌsjuːdəʊˈsɪtəsɪs/ noun a sudden fall in the temperature of a person with fever which does not mark the end of the fever.

pseudocroup /ˌsjuːdəʊˈkrʌp/ noun same as laryngismus.

pseudocysis /ˌsjuːdəʊˈsɪsɪs/ noun a condition in which a woman has the physical symptoms of pregnancy but is not pregnant. Also called phantom pregnancy. pseudopregnancy.

pseudocyst /ˌsjuːdəʊˈsɪst/ noun a false cyst.

pseudogynaecomastia /ˌsjuːdəʊɡəɪnəˈkɒməstɪə/ noun enlargement of the male breast because of extra fatty tissue. (Note: The US spelling is pseudogynecomastia.)

pseudohypertrophism /ˌsjuːdəʊhɪpərtroʊfɪzəm/ noun a condition in which a person has either ovaries or testes but external genitalia that are not clearly of either sex.

pseudohypertrrophy /ˌsjuːdəʊhaɪpətəˈrɒfɪ/ noun an overgrowth of fatty or fibrous tissue in a part or organ, which results in the part or organ being enlarged.

pseudomonad /ˌsjuːdəʊˌmənəd/ noun a rod-shaped bacterium which lives in soil or decomposing organic material and can cause disease in plants and sometimes in humans.

Pseudomonas /ˌsjuːdəʊmənəs/ noun

pseudomonad

pseudo-obstruction /ˌsjuːdəʊ əbˈstrækʃən/ noun a condition in which symptoms such as stomach cramps, nausea and bloating indicate a blockage in the intestines although no blockage exists.

pseudoplegia /ˌsjuːdəʊˈplɪdʒə, -ˌplɪdʒə/ noun loss of muscular power in the limbs without true paralysis.

pseudopolypsis /ˌsjuːdəʊˌpəlɪˈpəʊsɪs/ noun a condition in which polyps are found in many places in the intestine, usually resulting from an earlier infection.

psilosis /səˈlɒsɪs/ noun a disease of the small intestine which prevents a person from absorbing food properly. Also called sprue.

psos major /psəʊs ˈmeɪdʒər/ noun a muscle in the groin which flexes the hip.

psosa minor /psəʊsə ˈmeɪnər/ noun a small muscle similar to the psosa major but not always present.

psoriasis /səˈrɑːsɪəs/ noun a common inflammatory skin disease where red patches of skin are covered with white scales.

psoriatic /ˌsɔːriətɪk/ adjective referring to psoriasis.

psoriatic arthritis /ˌsɔːrɪətɪk ərˈtrɪtɪs/ noun a form of psoriasis which is associated with arthritis.

psych- /sai+k/ prefix same as psycho-(used before vowels)

psychache /sai+k/ noun the mind.

psychedelic /sai+kəˈdelIk/ adjective referring to drugs such as LSD which expand a person’s consciousness.

psychiatric /sai+kəˈtrɪtɪk/ adjective referring to psychiatry. ○ He is undergoing psychiatric treatment.

psychiatric hospital /sai+kəˈtrɪtɪk ˌhɒspɪt(ə)l/ noun a hospital which specialises in the treatment of patients with mental disorders.

psychiatrist /sai+kəˈtrɪstrɪst/ noun a doctor who specialises in the diagnosis and treatment of mental and behavioural disorders.

psychiatry /sai+kəˈtrɪtrɪ/ noun a branch of medicine concerned with the diagnosis and treatment of mental and behavioural disorders.

psychic /sai+kIk/ noun, psychical /sai+kIk(ə)/ adjective 1. referring to a person who is supposedly able to guess thoughts which people have not expressed, or to foresee the future 2. relating to or originating in the human mind.

psycho-/sai+kəu/ prefix referring to the mind.

psychoanalysis /sai+kəˈənəlɪsɪs/ noun a form of treatment for mental disorders in which a specialist and patient talk and together analyse the patient’s condition and past events which may have contributed to it.

psychoanalyst /sai+kəˈənəlɪst/ noun a person who is trained in psychoanalysis.

psychodrama /sai+kəˈdramə/ noun a type of psychotherapy in which patients act out roles in dramas illustrating their emotional problems, in front of other patients.

psychodynamics /sai+kəˈdɑːməstɪks/ noun the study of how the forces which affect human behaviour and mental states work, especially on a subconscious level.

psychogenic /sai+kəˈdʒenɪk, -ˈdʒenɪk/ noun a cause of disease or disturbance which is due to a mental rather than to any physical cause.
which starts in the mind, rather than in a physical state.

psychogeriatrics /sæk'soʊdʒərət'riks/ noun the study of the mental disorders of the late stages of the natural life span

psychological /saɪk'ɒlədʒɪk(əl)/ adjective referring to psychology, or caused by a mental state

psychological dependence /,saɪkələdʒɪk(əl) dɪ'pendəns/, psychological drug dependence /,saɪkələdʒɪk(əl) dɪ' dræg dɪ'pendəns/ noun a state in which a person is addicted to a drug such as cannabis or alcohol but does not suffer physical effects if he or she stops taking it

psychologist /ˌsɛkˈɒlədʒɪst/ noun a person who specialises in the study of the mind and mental processes

psychology /,saɪkələdʒi/ noun the study of the mind and mental processes

psychometrics /,saɪkəm'ɛtərɪks/ noun a way of measuring intelligence and personality in which the result is shown on a scale

psychomotor /,saɪkə'məʊtər/ adjective referring to muscle movements caused by mental activity

psychoneuroimmunology /ˌsɛkˈɒnəʊˌɪmjuːrələdʒi/ noun a branch of medicine which deals with how emotions affect the immune system

psychoneurosis /ˌsɛkˈɒnəʊrəsɪs/ noun any of a group of mental disorders in which a person has a faulty response to the stresses of life.

psychosomatic /ˌsɛkˈɒsəmətɪk/ adjective referring to the relationship between biological and psychological factors

psychosurgery /ˌsɛkˈɒsəʊˈɜːdʒɪk(ə)l/ noun brain surgery, used as a treatment for psychological disorders

psychosomatic /ˌsɛkˈɒsəmətɪk/ adjective referring to psychosurgery

psychotherapeutic /ˌsɛkˈɒθərerəpɪtɪk/ adjective referring to psychotherapy

psychotherapist /ˌsɛkˈɒθərəpɪst/ noun a person trained to give psychotherapy

psychotherapy /ˌsɛkˈɒθərəpi/ noun the treatment of mental disorders by psychological methods, as when a psychotherapist encourages a person to talk about his or her problems.

psychotic /ˌsɛkˈoʊtɪk/ adjective referring to psychosis

psychotropic /ˌsɛkˈɒsətrəpɪk/ adjective referring to a drug such as a stimulant or sedative which affects a person’s mood

psychopath /ˌsɛkˈoʊpæθ/ noun a person with a long-term mental disorder characterised by anti-social and often violent behaviour

psychopathic /ˌsɛkˈoʊpæθɪk/ adjective referring to psychopaths or psychopathy

psychopathological /ˌsɛkˈoʊpæθələdʒɪk(ə)l/ adjective referring to psychopathology

psychopathology /ˌsɛkˈoʊpæθələdʒɪ/ noun a branch of medicine concerned with the pathology of mental disorders and diseases

psychopathy /ˌsɛkˈoʊpæθi/ noun any disease of the mind (NOTE: The plural is psychopathies.)

psychopharmacology /ˌsɛkˈoʊfarmaʊlədʒi/ noun the study of the actions and applications of drugs which have a powerful effect on the mind and behaviour

psychophysiological /ˌsɛkˈoʊfɪzɪlədʒɪk(ə)l/ adjective referring to psychophysiology

psychophysics /ˌsɛkˈoʊfɪsɪskɪ/ noun the physiology of the mind and its functions

psychoses /ˌsɛkˈoʊsɪsəz/ plural of psychosis

psychosexual /ˌsɛkˈsoʊsɛl/ adjective relating to the mental and emotional aspects of sexuality and sexual development

psychosexual development /ˌsɛkˈsoʊsɛl dɪˈveləmpənt/ noun the development of human personality in stages based upon the ability to experience sexual pleasure, and the way in which sexuality plays a role in a person’s life

psychosis /ˌsɛkˈoʊsɪs/ noun any serious mental disorder in which a person has a distorted perception of reality (NOTE: The plural is psychoses.)

psychosomatic /ˌsɛkˈoʊsəmətɪk/ adjective referring to psychosomatic

psychosurgery /ˌsɛkˈoʊsəʊˈɜːdʒɪk(ə)l/ noun brain surgery, used as a treatment for psychological disorders

psychosurgical /ˌsɛkˈoʊsəʊˈɜːdʒɪk(ə)l/ adjective referring to psychosurgery

PTSD abbreviation post-traumatic stress disorder

ptyalin /ˌptəliəl/ prefix same as ptyalo- (used before vowels)

ptyalin /ˌptəliən/ noun an enzyme in saliva which cleanses the mouth and converts starch into sugar
ptyalism 250

ptyalism /ˈtaɪəlɪzm/ noun the production of an excessive amount of saliva

ptyolith /ˈtaɪəlɪθ/ noun as sialolith

ptyalo- /ˈtaɪələʊ-/ prefix referring to saliva

pubertal /ˈpjuːbərtəl/ adjective referring to puberty

puberty /ˈpjuːbərəti/ noun 1. the physical and psychological changes which take place when childhood ends and adolescence and sexual maturity begin and the sex glands become active 2. the time when these changes take place

pubes /ˈpjuːbəs/ plural of pubis

pubic /ˈpjuːbɪk/ adjective referring to the area near the genitals

pubic bone /ˈpjuːbɪk bɔːn/ noun the bone in front of the pelvis. Also called pubis. See illustration at PELVIS in Supplement

pubic hair /ˈpjuːbɪk ˈheər/ noun tough hair growing in the genital region

pubic louse /ˈpjuːbɪk ˈlaʊs/ noun also called Pediculus pubis

pubic symphysis /ˈpjuːbɪk ˈsmɪfəsɪs/ noun a piece of cartilage which joins the two sections of the pubic bone. Also called symphysis pubis COMMENT: In a pregnant woman, the pubic symphysis stretches to allow the pelvic girdle to expand so that there is room for the baby to pass through.

pubiotomy /ˈpjuːbɪətəʊmə/ noun a surgical operation to divide the pubic bone during labour, in order to make the pelvis wide enough for the child to be born safely (NOTE: The plural is pubiotomies.)

pubis /ˈpjuːbɪs/ noun a bone forming the front part of the pelvis. See illustration at PELVIS in Supplement (NOTE: The plural is pubes.)

public health /ˈpjuːblɪk hɛθ/ noun the study of illness, health and disease in the community

public health laboratory service /ˈpjuːblɪk hɛθ ləˈbɔːrətɔrɪ ˈsɜːvəs/ noun in the UK, a former service of the NHS which detected, diagnosed and monitored suspected cases of infectious disease in a countrywide network of laboratories. Abbreviation: PHLSS

public health medicine /ˈpjuːblɪk ˈmɛdɪsɪn/ noun the branch of medicine concerned with health and disease in populations; with the responsibilities of monitoring health, identification of health needs, development of policies which promote health and evaluation of health services

public health nurse /ˈpjuːblɪk hɛθ ˈnɜːs/ noun a nurse such as a school nurse, health visitor or other community nurse who monitors health and works to prevent illness in community situations

public health physician /ˈpjuːblɪk ˌfɪzɪkənl ˈfɪzɪkənl/ noun a consultant who has special training in public health medicine

pubenda /ˈpjuːdənə/ plural of pudendum

pubenal /ˈpjuːdənəl/ adjective referring to the pudendum

pubenal block /ˈpjuːdənəl bλk/ noun an operation to anaesthetise the pudendum during childbirth

pubendum /ˈpjuːdəmən/ noun an external genital organ of a woman (NOTE: The plural is pudenda.)

puerpera /ˈpjuːəpərə/ noun a woman who has recently given birth, or is giving birth, and whose uterus is still distended (NOTE: The plural is puerperae.)

puerperal /ˈpjuːəpərəl/ adjective referring to the puerperium

puerperal infection /ˈpjuːəpərəl ɪnˈfɛkʃən/ puerperal fever /ˈpjuːəpərəl ˈfevr/ noun an infection of the uterus and genital tract after the birth of a baby, which is more common in women who have had a caesarean section. It causes a high fever, and occasionally sepsis, which can be fatal and was commonly so in the past. Also called postpartum fever

puerperalism /ˈpjuːəpərəlaɪzəm/ noun an illness of a baby or its mother resulting from or associated with childbirth

puerperium /ˈpjuːəpərəjəm/ noun a period of about six weeks which follows immediately after the birth of a child, during which the mother’s sexual organs recover from childbirth

puerperous /ˈpjuːəpərəs/ adjective same as puerperal

puke /ˈpjuːk/ verb same as vomit (informal)

pull /pɔːl/ verb to make a muscle move in a wrong direction  □ He pulled a muscle in his back. □ to pull the plug to switch off life support (informal) □ to pull yourself together to become calmer  □ Although he was very angry he soon pulled himself together

pull through /pɔːl θraʊθ/ verb to recover from a serious illness (informal) □ The doctor says she is strong and should pull through.

pulmo- /ˈpʌlmoʊ-/ pulmon- /ˈpʌlmon-/ prefix referring to the lungs

pulmonary /ˈpʌlmonəri/ adjective referring to the lungs

pulmonary artery /ˈpʌlmonəri ˈɑːrtəri/ noun one of the two arteries which take deoxygenated blood from the heart to the lungs for oxygenation. See illustration at HEART in Supplement

pulmonary circulation /ˈpʌlmonəri ˈsəkjuːlər/ noun the circulation of blood from the heart through the pulmonary arteries to the lungs for oxygenation and back to the heart
through the pulmonary veins. Also called lesser
circulation

pulmonary embolism /'polmonari/ noun a blockage of a pulmonary
artery by a blood clot. Abbreviation PE

pulmonary hypertension /'polmonari/ noun high blood pressure in the
blood vessels supplying blood to the lungs

pulmonary insufficiency /'polmonari/ noun a condition characterized by
dilatation of the main pulmonary artery and stretching of the valve ring, due to pul-
monary hypertension

pulmonary oedema /'polmonari/ noun the collection of fluid in the lungs, as occurs in
left-sided heart failure

pulmonary stenosis /'polmonari/ noun a condition in which the opening to the
pulmonary artery in the right ventricle becomes narrow

pulmonary tuberculosis /'polmonari/ noun one of the four veins which carry oxygenated
blood from the lungs back to the left atrium of the
heart. See illustration at HEART in Supplement

NOTE: The pulmonary veins are the only veins which carry oxygenated blood.

pulmonectomy /'polmonekti/ noun same as pneumonectomy (NOTE: The plural is pul-
monectomies.)

pulp /'pulp/ noun soft tissue, especially when collapsed by hard tissue as in the inside of a
tooth

pulp cavity /'pulp kaviti/ noun the central part of a tooth containing soft tissue

pulsation /'pulzei/ noun the action of
beating regularly, e.g. the visible pulse which can be seen under the skin in some parts of the body

pulse /'puls/ noun the regular expansion and contraction of an artery caused by the heart pump-
ing blood through the body, which can be felt with the fingers especially where an artery is near the
surface of the body, as in the wrist or neck. // Her pulse is very irregular. // To take or feel a per-
son’s pulse to measure a person’s pulse rate by pressing on the skin above an artery with the fin-
gers // Has the patient’s pulse been taken?

pulseless /'pulsless/ adjective referring to a person who has no pulse because the heart is beat-
ing very weakly

pulse oximetry /'puls eksi Omi/ noun a method of measuring the oxygen content of arte-
rial blood

to measure the oxygen content of arterial blood

to measure the oxygen content of arterial blood

to measure the oxygen content of arterial blood

puls point /'puls pont/ noun a place on the body where the pulse can be taken

puls pressure /'puls pres/ noun the difference between the diastolic and systolic pressure.

Corrigan’s pulse

puls rate /'puls reit/ noun the number of times the pulse beats per minute

pulsum /'pulsam/ noun same as pulse

pulsus alternans /'pulsas altrnanz/ noun a pulse with a beat which is alternately strong and
weak

pulsus bigeminus /'pulsas bi geminas/ noun a double pulse, with an extra ectopic beat

pulsus paradoxus /'pulsas paradoks/ noun a condition in which there is a sharp fall in the pulse when the person breathes in

pulvis /'pulvis/ noun powder

punch drunk syndrome /'punsch dunk stron dis/ noun a condition affecting a person, usually a boxer, who has been hit on the head
many times and develops impaired mental facul-
ties, trembling limbs and speech disorders

puncta /'punkta plural of punctum

puncta lacrimalia /'punkta lakrimalia/ plural noun small openings at the corners of the eyes through which tears drain into the nose

punctate /'punktei/ adjective referring to tissue or a surface which has tiny spots, holes or
dents in it

punctum /'punktm/ noun a point (NOTE: The plural is puncta.)

puncture /'punktor/ noun a neat hole made by a sharp instrument (NOTE: puncturing –
punctured)

puncture wound /'punktor wund/ noun a wound made by a sharp instrument which makes a hole in the tissue

pupil /'pjupl/ noun the central opening in the iris of the eye, through which light enters the eye. See illustration at EYE in Supplement

pupillary /'punklar/ adjective referring to the pupil

pupillary reaction /'punklar riakt/ noun a reflex of the pupil of the eye which con-
tracts when exposed to bright light. Also called light reflex

pursuer /'pursa/ noun a person, usually a PCC, which commissions health care and man-
ages the budget to pay for the service. (NOTE: provider

purgation /'purgesh/ noun the use of a drug to
cause a bowel movement

purgeative /'purgativ/ noun a drug used to
empty the bowels. (NOTE: laxative

purine /'pjoorin/ noun 1. a nitrogen-containing
substance derived from uric acid which is the par-
et compound of several biologically important
substances 2. a derivative of purine, especially
Purkinje cells

either of the bases adenine and guanine, which are found in RNA and DNA

Purkinje cells /paˈkɪndʒi/ plural noun neurones in the cerebellar cortex [Described 1837. After Johannes Evangelista Purkinje (1787–1869), Professor of Physiology at Breslau, now in Poland, and then Prague, Czech Republic.]

Purkinje fibres /paˈkɪndʒi ˈfɜːbəz/ plural noun a bundle of fibres which form the atrioventricular node and pass from the atrioventricular node to the septum [Described 1839. After Johannes Evangelista Purkinje (1787–1869), Professor of Physiology at Breslau, now in Poland, and then Prague, Czech Republic.]

Purkinje shift /paˈkɪndʒi ʃɪft/ noun the change in colour sensitivity which takes place in the eye in low light when the eye starts using the rods in the retina because the light is too weak to stimulate the cones

purpura /ˈpɜːrpəra/ noun a purple colouring on the skin, similar to a bruise, caused by blood disease and not by trauma

pursestring operation /pəsrˈstrɪŋ ˈɑrə/ synonym as Shirodkar’s operation

pursestring stitch /pəsrˈstrɪŋ ˈstɪʃ/ noun same as Shirodkar suture

purulent /pəˈjʊrələnt/ adjective containing or producing pus

pus /pʌs/ noun a yellow liquid composed of blood serum, pieces of dead tissue, white blood cells and the remains of bacteria, formed by the body in reaction to infection [NOTE: For other terms referring to pus, see words beginning with py- or pyc-]

pustule /pʌstjʊl/ noun a small pimple filled with pus

putrefaction /pəˈtrɪfrəkʃən/ noun the decomposition of organic substances by bacteria, making an unpleasant smell

p.v. adverb by way of the vagina. Full form per vaginam

PVS abbreviation persistent vegetative state

py-/pai/ pyo-/pɑʊə/ prefix same as pyo- (used before vowels)

pyaemia /pəɪˈɛmiə/ noun invasion of blood with bacteria which then multiply and form many little abscesses in various parts of the body [NOTE: The US spelling is pyemia.]

pyarthrosis /pəˈɑːθrəʊsɪs/ noun a condition in which a joint becomes infected with pyogenic organisms and fills with pus. Also called acute suppurative arthritis

pyel- /paɪəl/ prefix same as pyelo- (used before vowels)

pyelitis /paɪəˈlɪtɪs/ noun inflammation of the central part of the kidney

pyelo-/paɪəlou/ prefix referring to the pelvis of the kidney

pyelocystitis /paɪələˈsɪstɪtɪs/ noun inflammation of the pelvis of the kidney and the urinary bladder

pyelogram /paɪəˈlɔːɡræm/ noun an X-ray photograph of a kidney and the urinary tract

pyelography /paɪəˈlɔːɡrəfi/ noun X-ray examination of a kidney after introduction of a contrast medium

pyelolithotomy /paɪəˈlɔːlɪθətəmi/ noun a surgical operation to remove a stone from the pelvis of the kidney [NOTE: The plural is pyelolithotomies.]

pyelonephritis /paɪəˈləʊnəfɪrɪtɪs/ noun inflammation of the kidney and the pelvis of the kidney

pyeloplasty /paɪəˌpləˈplæstɪ/ noun any surgical operation on the pelvis of the kidney [NOTE: The plural is pyeloplasties.]

pyelotomy /paɪəˈləʊtəmi/ noun a surgical operation to make an opening in the pelvis of the kidney [NOTE: The plural is pyelotomies.]

pyg- /paɡ/ pyko- prefix relating to the buttocks

pykn- /paɪkən/ prefix indicating thickness or density

pyl-/paili/ pyle-/paili/ prefix referring to the portal vein

pylephlebitis /paɪləflɛˈlɪbətɪs/ noun thrombosis of the portal vein

pylethrombosis /paɪləθroʊˌmɒbəsɪs/ noun a condition in which blood clots are present in the portal vein or any of its branches

pylor-/paɪloʊr-/ prefix same as pyloro- (used before vowels)

pylorectomy /paɪləˈrɛktəmi/ noun a surgical operation to remove the pylorus and the antrum of the stomach [NOTE: The plural is pylorotomies.]

pylori /paɪlə′raɪ/ plural of pylorus

pyloric /paɪləˈrɪk/ adjective referring to the pylorus

pyloric antrum /paɪləˈrɪk ənˈtrəm/ noun a space at the bottom of the stomach, before the pyloric sphincter

pyloric orifice /paɪləˈrɪk ərˈrɪfɪs/ noun an opening where the stomach joins the duodenum

pyloric sphincter /paɪləˈrɪk ˈsfɪŋktər/ noun a muscle which surrounds the pylorus, makes it contract and separates it from the duodenum

pyloric stenosis /paɪləˈrɪk stəˈnɒsɪs/ noun a blockage of the pylorus, which prevents food from passing from the stomach into the duodenum

pyloro-/paɪləˈrəʊu/ prefix the pylorus

pyloroplasty /paɪləˈrəʊplæstɪ/ noun a surgical operation to make the pylorus larger, sometimes
The plural is **empyema**

**pylorospassm** /pa'larəspɑsəzm/ noun a muscle spasm which closes the pylorus so that food cannot pass through into the duodenum

**pylorotomy** /pa'larətəmI/ noun a surgical operation to cut into the muscle surrounding the pylorus to relieve pyloric stenosis. Also called **Ramstedt’s operation** (NOTE: The plural is **pylorotomies**.)

**pylorus** /pa'lərəs/ noun an opening at the bottom of the stomach leading into the duodenum (NOTE: The plural is **pylori**.)

**pyo-** /paɪəʊ-/ prefix referring to pus

**pyocolpos** /paɪəkəlpaʊs/ noun an accumulation of pus in the vagina

**pyoderma** /paɪədər'mə/ noun an eruption of pus in the skin

**pyoderma gangrenosum** /paɪədər'mə gæŋɡrənəsəm/ noun a serious ulcerating disease of the skin, especially the legs, usually treated with steroid drugs

**pyogenic** /paɪədʒə'nIək/ adjective producing or forming pus

**pyometra** /paɪə'mɛtroʊə/ noun an accumulation of pus in the uterus

**pyomyositis** /paɪə'mɔsɪtɪs/ noun inflammation of a muscle caused by staphylococci or streptococci

**pyonephrosis** /paɪənə'nɛfrəsɪs/ noun the distention of the kidney with pus

**pyopericarditis** /paɪəpərɪkɑrdɪtɪs/ noun an inflammation of the pericardium due to infection with staphylococci, streptococci or pneumococci

**pyopneumothorax** /paɪəpnoʊməθərɑks/ noun an accumulation of pus and gas or air in the pleural cavity

**pyorrhoea** /paɪə'roʊθiə/ noun discharge of pus (NOTE: The US spelling is **pyorrhea**.)

**pyosalpinx** /paɪəsə'alpɪns/ noun inflammation and formation of pus in a Fallopian tube

**pyothorax** /paɪəθɔθərɑks/ noun same as **empyema**

**pyr-** /paɪr/ prefix same as **pyro-** (used before vowels)

**pyramid** /paɪrəmd/ noun a cone-shaped part of the body, especially a cone-shaped projection on the surface of the medulla oblongata or in the medulla of the kidney. See illustration at **KIDNEY** in Supplement

**pyramidal** /paɪrəmɪdəl/ adjective referring to a pyramid

**pyramidal cell** /paɪrəmɪdəl/ cell/ noun a cone-shaped cell in the cerebral cortex

**pyramidal system** /paɪrəmɪdəl/ n'stɛms/ noun

**pyramidal tract** /paɪrəmɪdəl/ træk/ noun a group of nerve fibres within the pyramid of the medulla oblongata in the brain. It is thought to be vital in controlling movement and speech.

**pyret-** /paɪrɛt/, **pyreto-** prefix relating to heat or fever

**pyrexia** /paɪrɪk'sɪə/ noun same as **fever**

**pyridostigmine** /paɪrɪdəstɪ'gmaɪn/ noun a drug which stops or delays the action of the enzyme cholinesterase, used to treat myasthenia gravis

**pyridoxine** /paɪrɪdɒksɪn/ noun same as **Vitamin B₆**

**pyrimidine** /paɪrɪmɪdɪn/ noun 1. a strongly smelling nitrogenous based compound with a six-sided ring structure that is the parent compound of several biologically important substances 2. a derivative of pyrimidine, especially any of the bases cytosine, thymine, and uracil which are found in RNA and DNA

**pyro-** /paɪroʊ-/ prefix burning or fever

**pyrogen** /paɪrədʒə'nIək/ noun a substance which causes a fever

**pyrogenic** /paɪrədʒə'nIək/ adjective causing a fever

**pyromania** /paɪrəmənɪə/ noun an uncontrollable desire to start fires

**pyruvic acid** /paɪrʊvɪk/ 'əsɪd/ noun a substance formed from glycogen in the muscles when it is broken down to release energy

**pyuria** /paɪuərɪə/ noun pus in the urine
q.d.s. adverb (written on prescriptions) to be taken four times a day. Full form quater in die sumendus

Q fever /ˈkwɛfər/ noun an infectious rickettsial disease of sheep and cows caused by Coxiella burnetii transmitted to humans

QRS complex /ˈkjjuː ɪzˌərˈkɒmpleks/ noun the deflections on an electrocardiogram, labelled Q, R, and S, which show ventricular contraction. 

QPRST complex

q.s. adverb (written on prescriptions) as much as necessary. Full form quantum sufficit

Q-T interval /ˈkjjuː ɪntəˈvɜːrəl/ noun the length of the QRS complex in an electrocardiogram. 

QRS complex

quad /kwəd/ noun same as quadruplet (informal)

quadrant /ˈkwʌdrənt/ noun one of four sectors of the body thought of as being divided by the sagittal plane and the intertubercular plane. 

quadriplegia /ˈkwʌdrɪplɪdʒə/ noun paralysis of all four limbs, both arms and both legs

quadriplegic /ˈkwʌdriplɪdʒɪk/ adjective paralysed in both arms and both legs. 

quadriped /ˈkwʌdripid/ noun a large muscle in the front of the thigh, which extends to the leg

quadriceps /ˈkwʌdriˌsɛps/ noun the large muscles at the back of the thigh, below the hip bone

quadrilateral /ˈkwʌdriˌlɪtərəl/ adjective a figure having four sides and four angles

quadruplet /ˈkwʌdrʊplət/ noun one of four babies born to a mother at the same time. Also called quad

quadruplet vaccine /ˈkwʌdrʊplət ˈvɛksɪn/ noun a vaccine which immunises against four diseases, diphtheria, whooping cough, poliomyelitis and tetanus

qualitative /ˈkwɔːltɪtɪv/ adjective referring to a study in which descriptive information is collected. Compare quantitative

quality /ˈkwɔːlɪtɪ/ noun 1. a characteristic of somebody or something. 2. the general standard or grade of something. 3. the highest or finest standard

quality assurance /ˈkwɔːltɪti əˈsərəns/ noun a set of criteria which are designed to check that people in an organisation maintain a high standard in the products or services they supply

quality circle /ˈkwɔːltɪti ˈsɜːk(ə)l/ noun a group of employees from different levels of an organisation who meet regularly to discuss ways of improving the quality of its products or services

Qualpacs /ˈkwɔləpakz/ noun a written on prescriptions

quantitative digital radiography /ˌkwɒntəˈtɪtɪv ˈdʌɡrəˌrədʒɪˈəʊri/ noun the use of digital X-ray scans to find out whether a person has a bone disease such as osteoporosis. The levels of calcium in the bones are measured, usually in the spine and hip

quantitative /ˌkwɒntəˈtɪtɪv/ adjective referring to a study in which numerical information is collected. Compare qualitative

quarantine /ˈkwɔːrəntɪn/ noun 1. the situation in which a person, animal or ship just arrived in a country is kept isolated in case it carries a serious disease, to allow the disease time to develop and be detected. 2. the period of such isolation to prevent the spread of disease. 

quarantine /ˈkwɔːrəntɪn/ verb to put a person or animal in quarantine. (NOTE: quarantining – quarantined)

quartan fever /ˈkwɔːtən ˈfɛvər/ noun a form of malaria caused by Plasmodium malariae in which the fever returns every four days. 2 tertian fever

queasiness /ˈkwɛzɪnəs/ noun the feeling of being about to vomit

queasy /ˈkwɛzɪ/ adjective feeling as though about to vomit
Queckenstedt test /kwəkənstəd tɛst/ noun a test done during a lumbar puncture in which pressure is applied to the jugular veins to see if the cerebrospinal fluid is flowing correctly [Described 1916. After Hans Heinrich George Queckenstedt (1876–1918), German physician.]
quicken /kwɪkən/ noun the first sign of life in an unborn baby, usually after about four months of pregnancy, when the mother can feel it moving in her uterus
quiescent /kwɪəsənt/ adjective referring to a disease with symptoms reduced either by treatment or in the usual course of the disease
quin /kwɪn/ noun same as quintuplet (informal) (NOTE: The US term is quint.)
quinine /kwɪˈnɪn/ noun an alkaloid drug made from the bark of cinchona, a South American tree
quinolone /kwɪnəˈləʊn/ noun a drug used to treat Gram-negative and Gram-positive bacterial infections of the respiratory and urinary tracts and of the gastro-intestinal system (NOTE: Quinolone drugs have names ending in -oxacin: ciprofloxacin)
quinsy /ˈkwɪnsi/ noun acute throat inflammation with an abscess round a tonsil. Also called peritonsillar abscess
quint /kwɪnt/ noun US same as quintuplet
quintuplet /kwɪntjuːˈplɛt/ noun one of five babies born to a mother at the same time. Also called quin, quint
quotidian /kwətˈdiən/ adjective recurring daily
quotidian fever /kwətˈdiən ˈfɪvr/ noun a violent form of malaria in which the fever returns at daily or even shorter intervals
quotient /ˈkwətʃənt/ noun the result when one number is divided by another
Q wave /ˈkwɛt/ noun a negative deflection at the start of the QRS complex on an electrocardiogram, going downwards
R symbol/roentgen
R/ abbreviation prescription. Full form recipe
rabid /ˈræbid/ adjective referring to rabies, or affected by rabies ♦ She was bitten by a rabid dog
rabid encephalitis /ˈræbid ɪnˌsɛfəˈlætɪs/ noun a fatal form of encephalitis resulting from the bite of a rabid animal
rabies /ˈræbɪzɪz/ noun a frequently fatal viral disease transmitted to humans by infected animals ♦ The hospital ordered a batch of rabies vaccine. Also called hydrophobia
racemose /ˈræzməs/ adjective referring to glands which look like a bunch of grapes.
rachi- /ˈræki/ prefix referring to the spine
rachis /ˈræksɪs/ noun same as back;bone (NOTE: The plural is rachises or rachides.)
rachischisis /ˈrækɪskɪsɪs/ noun same as spina bifida
rachitic /ˈræktɪk/ adjective referring to rickets
rachitis /ˈrækɪtɪs/ noun same as rickets
rad /ræd/ noun a unit of measurement of absorbed radiation dose. ♦ Becquerel, gray (NOTE: Gray is now used to mean one hundred rads.)
radial /ˈrɛdɪl/ adjective 1. referring to something which branches 2. referring to the radius bone in the arm
radial artery /ˈrɛdɪl ˈærtərɪ/ noun an artery which branches from the brachial artery, running near the radius, from the elbow to the palm of the hand
radial nerve /ˈrɛdɪl ˈnɜrv/ noun the main motor nerve in the arm, running down the back of the upper arm and the outer side of the forearm
radial pulse /ˈrɛdɪl pʌls/ noun the main pulse in the wrist, taken near the outer edge of the forearm just above the wrist
radial recurrent /ˈrɛdɪl rɛˈkərənt/ noun an artery in the arm which forms a loop beside the brachial artery
radial reflex /ˈrɛdɪl ˈrɛfliks/ noun a jerk made by the forearm when the insertion in the radius of one of the muscles, the brachioradialis, is hit
radiant /ˈrɛdiənt/ adjective 1. lit with a bright or glowing light 2. referring to light, heat or other energy sent out in the form of rays or waves 3. sending out light, heat or other energy in the form of rays or waves
radiation /ˈrɛdiəʃən/ noun waves of energy which are given off by some substances, especially radioactive substances
radiation burn /ˈrɛdiəʃən bɜrn/ noun a burn on the skin caused by exposure to large amounts of radiation
radiation sickness /ˈrɛdɪəʃən sɪknes/ noun an illness caused by exposure to radiation from radioactive substances
radiation treatment /ˈrɛdɪəʃən ˈtrɛitmənt/ noun same as radiotherapy
radical /ˈrædɪkəl/ adjective aiming to deal with the root of a problem, taking thorough action to remove the source of a disease rather than treat its symptoms
radical mastectomy /ˈrædɪkal ˈmæstəktəmi/ noun a surgical operation to remove a breast and the lymph nodes and muscles associated with it
radical mastoidectomy /ˈrædɪkal ˈmæstədiˌektoʊmɪ/ noun a surgical operation to remove all of the mastoid process
radical treatment /ˈrædɪkal tɹɪˈtrɪtmənt/ noun treatment which aims at complete eradication of a disease
radicle /ˈrædɪkl/ noun a small root or vein
radicular /rəˈdɪkjuˈlər/ adjective referring to a radicle
radiculitis /ˈrædɪkjʊˈlɪtɪs/ noun inflammation of a radicle of a cranial or spinal nerve
radio- /ˈrɛdɪəʊ-/ prefix 1. referring to radiation 2. referring to radioactive substances 3. referring to the radius in the arm
radioactive /ˌrɛdɪəˈtreɪktɪv/ adjective with a nucleus which disintegrates and gives off energy in the form of radiation which can pass through other substances
radioactive isotope /ˈreidɪəʊɔːktɪv/ noun an isotope which sends out radiation, used in radiotherapy and scanning
radioactivity /ˈreidɪəʊæktɪvɪtɪ/ noun energy in the form of radiation emitted by a radioactive substance
radiobiologist /ˈreidɪəʊbɪələdʒɪst/ noun a doctor who specialises in radiobiology
radiobiology /ˈreidɪəʊbɪɒlədʒɪ/ noun the scientific study of radiation and its effects on living things
radiocarpal joint /ˈreidɪəʊˌkærpəl/ noun the joint where the radius articulates with the scaphoid, one of the carpal bones. Also called wrist joint
radiodermatitis /ˈreidɪəʊˌdɜːmətɪtɪs/ noun inflammation of the skin caused by exposure to radiation
radiograph /ˈreidɪəɡrɑːf/ noun an image produced on film or another sensitive surface when radiation such as X-rays or gamma rays passes through an object — verb to make a radiograph of something, especially a part of the body
radiographer /ˈreidɪəɡrɑːfər/ noun 1. a person specially trained to operate a machine to take X-ray photographs or radiographs. Also called diagnostic radiographer 2. a person specially trained to use X-rays or radioactive isotopes in the treatment of patients. Also called therapeutic radiographer
radiography /ˈreidɪəɡrɑːfi/ noun the work of examining the internal parts of the body by taking X-ray photographs
radioimmunassay /ˌreidɪəʊˌɪndʒuˈneɪs/ noun the use of radioactive tracers to investigate the presence of antibodies in blood samples, in order to measure the antibodies themselves or the amount of particular substances, such as hormones, in the blood
radioisotope /ˈreidɪəʊˌɪsɔːtɒp/ noun an isotope of a chemical element which is radioactive
radiologist /ˈreidɪəʊlədʒɪst/ noun a doctor who specialises in radiology
radiology /ˈreidɪəʊlədʒɪ/ noun the use of radiation to diagnose disorders, e.g. through the use of X-rays or radioactive tracers, or to treat diseases such as cancer
radiomimetic /ˈreidɪəʊmɪmɪtɪk/ adjective referring to a drug or chemical which produces similar effects to those of radiation, e.g. the nitrogen mustard group of chemicals used in chemotherapy
radionuclide /ˌreidɪəʊˈnjuːklaid/ noun an element which gives out radiation
radionuclide scan /ˌreidɪəʊˌnjuːklaid,ˈskænt/ noun a scan, especially of the brain, where radionuclides are put in compounds which are concentrated in particular parts of the body
radio-opaque /ˈreidɪəʊ əʊˈpeɪk/ adjective absorbing and blocking radiant energy, e.g. X-rays
radio-opaque dye /ˈreidɪəʊ əʊˈpeɪk ˈdeɪ/ noun a liquid which appears on an X-ray, and which is introduced into soft organs such as the kidney so that they show up clearly on an X-ray photograph
radiopaque /ˈreidɪəʊˌpeɪk/ adjective same as radio-opaque
radioscopy /ˌreidɪəʊˈsɒskəpi/ noun an examination of an X-ray photograph on a fluorescent screen
radiosensitive /ˌreidɪəʊˌsɛnˈsɪtɪv/ adjective referring to a cancer cell which is sensitive to radiation and can be treated by radiotherapy
radiotherapist /ˌreidɪəʊˌθɜːrəˈpɪst/ noun a doctor who specialises in radiotherapy
radiotherapy /ˌreidɪəʊˌθɜːrəˈpi/ noun the treatment of diseases by exposing the affected part to radioactive rays such as X-rays or gamma rays
radium /ˈreidɪəm/ noun a radioactive metallic element (NOTE: The chemical symbol is Ra.)
radius /ˈreidɪəs/ noun the shorter and outer of the two bones in the forearm between the elbow and the wrist. See illustration at HAND in Supplement (NOTE: The plural is radii. The other bone in the forearm is the ulna.)
radiix /ˈreidɪks/ noun same as root (NOTE: The plural is radices or radixes.)
radon /ˈreidən/ noun a radioactive gas, formed from the radioactive decay of radium, and used in capsules called radon seeds to treat cancers inside the body (NOTE: The chemical symbol is Rn.)
rade /ræd/ noun same as crepitation
Ramstedt’s operation /ˈreɪmstɛdts oʊpə/ noun same as pylorotomy [Described 1912. After Wilhelm Conrad Ramstedt (1867–1933), German surgeon.]
ramus /ˈreɪməs/ noun 1. a branch of a nerve, artery or vein, the ascending part on each side of the mandible (NOTE: The plural is rami.)
R & D abbreviation research and development
randomised /ˈreɪndəmaɪzd/, randomized adjective involving subjects which have been selected without a prearranged plan and in no particular pattern or order
ranitidine /ˈræniːtɪdɪn/ noun a drug which reduces the amount of acid released by the stomach. It is used to treat peptic ulcers and gastritis.
ranula /ˈrænlʊə/ noun a small cyst under the tongue, on the floor of the mouth, which forms when a salivary duct is blocked
Ranvier /ˈrænvɪər/ noun a node of Ranvier
rape /reɪp/ noun the crime of forcing somebody to have sexual intercourse — verb to force somebody to have sexual intercourse
reactivate /ritæk'teiv/ verb to make something active again [His general physical weakness has reactivate the dormant virus.]

reactive /ri'pektiv/ adjective taking place as a reaction to something else

reactionary haemorrhage /ri'fi-kושnə'ri/ həm'əri'di/ noun bleeding which follows an operation
monitoring your own actions while they are being carried out, and by then later evaluating them by talking or writing about them and asking other professionals to give their assessments of you

reflex /rɪˈfleks/ noun a physiological reaction without any conscious thought involved, e.g. a knee jerk or a sneeze, which happens in response to a particular stimulus

reflex are /rɪˈfleks ər/ noun the basic system of a reflex action, where a receptor is linked to a motor neurone which in turn is linked to an effector muscle

reflexologist /rɪˈfleksəlɒdʒɪst/ noun a person specialising in reflexology

reflexology /rɪˈfleksəlɒdʒɪ/ noun a treatment to relieve tension by massaging the soles of the feet and thereby stimulating the nerves and increasing the blood supply

reflux /rɪˈfleks/ noun a situation where a fluid flows in the opposite direction to its usual flow. The valves in the veins prevent blood reflux. Vesicoureteric reflux

reflux oesophagitis /rɪˈfleks əˈsɒfəɡətɪs/ noun inflammation of the oesophagus caused by reflux of stomach acid causing heartburn

refraction /rɪˈtrækʃən/ noun a change of direction of light rays as they enter a medium such as the eye

refractory /rɪˈfrefrəktoʊrɪ/ adjective difficult or impossible to treat, or not responding to treatment

refractory period /rɪˈfrefrəktoʊrɪ ˈpɜːrɪəd/ noun a short space of time after the ventricles of the heart have contracted, when they cannot contract again

refrigeration /rɪˈfrɪɡərəʃən/ noun the process of making something cold

regeneration /rɪˈdʒenərəʃən/ noun a stage where symptoms of a disease are disappearing and the person is getting better

regurgitation /rɪˈdʒʊrʒətʃən/ noun the act of vomiting food up again

rehydration /rɪˈhædrəˈteɪʃən/ noun the act of giving water or liquid to someone who has dehydration

relapse /rɪˈlæps/ noun a situation in which someone gets worse after seeming to be getting better, or where a disease appears again after seeming to be cured. To return to an earlier and worse state, especially to get ill again after getting better

relapsing fever /rɪˈlæpsɪŋ ˈfiːvər/ noun a disease caused by a bacterium, where attacks of fever recur from time to time

relative density /rɪˈlətɪv ˈdɛnətɪ/ noun the ratio of the density of a substance to the density of a standard substance at the same temperature and

registered midwife /ˌrɛdʒɪstrəd ˈmɪdwaɪf/ noun a qualified midwife who is registered to practise

Registered Nurse /ˌrɛdʒɪstrəd ˈnɜːs/ noun a nurse who has been registered by the UKCC. Abbreviation RN, RGN, RTR

registrar /rɪˈdʒɪstrər/ noun 1. a qualified doctor or surgeon in a hospital who supervises house officers. 2. a person who registers something officially

regression /rɪˈgɛrʃən/ noun the act of registering

relapsing fever /rɪˈlæpsɪŋ ˈfiːvər/ noun a disease caused by a bacterium, where attacks of fever recur from time to time

Reiter's syndrome /ˈriːtərz ˈsɜːndrəʊm/ noun a condition caused by a bacterium, where attacks of fever recur from time to time

Reiter's disease /ˈriːtərz ˈdɪzəs/ noun an illness which may be sexually transmitted and affects mainly men, causing arthritis, urethritis and concurrent illness in the same time [Described 1916. After Hans Conrad Reiter (1881–1969), German bacteriologist and hygienist.]

reject /rɪˈdʒekt/ verb 1. to refuse to accept something. 2. to be unable to tolerate tissue or an organ transplanted from another body because it is immunologically incompatible

The new heart was rejected by the body. They gave the patient drugs to prevent the transplant being rejected. 3. to be unable to keep food down and vomit it up again

rejection /rɪˈdʒektʃən/ noun the act of rejecting tissue

Reiter’s syndrome /ˈriːtərz ˈsɜːndrəʊm/ noun a condition caused by a bacterium, where attacks of fever recur from time to time

relapse /rɪˈlæps/ noun a situation in which someone gets worse after seeming to be getting better, or where a disease appears again after seeming to be cured

relapsing fever /rɪˈlæpsɪŋ ˈfiːvər/ noun a disease caused by a bacterium, where attacks of fever recur from time to time

relative density /rɪˈlətɪv ˈdɛnətɪ/ noun the ratio of the density of a substance to the density of a standard substance at the same temperature and
pressure. For liquids and solids the standard substance is usually water, and for gases, it is air.

relative risk /ˈrɛlətɪv/ 'rɪsk/ noun a measure of the likelihood of developing a disease for people who are exposed to a particular risk, relative to people who are not exposed to the same risk. For example, the relative risk of myocardial infarction for oral contraceptive users is 1.6 times that of non-users. Abbreviation RR

relaxant /ˈrɛləksənt/ noun a substance which relieves strain  ■ adjective relieving strain

relaxation /ˈrɛləksəʃən/ noun the process of reducing strain in a muscle

relaxation therapy /ˈrɛləksəʃən ˈθerəpi/ noun a treatment in which people are encouraged to relax their muscles to reduce stress

relaxin /ˈrɛləksən/ noun a hormone which is secreted by the placenta to make the cervix relax and open fully in the final stages of pregnancy before childbirth

release /rɪˈleɪs/ noun the process of allowing something to go out  ○ the slow release of the drug into the bloodstream  ■ verb to let something out  ○ Hormones are released into the body by glands.

releasing factor /rɪˈleɪsɪŋ ˈfæktər/ noun a substance produced in the hypothalamus which encourages the release of hormones

releasing hormone /rɪˈleɪsɪŋ ˈhɔrnmən/ noun a hormone secreted by the hypothalamus which makes the pituitary gland release particular hormones. Also called hypothalamic hormone

REM /rɛm/ noun a unit for measuring amounts of radiation, equal to the effect that one roentgen of X-rays or gamma-rays would produce in a human being. It is used in radiation protection and monitoring.

REM /rɛm/ abbreviation rapid eye movement.  ● REM sleep

remission /rɪˈmiʃən/ noun a period when an illness or fever is less severe

re. mist. /​rɛ/ ‘mɪst/ adverb (on a prescription) repeat the same mixture. Full form repetatur mistura

REM sleep /rɛm slɪp/ noun a stage of sleep which happens several times each night and is characterised by dreaming, rapid eye movement and increased pulse rate and brain activity. Also called rapid eye movement sleep

COMMENT: During REM sleep, a person dreams, breathes lightly and has a raised blood pressure and an increased rate of heartbeat. The eyes may be half-open, and the sleeper may make facial movements.

ren- /rɛn/- prefix same as reno- (used before vowels)

renal /rɛnəl/ adjective referring to the kidneys

renal artery /rɛnəl ˈɑːrtərɪ/ noun one of two arteries running from the abdominal aorta to the kidneys

renal calculi /rɛnəl ˈkælkjʊli/ noun a small hard mineral mass called a stone in the kidney

renal capsule /rɛnəl ˈkæpsjʊl/ noun same as fibrous capsule

renal colic /rɛnəl ˈkɒlɪk/ noun a sudden pain caused by a kidney stone or stones in the ureter

renal corpuscle /rɛnəl ˈkɔpərskul/ noun part of a nephron in the cortex of a kidney. Also called Malpighian body

renal cortex /rɛnəl ˈkɔrktɛks/ noun the outer covering of the kidney, immediately beneath the capsule. See illustration at kidney in Supplement

renal dialysis /rɛnəl ˈdələlaɪsɪs/ noun a method of artificially maintaining the chemical balance of the blood when the kidneys have failed, or the process of using this method. Also called dialysis

renal hypertension /rɛnəl ˈhɑpstrənˌθɛn/ noun high blood pressure linked to kidney disease

renal medulla /rɛnəl ˈmeɪdəlu/ noun the inner part of a kidney containing no glomeruli. See illustration at kidney in Supplement

renal pelvis /rɛnəl ˈpɜːlvɪs/ noun the upper and wider part of the ureter leading from the kidney where urine is collected before passing down the ureter into the bladder. Also called pelvis of the kidney. See illustration at kidney in Supplement

renal transplant /rɛnəl ˈtrænspɔːltʃənt/ noun a kidney transplant

renal tubule /rɛnəl ˈtjuːbjuːl/ noun a tiny tube which is part of a nephron. Also called unipolar tubule

reno- /rɛnəʊ/- prefix referring to the kidneys

renin /rɛnɪn/ noun an enzyme secreted by the kidney to prevent loss of sodium, and which also affects blood pressure

rennin /rɛnˈnɪn/ noun an enzyme which makes milk coagulate in the stomach, so as to slow down the passage of the milk through the digestive system

reno- /rɛnəʊ/- prefix referring to the kidneys

renovascular system /rɛnəvəˈsæskjʊlər ˈsɪstəm/ noun the blood vessels associated with the kidney

reorganisation /rɛrəɡˈɔːnɪzəʃən/ noun 1. a change in the way something is organised or done 2. the process of changing the way something is organised or done 3. an occasion when a business or organisation is given a completely new structure

reovirus /rɛrəvəˈvɜːrəs/ noun a virus which affects both the intestine and the respiratory system, but does not cause serious illness. Compare echovirus

rep /rɛp/- adverb (written on a prescription) repeat. Full form repetatur
repetitive strain injury /riˈpetɪtɪvˈstrɪnmɪˈdrɪ, riˈpetɪtɪvˈstrɛs/ noun stress injury; repetitive stress injury /riˈpetɪtɪvˈstrɛs/ noun; repetitive strain injury /riˈpetɪtɪvˈstrɛz/ diˈˈpres- run-in time, usually in a limb, felt by someone who performs the same movement many times over a period, e.g. when operating a computer terminal or playing a musical instrument. Abbreviation RSI

replantation /rɪˈplaːntəˈʃən/ noun a surgical technique which reattaches parts of the body which have been accidentally cut or torn off.

replication /rɪˈplɪkəˈʃən/ noun the process in which a cell, where the DNA makes copies of itself.

repolarisation /riˈpɒləraɪˈzeɪʃən/, repolarization /riˈpɔləraɪzəˈʃən/ noun the restoration of the usual electrical polarity of a nerve or muscle cell membrane after reversal of its polarity while a nerve impulse or muscle contraction travelled along it.

reportable diseases /rɪˈpɔrtəbəl dɪˈzəriz/ plural noun diseases such as asbestosis, hepatitis or anthrax which may be caused by working conditions or may infect other workers and must be reported to the District Health Authority.

repositor /rɪˈpɒzɪtər/ noun a surgical instrument used to push a prolapsed organ back into its usual position.

repression /rɪˈpreʃən/ noun (in psychiatry) the act of ignoring or forgetting feelings or thoughts which might be unpleasant.

reproduction /rɪˈprɒdʌkʃən/ noun the process of making new living beings by existing ones, e.g. producing children or derived other descendants.

reproductive organs /rɪˈprɒdʌktɪv ˈɔrənəz/ plural noun parts of the bodies of men and women which are involved in the conception and development of a fetus.

reproductive system /rɪˈprɒdʌktɪv ˈsɪstəm/ noun the arrangement of organs and ducts in the bodies of men and women which produce spermatozoa or ova.

COMMENT: In the human male, the testes produce the spermatozoa which pass through the vasa efferentia and the vasa deferentia where they receive liquid from the seminal vesicles, then out of the body through the urethra and penis on ejaculation.

In the female, an ovum, produced by one of the two ovaries, passes through the Fallopian tube where it is fertilised by a spermatozoon from the male. The fertilised ovum moves down into the uterus where it develops into an embryo.

RES abbreviation reticuloendothelial system

research and development /rɪˈsɛrچ ənd ˈdɛvələpmənt/ noun the process by which pharmaceutical companies find new drugs and test their suitability. Abbreviation R & D

resection /rɪˈsektʃən/ noun the surgical removal of any part of the body.

resection of the prostate /rɪˈsektʃən əv dəˈprəʊstər-/ noun same as transurethral prostatectomy.

resectoscope /rɪˈsektəskəʊp/ noun a surgical instrument used to carry out a transurethral resection.

reservoir /rɪˈzɜrvər/ noun 1. a cavity in an organ or group of tissues in which fluids collect and are stored; 2. an organism in which a parasite lives and develops without damaging it, but from which the parasite then passes to another species which is damaged by it; 3. a part of a machine or piece of equipment where liquid is stored for it to use.

resident /rɪˈzɛnt/ adjective living in a place.

residential /rɪˈzɛnʃənl/ adjective 1. living in a hospital; 2. living at home.

residential care /rɪˈzɛnʃənl keə/ noun the care of patients either in a hospital or at home, but not as outpatients.

residual /rɪˈzjuːdʒəl/ adjective, which is left behind.

residual air /rɪˈzjuːdʒəl ər/ noun air left in the lungs after a person has breathed out as much air as possible.

residual volume /rɪˈzjuːdʒəl ˈvʌlərəs/ noun air left in the lungs by a person who has passed as much urine as possible.

resistance /rɪˈzistəns/ noun 1. the ability of a person not to get a disease; 2. the ability of bacteria or a virus to remain unaffected by a drug. The bacteria have developed a resistance to certain antibiotics.

resolution /rɪˈzərəʃən/ noun the amount of detail which can be seen in a microscope or on a computer monitor.

resonance /rɪˈzoʊnəns/ noun a sound made by a hollow part of the body when hit. ☇ magnetic resorption /rɪˈzərpʃən/ noun the process of absorbing a substance produced by the body back into the body.

respiration /rɪˈspɛrəʃən/ noun the act of taking air into the lungs and blowing it out again through the mouth or nose. Also called breathing.

respiration rate /rɪˈspɛrəʃən ˈræt/ noun the number of times a person breathes per minute.

respirator /rɪˈspɪrətər/ noun 1. a mask worn to prevent someone breathing harmful gas or fumes.

respiratory /rɪˈspɪrətri/ adjective referring to breathing.

respiratory centre /rɪˈspɪrətəri ˈsɛntə/ noun a nerve centre in the brain which regulates the breathing.
respiratory distress syndrome /riˈspɪrətɔrɪ dɪˈstres ˈsɪndrəm/ noun a condition of newborn babies, and especially common in premature babies, in which the lungs do not expand properly, due to lack of surfactant. Also called hyaline membrane disease

respiratory failure /riˈspɪrətɔrɪ ˈfeɪjər/ noun failure of the lungs to oxygenate the blood correctly

respiratory quotient /riˈspɪrətɔrɪ ˈkwəutən/ noun the ratio of the amount of carbon dioxide taken into the alveoli of the lungs from the blood to the amount of oxygen which the alveoli take from the air. Abbreviation RQ

respiratory syncytial virus /riˈspɪrətɔrɪ ˈsɪnsətɪəl ˈvɜːrəs/ noun a virus which causes infections of the nose and throat in adults, but serious bronchiolitis in children. Abbreviation RSV

respiratory system /riˈspɪrətɔrɪ ˈsɪstəm/ noun the series of organs and passages which take air into the lungs, and exchange oxygen for carbon dioxide

respite care /rɪˈspɪt kɛə/ noun temporary care provided to people with disabilities, serious conditions or terminal illness, so that their families can have a rest from the daily routine

response /rɪˈspʌns/ noun a reaction by an organ, tissue or a person to an external stimulus

responsibility /rɪˈspʌnsɪbɪlɪtɪ/ noun 1. somebody or something which a person or organisation has a duty to take care of. Checking the drip is your responsibility. 2. the blame for something bad which has happened. She has taken full responsibility for the mix-up. 3. the position of having to explain to somebody why something was done. Whose responsibility is it to talk to the family?

rest /rɛst/ noun a period of time spent relaxing or sleeping. What you need is a good night’s rest. 1. verb, to spend time relaxing or sleeping, to use a body part less for a period of time. Rest your arm for a week.

restenosis /rɛstəˈnɒsɪs/ noun an occasion when something becomes narrow again, e.g. a coronary artery which has previously been widened by balloon angioplasty. (Note: The plural is restenoses.)

resuscitation /rɛˈsʌskəteɪʃən/ noun the act of reviving someone who seems to be dead, by making him or her breathe again and restarting the heart

retardation /rɛtəˈdeɪʃən/ noun the process of making something slower

retching /rɛtʃɪŋ/ noun the fact of attempting to vomit without being able to do so

rete /ˈreɪtɪ/ noun a network of veins, arteries or nerve fibres in the body. Ret. reticul (Note: The plural is retia.)

retention /rɛtəˈtenʃən/ noun the act of not letting out something, especially a fluid, which is usually released from the body, e.g. holding back urine in the bladder

retention cyst /rɛtəˈtenʃən kɪst/ noun a cyst which is formed when a duct from a gland is blocked

retention of urine /rɛtəˈtenʃən əv ˈjuərɪn/ noun a condition in which passing urine is difficult or impossible because the urethra is blocked or because the prostate gland is enlarged

rete testis /ˈreɪtə testɪs/ noun a network of channels in the testis which take the sperm to the epididymis

retia /rɛˈtʃiə/ plural of rete

reticular /rɛtɪˈkjuːlər/ adjective relating to or in the form of a network

reticular fibres /rɛtɪˈkjuːlər fɪbəz/ plural noun fibres in connective tissue which support, e.g., organs or blood vessels

reticuloocyte /rɛtɪˈkjuːləʊsɪt/ noun a red blood cell which has not yet fully developed

reticuloysis /rɛtɪˈkjuːləʊsɪs/ noun a condition in which the number of reticuloocytes in the blood increases unusually

reticuloendothelial cell /rɛtɪˈkjuːləʊdəndəˈθɪəl ˈsel/ noun a phagocytic cell in the reticuloendothelial system

reticuloendothelial system /rɛtɪˈkjuːləʊdəndəˈθɪəl ˈsɪstəm/ noun a series of phagocytic cells in the body, found especially in bone marrow, lymph nodes, liver and spleen, which attack and destroy bacteria and form antibodies. Abbreviation RES

retin-/retin- /ˈretɪn-/ prefix same as retino- (used before vowels)

retina /ˈretɪnə/ noun the inside layer of the eye which is sensitive to light. Detached retina. See illustration at EYE in Supplement. (Note: The plural is retinæ.)

retinal /ˈrɛtɪnəl/ adjective referring to the retina

retinal artery /ˈretɪnəl ərtəri/ noun the only artery of the retina, which accompanies the optic nerve

retinal detachment /ˈretɪnəl dɪˈtætʃmen/ noun a condition in which the retina is partly detached from the choroid

retinitis /ˈretɪnətɪs/ noun inflammation of the retina

retinitis pigmentosa /ˈretɪnətɪtɪs ˈpɪgmen təʊsə/ noun a hereditary condition in which inflammation of the retina can result in blindness

retino- /ˈretɪnəʊ-/ prefix referring to the retina
retinol /ˈretɪnɒl/ noun a vitamin found in liver, vegetables, eggs and cod liver oil which is essential for good vision. Also called Vitamin A.

retinopathy /ˌretɪnəˈpɒθi/ noun any disease of the retina.

retinoscope /ˌretɪnəˈskɒp/ noun an instrument with various lenses, used to measure the refraction of the eye.

retraction /ˌretrækʃən/ noun the fact of moving backwards or becoming shorter. There is retraction of the overlying skin.

retraction ring /ˌretrækʃən rɪŋ/ noun a groove round the uterus, separating its upper and lower parts, which, in obstructed labour, prevents the baby from moving forward as expected into the cervical canal. Also called Bandi’s ring.

retractor /ˌretræktrə/ noun a surgical instrument which pulls and holds back the edge of the incision in an operation.

retro-/retro- prefix at the back, behind.

retrobulbar /ˌretroˈbʌlbə/ adjective behind the eyeball.

retrobulbar neuritis /ˌretroˈbʌlbər niːrɪtɪs/ noun inflammation of the optic nerve which makes objects appear blurred. Also called optic neuritis.

retroflexion /ˌretroˈfleksʃən/ noun the fact of being bent backwards.

retrograde /ˌretroɡreɪd/ adjective going backwards or deteriorating, getting worse.

retrograde pyelography /ˌretroɡreɪd ˈpɪliɡrəfi/ noun an X-ray examination of the kidney where a catheter is passed into the kidney and an opaque liquid is injected directly into it.

retrointestinal fibrolasia /ˌretroɪnˈtɜːstənɪəl fɪbroləˈsɪəs/ noun a condition in which fibrous tissue develops behind the lens of the eye, resulting in blindness.

retro-ocular /ˌretroʊˈəʊklər/ adjective at the back of the eye.

retroperitoneal /ˌretroʊpərɪˈtəʊnəl/ adjective at the back of the peritoneum.

retroperitoneal space /ˌretroʊpərɪˈtəʊnəl ˈspeɪs/ noun the area between the posterior peritoneal peritoneum and the posterior abdominal wall, containing the kidneys, adrenal glands, duodenum, ureters and pancreas.

retropharyngeal /ˌretroʊˌfærɪnˈdʒiːnəl/ adjective at the back of the pharynx.

retropubic /ˌretroʊˈpuːbɪk/ adjective at the back of the pubis.

retrospection /ˌretroʊˈspekʃən/ noun the act of recalling what happened in the past.

retrospective /ˌretroʊˈspektɪv/ adjective applying to the past, tracing what has happened already to selected people.

retroversion /ˌretroʊˈvɜːzʃən/ noun the fact of sloping backwards. Also called retroversion of the uterus.

retroverted uterus /ˌretroʊˈvɜːrtɪd juˈtəras/ noun a condition in which the uterus slopes backwards away from its usual position. Also called retroversion of the uterus, tipped womb.

retrovirus /ˌretroʊˈvɜːrəs/ noun a virus whose genetic material contains RNA from which DNA is synthesised (NOTE: The AIDS virus and many carcinogenic viruses are retroviruses.)

revascularisation /ˌriːˌvæskəˈræzən/ noun an X-ray examination of the kidneys, showing increased blood flow through them.

reverse isolation /ˌriːvɜːs əˈziːləʃən/ noun the act of restoring an adequate blood supply to an organ or tissue, especially in a surgical operation using a blood vessel graft.

revisión /ˌriˌveˈziːon/ noun an examination of a surgical operation after it has been carried out. Also called a revision of a radical mastectomy.

Rhee’s syndrome /ˈriːz sɪndrəm/ noun a form of brain disease affecting young children, which is possibly due to viral infection and has a suspected link with aspirin.

RGN abbreviation Registered General Nurse.

Rh abbreviation rhesus.

rhabdomyosarcoma /ˈræbdəməsərˈkɔːmə/ noun a malignant tumour of striated muscle tissue. It occurs mostly in children.

rhabdovirus /ˈræbdəvoʊvɜːrəs/ noun any of a group of viruses containing RNA, one of which causes rabies.

rhachio-/raˈkiəʊʊ/ prefix referring to the spine.

Rheumatoid arthritis /ˌrihuˌmeɪtəd/ noun a chronic disease affecting the joints and also the valves and lining of the heart.

Rheumatoid arthritis /ˌrihuˌmeɪtəd/ noun a chronic disease affecting the joints and also the valves and lining of the heart.

RH disease /ˈri θiː/ noun same as rhesus factor disease.

rheo-/riˈeəʊ/ prefix relating to the flow of liquids.

rheostatic /rɪˈəʊstətɪk/ adjective referring to rheostat.

Rheostat /ˈriəʊstæt/ noun a device for controlling the flow of electrical current.

rheus factor disease /ˈrɪəʊs /fæktər diˈziːs/ noun a disease which occurs when the blood of a fetus has a different rhesus factor from that of the mother. Also called Rh disease.

Rh negative /ˈri əʊ s i ə/ adjective referring to rheumatism.

rheumatic fever /ˈriɪmətɪk/ noun a collagen disease of young people and children, caused by haemolytic streptococci, where the joints and also the valves and lining of the heart become inflamed. Also called acute rheumatism.

COMMENT: Rheumatic fever often follows another streptococcal infection such as a...
nour

rhiz-

common cold
viruses containing RNA, which cause infection of rhinovirus ics, antihistamines or steroids.
sinus, as a result of either a viral infection or swelling of the lining of the nose and paranasal rhinoscopy rhinoscope charge from the nose rhinorrhoea rhinorrhoea rhinoplasty caused by rosacea, in which the nose becomes rhinophyma nasal passages medicine dealing with diseases of the nose and rhinology rhino-

allergic reaction to dust or flowers nose run, caused, e.g., by a virus infection or an rhinitis rhin-

ostearthritis rheumatologist /rə'muːtəlɪst/ noun a doctor who specializes in rheumatology

rheumatology /rəˈmuːtɒlədʒi/ noun a branch of medicine dealing with rheumatic disease of muscles and joints

Rh factor /ər ˈɛfər/ fact is /ˈɛkstɪv/ adjective relating to rheumatism

rheumatoid /rəˈmuːtəʊd/ adjective relating to rheumatism

rheumatoid arthritis /rəˈmuːtəʊd əˈrɪθrətɪs/ noun a general painful disabling collagen disease affecting any joint, but especially the hands, feet and hips, making them swollen and inflamed. o osteoarthritis

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rhizotomy /rɪˈzɒtəmi/ noun a surgical operation to cut or divide the roots of a nerve to relieve severe pain

Rh-negative /rhaɪ ˈɛnɪvədʒəv/ adjective who does not have the rhesus factor in his or her blood

rhodopsin /raʊdəˈɒpsɪn/ noun a light-sensitive purple pigment in the rods of the retina, which makes it possible to see in dim light. Also called visual purple

rhomboid /raʊmbɔɪd/ noun one of two muscles in the top part of the back which move the shoulder blades

rheumatism /rhuːˈmætɪzəm/ noun an unusual sound in the chest, heard through a stethoscope, caused by a partial blockage in the bronchi (NOTE: The plural is rhonchi.)

Rh-positive /rhaɪ ˈpɒzɪtɪv/ adjective who has the rhesus factor in his or her blood

rhythm method /rɪθm ˈmiːθəd/ noun a method of birth control where sexual intercourse should take place only during the safe periods when conception is least likely to occur, i.e., at the beginning and at the end of the menstrual cycle COMMENT: This method is not as safe or reliable as other methods of contraception because the time when ovulation takes place cannot be accurately calculated if a woman does not have regular periods.

riboflavin /raɪbəflaɪˈvɛn/ noun a condition caused by rosacea, in which the nose becomes permanently red and swollen

rhinoplasty /rɪˈnɒspləstɪ/ noun plastic surgery to correct the appearance of the nose

rhinorrhoea /rɪˈnɒrəʊə/ noun a watery discharge from the nose

rhinoscope /rɪˈnɒskəp/ noun an instrument for examining the inside of the nose

rhinoscopy /rɪˈnɒskɒpi/ noun an examination of the inside of the nose

rhinosinusitis /rɪˌnɒsɪˈnjuːsɪtɪs/ noun swelling of the lining of the nose and paranasal sinuses, as a result of either a viral infection or allergic rhinitis. It is usually treated with antibiotics, antihistamines or steroids.

rhinovirus /rɪˌnɒvərɪvəs/ noun a group of viruses containing RNA, which cause infection of the nose and include the virus which causes the common cold

rhz- /raɪz-/ rhz- /raɪz-/ prefix referring to a root
There is no risk of the disease spreading to other members of the family. □ at risk in danger of being harmed □ Businessmen are particularly at risk of having a heart attack. □ verb to do something which may possibly cause harm or have bad results □ If the patient is not moved to an isolation ward, all the patients and staff in the hospital risk catching the disease.

risk factor /risk /faktə/ noun a characteristic that increases a person’s likelihood of getting a particular disease □ Smoking is a risk factor for lung cancer. □ Obesity is a risk factor for diabetes.

risus sardonicus /ˌrɪsəs sɑrdəˈnɪks/ noun a twisted smile which is a symptom of tetanus

rite of passage /rɪt av ‘paʊsɪdʒ/ noun a ceremony which shows that somebody is moving from one stage of their life to another, e.g. from childhood to puberty or from unmarried to married life

RM abbreviation Registered Midwife
RN abbreviation Registered Nurse
RNA abbreviation ribonucleic acid
RNMH abbreviation Registered Nurse for the Mentally Handicapped
Rocky Mountain spotted fever /ˌrɒki ‘mɔntəmən ˈspeɪtnɪ/ noun a type of typhus caused by Rickettsia rickettsii, transmitted to humans by ticks
rod /rɒd/ noun 1. a stick shape with rounded ends □ Some bacteria are shaped like rods or are rod-shaped. 2. one of two types of light-sensitive cell in the retina of the eye. Rods are sensitive to dim light, but not to colour. □ cone
rodent ulcer /ˌrəʊdənt ˈʌltə(r)/ noun a malignant tumour on the face

Roentgen /ˌrʊəntʃən/ noun a unit of radiation used to measure the exposure of someone or something to X-rays or gamma rays. Symbol R [After Wilhelm Konrad von Röntgen (1845–1923), physicist at Strasbourg, Geissen, Würzburg and Munich, and then Director of the physics laboratory at Würzburg where he discovered X-rays in 1895. Nobel prize for Physics 1901.]

role /rʊl/ noun 1. the usual or expected function of somebody or something in a particular process or event □ the role of haemoglobin in blood clotting 2. the characteristic or expected pattern of behaviour of a particular member of a social group □ the eldest child’s role in the family

role playing /rʊl, ˈplɛɪɪŋ/ noun the act of pretending to be somebody else in a situation, so that you have to imagine how that person feels and thinks. It usually involves several people. It is used in many training exercises and psychiatric evaluations.

rolled bandage /ˈrɔld, ˈbændɪdʒ/ noun a bandage in
the form of a long strip of cloth which is rolled up from one end or both ends.

Röntgen's sign /ˈrɔntʃən sain/ noun a swaying of the body or falling when standing with the feet close together and the eyes closed, the result of loss of the joint position sense [Described 1895.]

Rothera's test /ˈrɒθərəz tɛst/ noun for breastfeeding a touch on the cheek or mouth, which is important in new babies to turn their heads towards a nurse will help them to increase.

Roy's model /roʊ/ a model for nursing developed in the US in the 1970s. It represents nurses. Abbreviation RN

RPSN abbreviation Registered Sick Children's Nurse

RQ abbreviation respiratory quotient

RR abbreviation 1. recovery room 2. relative risk

RRH abbreviation respiratory resistant strain

RSCN abbreviation Registered Theatre Nurse

rubefacient /ˌrʌbəˈfɪʃənt/ adjective causing the skin to become red
rubella /rub-ələ/ noun a common infectious viral disease of children with mild fever, swollen lymph nodes and rash. Also called German measles.

COMMENT: Rubella can cause stillbirth or malformation of an unborn baby if the mother catches the disease while pregnant. One component of the MMR vaccine immunises against rubella.

rubeola /rub-ə-lə/ noun same as measles

rubor /rub-ər/ noun redness of the skin or tissue

Ruffini corpuscles /ruf-i-ne kər-pəsəlz/.

Ruffini nerve endings /ruf-i-nər-ve ə-nəndž/.

run-down /rən daun/ adjective exhausted and unwell

running /rənɪŋ/ adjective from which liquid is flowing

running sore /rənɪŋ sɔr/ noun a sore which is discharging pus

runs /rənz/ noun the runs same as diarrhea (informal) [NOTE: Takes a singular or plural verb.]

rupture /rəptʃər/ noun 1. the breaking or tearing of an organ such as the appendix 2. same as hernia • verb to break or tear something

ruptured spleen /rəptʃərd spli-n/ noun a spleen which has been torn by piercing or by a blow

Russell traction /rasəl ə-trakʃən/ noun a type of traction with weights and slings used to straighten a femur which has been fractured [Described 1924. After R. Hamilton Russell (1860–1933), Australian surgeon.]

Ryle’s tube /rəliz ˈdʒʌst/ noun a thin tube which is passed into the stomach through either the nose or mouth, used to pump out the contents of the stomach or to introduce a barium meal in the stomach [Described 1921. After John Alfred Ryle (1882–1950), physician at London, Cambridge and Oxford, UK]
S

Sabin vaccine /ˈseɪbrɪn, ˈvæksvɪn/ noun an oral vaccine against poliomyelitis, consisting of weak live polio virus. Compare Salk vaccine [NOTE: This is the vaccine used in the UK] [Developed 1955. After Albert Bruce Sabin (1906–93), Russian-born New York bacteriologist.]
sac /ˈsæk/ noun a part of the body shaped like a bag
saccades /ˈsækədəs/ plural noun controlled rapid movements of the eyes made when a person is changing the direction in which they are focusing, e.g. when they are reading
saccar- /sakər-/ prefix same as saccharo-
(such as a contraceptive sheath and having only one sexual partner to reduce the possibility of catching a sexually transmitted disease)
saccharide /ˈsækrərɪd/ noun a form of carbohydrate
saccharin /ˈsækrərɪn/ noun a white crystalline substance, used in place of sugar because, although it is nearly 500 times sweeter than sugar, it contains no carbohydrates
saccharine /ˈsækrərɪn/ adjective relating to, resembling or containing sugar
saccharo- /ˈsakrəroʊ-/ prefix referring to sugar
sacculus /ˈsækjʊləs, ˈsækjuːləs/ noun the smaller of two sacs in the vestibule of the inner ear which is part of the mechanism which relates information about the position of the head in space
sacral /ˈsekrəl/ adjective referring to the sacrum
sacral foramen /ˈsekrəl fərəˌmən/ noun one of the openings in the sacrum through which the sacral nerves pass. See illustration at Pelvis in Supplement [NOTE: The plural is sacral foramina.]
sacral nerve /ˈsekrəl nɜrv/ noun one of the nerves which branch from the spinal cord in the sacrum and govern the legs, the arms and the genital area
sacral plexus /ˈsekrəl ˈpleksəs/ noun a group of nerves inside the pelvis near the sacrum which lead to nerves in the buttocks, back of the thigh and lower leg and foot
sacral vertebrae /ˈsekrəl ˈvɜtrəbrə/ plural noun the five vertebrae in the lower part of the spine which are fused together to form the sacrum

Sacroccygeal /ˈsekrəkoʊˌsɪksɪˈjɪgl/ adjective referring to the sacrum and the coccyx
sacroiliac /ˈsekrələˌlɪk/ adjective referring to the sacrum and the ilium
sacroiliac joint /ˈsekrəliˌæk ˈdʒɒnt/ noun a joint where the sacrum joins the ilium
sacroiliitis /ˈsekrəlɪəlɪtɪs/ noun inflammation of the sacroiliac joint
sacrum /ˈsekrəm/ noun a flat triangular bone, formed of five sacral vertebrae fused together, located between the lumbar vertebrae and the coccyx. It articulates with the coccyx and also with the hip bones. See illustration at Pelvis in Supplement [NOTE: The plural is sacra.]

SAD abbreviation seasonal affective disorder
saddle joint /ˈseɪdəl dʒənt/ noun a synovial joint where one element is concave and the other convex, like the joint between the thumb and the wrist
sadism /ˈseɪdɪzəm/ noun a sexual condition in which a person finds sexual pleasure in hurting others
sadist /ˈseidɪst/ noun a person whose sexual urge is linked to sadism
sadistic /ˈseɪdiːstɪk/ adjective referring to sadism. Compare masochism
SADS abbreviation seasonal affective disorder syndrome
safe /ˈseɪf/ adjective 1. not likely to cause harm ○ Is it safe to use this drug on someone who is diabetic? 2. in a protected place or situation and not likely to be harmed or lost ○ Keep the drugs in a safe place. ○ He's safe in hospital being looked after by the doctors and nurses. [NOTE: safer – safest]
safe dose /ˈseɪf dəʊs/ noun the amount of a drug which can be given without being harmful
safe sex /ˈseɪf ˈseks/ noun the use of measures such as a contraceptive sheath and having only one sexual partner to reduce the possibility of catching a sexually transmitted disease
sagittal /ˈseɪdʒɪtəl/ adjective going from the front of the body to the back, dividing it into right and left
sagittal plane

sagittal plane /ˌsædʒɪtl/ 'pleyn/ noun the division of the body along the midline, at right angles to the coronal plane, dividing the body into right and left parts. Also called median plane. See illustration at ANATOMICAL TERMS in Supplement.

sagittal section /ˌsædʒɪtl/ 'sɛkʃən/ any section or cut through the body, going from the front to the back along the length of the body.

sagittal suture /ˌsædʒɪtl/ 'surʃə/ noun a joint along the top of the head where the two parietal bones are fused.

St Vitus’s dance /sʌnt 'vʌtəz, ˈdɔːms/ noun a former name for Sydenham’s chorea.

salbutamol /ˈsæljʊbjuˌtæməl/ noun a drug which relaxes and dilates the bronchi, used in the relief of asthma, emphysema and chronic bronchitis.

salicylate /sælˈɪsɪleɪt/ noun one of various pain-killing substances derived from salicylic acid, e.g. aspirin.

salicylic acid /səˈlɪsɪlɪk/ 'əsəld/ noun a white antiseptic substance which destroys bacteria and fungi and which is used in ointments to treat corns, warts and other skin disorders.

salicylism /səˈlɪsɪlɪzɪズm/ noun the effects of poisoning due to too much salicylic acid. Symptoms include headache, tiredness, faintness and vomiting.

saline /ˈsɛliːn/ adjective referring to or containing salt. • The patient was given a saline transfusion. ■ noun same as saline solution.

saline drip /ˈsɛliːn ˈdrɪp/ noun a drip containing a saline solution.

saline solution /ˈsɛliːn səˈluːʃən/ noun a solution made of distilled water and sodium chloride, which is introduced into the body intravenously through a drip.

saliva /ˈsælɪvə/ noun a fluid in the mouth, secreted by the salivary glands, which starts the process of digesting food. (NOTE: For terms referring to saliva, see words beginning with 'ptyal-', phyalo- or sia-, dialo-).

salivary /ˈsælɪvərɪ/ adjective referring to saliva.

salivary calculus /ˈsælɪvərɪ kəˈʃék juːlɪs/ noun a stone which forms in a salivary gland.

salivary gland /ˈsælɪvərɪ ɡlænd/ noun a gland which secretes saliva, situated under the tongue (the sublingual gland), beneath the lower jaw (the submandibular gland) and in the neck at the back of the lower jaw joint (the parotid gland).

salivation /ˈsælɪveɪʃən/ noun the production of saliva.

Saik vaccine /ˌsɔɪk, ˈvækˈsɪnt/ noun an injected vaccine against poliomyelitis, consisting of inactivated poliovirus. Compare Sabin vaccine.

[Developed 1954. After Jonas Edward Salk (1914–95), virologist in Pittsburgh, USA.]

salmeterol /ˈsælˌmɛtərəl/ noun a drug which relaxes and widens the airways, used to treat severe asthma.

Salmonella /ˈsælmoʊ̯nəlu/ noun a genus of pathogenic bacteria which live in the intestines and are usually acquired by eating contaminated food, responsible for many cases of gastroenteritis and food poisoning. (NOTE: The plural is Salmonellae.)

Salmonella poisoning /ˌsælmoʊ̯nəluˌpəˈziŋ/ noun poisoning caused by Salmonellae which develop in the intestines. ○ Five people were taken to hospital with Salmonella poisoning.

salmonellosis /ˈsælmoʊ̯nəluˈloʊsɪs/ noun food poisoning caused by Salmonella in the digestive system.

salpingo-/ /ˈsælpinɡo-/ prefix same as salpingo-(used before vowels).

salpingectomy /ˈsælpinɡəˌdʒɛktəmi/ noun a surgical operation to remove or cut a Fallopian tube, used as a method of contraception.

salpingitis /ˈsælpinɡəˌdʒaiətɪs/ noun inflammation, usually of a Fallopian tube.

salpingo-/ /ˈsælpinɡəʊ-/ prefix referring to the Fallopian tubes.

salpingography /ˈsælpinɡəˈɡrɑːfɪ/ noun an X-ray examination of the Fallopian tubes.

salpingolysis /ˈsælpinɡəˌlɪsɪs/ noun a surgical operation to open up blocked Fallopian tubes by removing any adhesions near the ovaries.

salpingo-oophorectomy /ˌsælˌpɪŋgəˌɔθərəktəmi/ noun a surgical operation to remove a Fallopian tube and ovary.

salpingo-oophoritis /ˌsælˌpɪŋgəˌɔθəˈrɪtɪs/ noun an inflammation of a Fallopian tube.

salpingo-oophorocoele /ˌsælˌpɪŋgəˌɔθəˌrəʊkəˈliː/ noun a hernia where a Fallopian tube and its ovary pass through a weak point in the surrounding tissue.

salpingostomy /ˌsælpinɡəˌstəmə/ noun a surgical operation to open up a blocked Fallopian tube.

salt /sɔːlt/ noun 1. small white crystals mainly of sodium chloride used to flavour and preserve food.

salt-free diet /ˈsɔːlt frɪː/ noun a diet in which no salt is allowed.

salve /ˈsælv/ noun an ointment.
sample /ˈsæmpl/ noun a small quantity of something used for testing ○ Blood samples were taken from all the staff in the hospital. ○ The doctor asked her to provide a urine sample.

sanatorium /ˌsænəˈtɔriəm/ noun an institution, similar to a hospital, which treats particular types of disorder such as tuberculosis, or offers special treatment such as hot baths or massage (NOTE: The plural is sanatoria or sanatoriums.)

sandy fever /ˈsændiˌfiər/ noun a virus infection like influenza, which is transmitted by the bite of the sandyfly Phlebotomus papatasii and is common in the Middle East

sandwich therapy /ˈsændwɪtʃ ˈθerəpi/ noun a system in which one type of treatment is used between exposures to a different treatment, e.g., chemotherapy given before and after radiation, or radiation given before and after surgery.

ganglion /ˈɡæŋɡliən/ noun a point related to blood

glucose /ˈɡlʌkəs/ noun a sweet taste, or a sweet substance.

sensation /ˈsɛnʃən/ noun a feeling or experience of something in a part of the body, caused by a stimulus.

saphenous /ˈsæfənəs/ adjective relating to blood, containing blood

sanaion /ˈsɛniən/ noun a discharge from a sore or wound which has an unpleasant smell

sanitary towel /ˈsæntəriˌtɔul/ noun a disposable paper wrapped material worn by women to absorb the blood flow during menstruation.

SA node /ˌes ˈeiˌnɔd, S-A node /ˌes ˈeiˌnɔd/ noun same as sinoatrial node

saphena /ˈsæfənə/ noun same as saphenous vein (NOTE: The plural is saphena.)

saphenous /ˈsæfənəs/ adjective relating to the saphenous veins

saphenous vein /ˈsæfənəs vɛɪn/ noun one of two veins which take blood from the foot up the leg. Also called saphena.

COMMENT: The long (internal) saphenous vein, the longest vein in the body, runs from the foot up the inside of the leg and joins the femoral vein. The short (posterior) saphenous vein runs up the back of the lower leg and joins the popliteal vein.

saphism /ˌsæfɪzəm/ noun same as lesbianism

sarc- /sɑr-, sɑrk-/ prefix 1. referring to flesh 2. referring to muscle

sarco- /ˈsærkəʊ/ noun a tumour which is like a sarcoma. ■ adjective like a sarcoma

sarcoïdosis /ˈsɑrkɔɪdəsɪs/ noun a disease causing enlargement of the lymph nodes, where small nodules or granulomas form in certain tissues, especially in the lungs or liver and other parts of the body. Also called Boeck's disease. Boeck's sarcoïd (NOTE: The Kveim test confirms the presence of sarcoïdosis.)

sarcolemma /ˈsɑrkɔləˈmə/ noun a membrane surrounding a muscle fibre

sarcoma /ˈsɑrkəmə/ noun a cancer of connective tissue such as bone, muscle or cartilage

sarcomatosis /ˈsɑrkəˌmətəsɪs/ noun a condition in which a sarcoma has spread through the bloodstream to many parts of the body

sarcoptes /ˈsɑrkəˌkɒptəz/ noun a type of mite which causes scabies

SARS /ˈsɑrdz/ noun a serious, sometimes fatal, infection affecting the respiratory system, first seen in China. Suspected cases of SARS must be isolated with full barrier nursing precautions. Full form severe acute respiratory syndrome

sartorius /ˈsɑrtərəriəs/ noun a very long muscle, the longest muscle in the body, which runs from the anterior iliac spine, across the thigh down to the tibia

saturated fat /ˈsætərətɪd ˈfæt/ noun a fat which has the largest amount of hydrogen possible

satyriasis /ˈsætəriəsɪs/ noun an obsessive sexual urge in a man (NOTE: A similar condition in a woman is called nymphomania.)

saucerisation /ˌsɔkərˌɪzaʃən/ noun a surgical operation in which tissue is cut out in the form of a saucer-like depression, usually in order to help material drain away from infected areas of bone 2. the shallow saucer-like appearance of the upper surface of a vertebra after a compression fracture

s.c. abbreviation subcutaneous

scab /ˈskæb/ noun a crust of dry blood which forms over a wound and protects it.

scabicide /ˌskæbɪˈsайд/ noun a solution which kills mites. ■ adjective killing mites

scabies /ˈskæbiəz/ noun a very irritating infection of the skin caused by a mite which lives under the skin

scale /ˈskæl/ noun a spiral canal in the cochlea

scald /ˈskiːld/ noun an injury to the skin caused by touching a very hot liquid or steam. Also called wet burn. ■ verb to injure the skin with a very hot liquid or steam

scale /ˈskiːl/ noun 1. a thin flat piece of something such as dead skin 2. same as tartar 3. a system of measurement or valuation based on a series of marks or levels with regular intervals between them ○ a pay scale 4. same as scales ■ verb to remove the calcium deposits from teeth

scalene /ˈskɛləni/ scalene /ˈskɛln/ noun one of a group of muscles in the neck which bend the neck forwards and sideways, and also help expand the lungs in deep breathing

scalene syndrome /ˈskɛləniˌsdəroʊm/ noun a pain in an arm, caused by the scalene anterior muscle pressing the subclavian artery and the brachial plexus against the vertebral. Also called thoracic outlet syndrome.
scaler /ˈskeɪlər/ noun a surgical instrument for scaling teeth
scales /ˈskeɪləs/ noun a machine for weighing ○ The nurses weighed the baby on the scales.
scapula /ˈskæpələ/ noun the thick skin and muscle, with the hair, which covers the skull
scalpel /ˈskæpləl/ noun a small sharp-pointed knife used in surgery
scan /skæn/ noun an examination of part of the body using computer-interpreted X-rays to create a picture of the part on a screen □ verb to examine part of the body using computer-interpreted X-rays to create a picture of the part on a screen
scanning /ˈskænɪŋ/ noun 1. the act of examining an area with the eyes 2. the act of examining internal organs of the body with a piece of electronic equipment
scaphocephalic /ˌskefəʊˌsɛfəklɪk/ adjective having a long, narrow skull
scaphocephaly /ˌskefəʊˌsɛfələɪ/ noun a condition in which the skull is unusually long and narrow
scaphoid /ˈskefəʊd/ noun one of the carpal bones in the wrist. See illustration at hand in Supplement
scapula /ˈskæpələ/ noun one of two large flat bones covering the top part of the back. Also called shoulder blade (NOTE: The plural is scapulae)
scapular /ˈskæpələr/ adjective referring to the shoulder blade
scapulohumeral /ˌskepəˈljuːərəl/ adjective referring to the scapula and humerus
scar /skɑr/ noun the mark left on the skin after a wound or surgical incision has healed ○ He still has the scar of his appendicectomy. Also called cicatrix □ verb to leave a scar on the skin ○ The burns have scarred him for life. ○ Plastic surgeons have tried to repair the scarred arm. ○ Patients were given special clothes to reduce hypertrophic scarring.
scarlaticina /ˌskɔrləˈtɪkənə/ noun an infectious disease with a fever, sore throat and a red rash. It is caused by a haemolytic streptococcus and can sometimes have serious complications if the kidneys are infected.
scar tissue /skɑr ˈtɪʃuː/ noun fibrous tissue which forms a scar
scat /skæt/ noun faeces
scatoluria /skætəˈljuəriə/ noun a substance in faeces, formed in the intestine, which causes a strong smell (NOTE: Also spelled skatole.)
SCC abbreviation squamous cell carcinoma
Scheuermann's disease /ʃəʊərmənz ˈdiː zɪtɪz/ noun inflammation of the bones and cartilage in the spine, usually affecting adolescents [Described 1920. After Holger Werfel Scheuermann (1877–1960), Danish orthopaedic surgeon and radiologist.]
Schick test /ʃɪk test/ noun a test to see if a person is immune to diphtheria [Described 1908. After Bela Schick (1877–1967), paediatrician in Vienna, Austria, and New York, USA.]
Schilling test /ʃɪlɪŋg test/ noun a test to see if someone can absorb Vitamin B12 through the intestines, to determine cases of pernicious anemia [After Robert Frederick Schilling (b. 1919), US physician.]
-schisis /ˌskeɪsɪs/ suffix referring to a fissure or split
schisto- /ˈskɪstəʊ/ prefix referring to something which is split
schistosoma /ˌskɪstəˈsɒmə/ noun a blood disorder of a person who has a less severe form of schistosomiasis
schistosomiasis /ˌskɪstəˈsɒməˌmæzɪsɪs/ noun same as bilharziasis
schiz- /skɪz-/ prefix referring to something which is split
schizoid /ˈskɪzoɪd/ adjective referring to schizophrenia □ noun a person who has less severe form of schizophrenia
schizophrenia /ˌskɪzəˈfɪəriə/ noun a mental disorder in which someone withdraws from contact with other people, has delusions and seems to lose contact with the real world.
Schönlau–Henoch purpura /ˈʃɔlnlau ˈhɛnək ˈpaʊpərə/ noun a blood disorder of children, in which the skin becomes purple on the buttocks and lower legs, the joints are swollen and painful and there are gastrointestinal problems
school nurse /ˈskʊrl nɜːs/ noun a nurse who works in a school, treating health problems and promoting health and safety
Schwann cells /'ʃaʊm seɪlz/ plural noun the cells which form the myelin sheath around a nerve fibre. See illustration at NEURONE in Supplement [Described 1839. After Friedrich Theodor Schwann (1810–82), German anatomist.]

sciatric /'skeətrɪk/ adjective 1. referring to the hip 2. referring to the sciatic nerve

sciatica /'skeətɪkə/ noun pain along the sciatic nerve, usually at the back of the thighs and legs

ciatic nerve /'skeətrɪk nav/ noun one of two main nerves which run from the sacral plexus into each of the thighs, dividing into a series of nerves in the lower legs and feet. They are the largest nerves in the body.

scintigram /'sɪntɪgræm/ noun an image recording radiation from radioactive isotopes injected into the body

scirrhous /'skaɪrəʊs/ adjective hard or a scirrhus tumour

scirrhus /'skaɪrəs/ noun an opening in something or a splitting of something

ciscer- /'skɪsər-/ prefix same as sclero- (used before vowels)

cisclera /'skɪsələ/ noun the hard white outer covering of the eyeball. See illustration at EYE in Supplement. Also called scierotic, scierotic coat, albuginea oculi

ciscleral /'skɪsərəl/ adjective referring to the sclera

ciscleritis /'skɪsərələtɪs/ noun inflammation of the sclera

cisclero- /'skɪsələr-/ prefix 1. hard, thick 2. referring to the sclera

cisderoderma /'skɪsədərədmə/ noun a collagen disease which thickens connective tissue and produces a hard thick skin

cisderomalacia /'skɪsədərəmələkəsɪə/ noun a condition of the sclera in which holes appear in it

cisderosant agent /'skɪsədərərsənt əˌdʒent/ noun an irritating liquid injected into tissue to harden it

cisderosing /'skɪsədərəsəŋ/ adjective becoming hard, or making tissue hard

cisderosing agent /'skɪsədərəsəŋ əˌdʒent/ noun same as cisderosant agent

sclerosis /'sklərəʊsɪs/ noun a condition in which tissue becomes hard

cisclerotherapy /'sklərəʊθəˈrɛpi/ noun the treatment of a varicose vein by injecting a sclerosant agent into the vein, and so encouraging the blood in the vein to clot

cisclerotic /'sklərətɪk/ adjective referring to sclerosis, or having sclerosis n noun same as sclera

cisclerotic coat /'sklərətɪk kəʊt/ noun same as sclera

cisclerome /'sklərərəʊm/ noun a sharp knife used in cisclerotomy

cisclerotomy /'sklərətəmə/ noun a surgical operation to cut into the sclera

cisclenex /'skɪsələkəs/ noun the head of a tape-worm, with hooks which attach it to the wall of the intestine (NOTE: The plural is scicles or cisclenexs.)

cisclonosis /'skɪsələnəsɪs/ noun a condition in which the spine curves sideways

ciscoliotic /'skɪskələtɪk/ adjective referring to a spine which curves sideways

SCISCOPE /'skɪsəs/ noun a UK organisation that offers support and services to people with cerebral palsy

-SCOPE /'skɑʊp/ suffix referring to an instrument for examining by sight

ciscopolamine /'skɪsəkələmənɪz/ noun a colourless thick liquid poisonous alkaloid found in some plants of the nightshade family. It is used especially to prevent motion sickness and as a sedative

ciscorbutic /'skɪskərətɪk/ adjective referring to scurvy

ciscorbutus /'skɪskərətəs/ noun same as scurvy

ciscoto- /'skɪsət-/ prefix dark

ciscotoma /'skɪsətəʊmə/ noun a small area in the field of vision where someone cannot see

ciscotometer /'skɪsətəmətə/ noun an instrument used to measure areas of impaired vision

ciscotopia /'skɪsətəˈpəʊrə/ noun the power of the eye to adapt to poor lighting conditions and darkness

ciscoscopic /'skɪskəˈsəʊpɪk/ adjective referring to scotopia

scotopic vision /'skətəpɪk ˈvɪʒən/ noun vision in the dark and in dim light, where the rods of the retina are used instead of the cones, which are used for photopic vision

screen /skrizn/ noun 1. a light wall, sometimes with a curtain, which can be moved about and put round a bed to shield a person 2. same as screening n verb to examine large numbers of people to test them for a disease ○ The population of the village was screened for meningitis.
screening /ˈskrɛniŋ/ noun the process of testing large numbers of people to see if any of them have a particular type of disease. § genetic screening

screening test /ˈskrɛniŋ tiːst/ noun a test for a particular disease which is given to people who have no symptoms in order to identify how many of them have that disease or are showing early signs of it

scrotal /ˈskrət(ə)l/ adjective referring to the scrotum

scrototomy /ˈskrətətəm/ noun a surgical operation to open up and examine the scrotum (NOTE: The plural is scrototomies.)

scrotum /ˈskrətəm/ noun a bag of skin hanging from behind the penis, containing the testes, epididymides and part of the spermatic cord. See illustration at UROGENITAL SYSTEM (MALE) in Supplement (NOTE: The plural is scrotums or scrota.)

scrub up /ˈskrʌb ʌp/ verb (of a surgeon or theatre nurse) to clean the hands and arms thoroughly before performing surgery (NOTE: scrubbing up – scrubbed up)

scruppox /ˈskrʌmppoks/ noun a form of herpes simplex found especially in male sports players, passed on easily due to the presence of small cuts in the skin combined with the abrasive effects of facial stubble

scurf /ˈskɜːf/ noun same as dandruff

scurvy /ˈskɜːrvi/ noun a disease caused by lack of vitamin C or ascorbic acid which is found in fruit and vegetables. Also called scorbutus

scybalum /ˈskaɪbələm/ noun very hard laces

seasickness /ˈsiːsɪkənʃ/ noun illness, with nausea, vomiting and sometimes headache, caused by the movement of a ship. Take some seasickness tablets if you are going on a long journey.

seasonal affective disorder /ˈsɛznəl əˈfektɪv ˈdɪzər/ a ‘fektiv ˈdiːzər/ seasonal affective disorder syndrome /ˈsɛznəl əˈfektɪv ˈdiːzər ˈsɪndrəm/ a ‘fektiv ˈdiːzər ˈsɪndrəm/ a condition in which a person becomes depressed and anxious during the winter when there are fewer hours of daylight. Its precise cause is not known, but it is thought that the shortening of daylight may provoke a reaction between various hormones and neurotransmitters in the brain. Abbreviation SAD, SADS

seat /siːt/ noun same as buttock (informal)

seat-belt syndrome /ˈsiːt bɛlt ˈsɪndrəm/ a group of injuries between the neck and the abdomen which occur in a car accident when a person is using either a lap belt or a shoulder belt incorrectly, not over the strongest part of the chest

sebaceous /ˈseɪbəʃəs/ adjective referring to sebum

sebaceous cyst /ˈseɪbəʃəs ˈsaɪst/ noun a cyst which forms when a sebaceous gland is blocked. § seboma

sebaceous gland /ˈseɪbəʃəs ˈgaɪnd/ noun a gland in the skin which secretes sebum at the base of each hair follicle

seborrhoea /ˌsebəˈriːə/ noun an excessive secretion of sebum by the sebaceous glands, common in young people at puberty, and sometimes linked to seborrhoeic dermatitis (NOTE: The US spelling is seborrhea.)

seborrhoeic /ˌsebəˈriːɪk/ adjective caused by seborrhoea (NOTE: The US spelling is seborrheic.)

seborrhoeic dermatitis /ˌsebərɪˈiːk dəˈmaɪtətɪs/ ‘derəˌmaɪtətɪs, ˌsebərɪˈiːk ˈɛkəma ˌderəˌmaɪtɪs/ a situation in which a premenopausal woman’s menstrual periods have stopped and she has depression and anxiety. See also seasonal affective disorder.

seboma /ˈseɪbəmə/ noun an oily substance secreted by a sebaceous gland, which makes the skin smooth. It also protects the skin against bacteria and the body against rapid evaporation of water.

secondary /ˈsɛkəndri/ adjective 1, occurring after the first stage. Less important than something else. § noun a malignant tumour which has developed and spread from another malignant tumour. § primary (NOTE: The plural is secondaries.)

secondary amenorrhoea /ˌsɛkəndri əˈmənərəˌhiːə/ ‘æmənərəˌhiːə/ secondary menstrual periods have stopped

secondary biliary cirrhosis /ˌsɛkəndri ˈbɪljəri ˈsɜːrəsɪs/ ‘sɜːrəsɪs, ˌsɛkəndri ˈkɜːrəsɪs/ a condition in which the liver is damaged due to an obstruction of the bile ducts

secondary care /ˌsɛkəndri ˈkeər/ noun treatment provided by the professional team in a hospital, rather than by a GP or other primary care provider and the primary health care team. Compare primary care, tertiary care. Also called secondary health care

secondary growth /ˌsɛkəndri ˈɡraʊθ/ noun same as metastasis

secondary haemorrhage /ˌsɛkəndri ˈheɪmərərɑː/ ‘heɪmərərɑː/ a haemorrhage which occurs some time after an injury, usually due to infection of the wound

secondary health care /ˌsɛkəndri ˈheəlθ keər/ noun same as secondary care

secondary infection /ˌsɛkəndri ɪnˈfekʃən/ an infection which affects a person while he or she is weakened through having another infection

secondary medical care /ˌsɛkəndri ˈmɛdɪkəl keər/ noun specialised treatment provided by a hospital

secondary peritonitis /ˌsɛkəndri ˈpərɪtoʊnɪtɪs/ another infection of the peritoneum caused by infection from
an adjoining tissue, e.g. from the rupturing of the appendix

secondary prevention

'sekɔndi pioneer the use of methods such as screening tests which avoid a serious disease by detecting it early

sexual characteristic

'sekɔndi ɔkast ɹcyastik noun a sexual characteristic which develops after puberty, e.g. pubic hair or breasts

second-degree burn

'sekɔnd də bɜrn noun a burn where the skin becomes very red and blisters

second-level nurse

'sekɔnd levəl ˈnɜrs noun a trained person who delivers nursing care under the direction and supervision of a first-level nurse. Compare first-level nurse

secretin

'sɛkərˈtɪn noun a hormone secreted by the duodenum which encourages the production of pancreatic juice

secretion

'sɛkərˈʃiən noun 1. the process by which a substance is produced by a gland. 2. The pituitary gland stimulates the secretion of hormones by the adrenal gland. Is a substance produced by a gland.

secretor

'sɛkətər noun a person who secretes substances indicating ABO blood group into mucous fluids such as semen or saliva

secretory otitis media

'sɛkətərri ətɪtɪs ˈmedɪə noun same as glue ear

section

'sɛkʃən noun 1. a part of something. 2. The middle section of the aorta. 3. The act of cutting tissue. 4. A slice of tissue cut for examination.

self-catheterisation

'sɛlf keθətəraɪzəʃən noun a surgical operation to remove part of a nail, e.g. treatment for an ingrowing toenail

self-abuse

'sɛlf ə'bjuːs noun same as self-harm

self-help

'sɛlf ˈhɛlp noun acting to help a person sleep or to relieve stress.

sedation

'sedəˈʃiən noun the act of calming someone using a sedative

sedative

'sedətɪv noun an anxiolytic or hypnotic drug such as benzodiazepine, which acts on the nervous system to help a person sleep or to relieve stress. [dated] She was prescribed sedatives by the doctor.

sedentary

'sedənˈtɛri adjective involving a lot of sitting and little exercise

sedentary occupation

'sedəntəri ˈəʊkjuərn noun a job where the workers sit down for most of the time

sedimentation

'sedimentsiən noun the action of solid particles falling to the bottom of a liquid

sedimentation rate

'sedimentsiən ˈreit noun the rate at which solid particles are deposited from a solution, measured especially in a centrifuge

segment

'segmənt noun a part of an organ or piece of tissue which is clearly separate from other parts

segmental

'segˌmentəl adjective formed of segments

segmental ablation

'segˌmentəl əˈblæʃən noun ablating an organ or piece of tissue which is clearly separate from other parts

secretion of oat

'sekrəˈʃiən əʊt noun a fit, convulsion or sudden contraction of the muscles, especially in a heart attack, stroke or epileptic fit

selective

'sɛkˈtɪv adjective choosing only one person, thing or group, and not others

selective serotonin re-uptake inhibitor

'sɛkˈtɪv ˌsɛrəˈtɔrən riˈɛptək ɪnˈhɪbərtə noun a drug which causes a selective accumulation of serotonin in the central nervous system, and is used in the treatment of depression, e.g. fluoxetine. Abbreviation SSRI

seizure

'siːzər noun a fit, convulsion or sudden contraction of the muscles, especially in a heart attack, stroke or epileptic fit

seizure reflex

'siːzər ˈrɛflɛks noun a part of an organ or piece of tissue which is clearly separate from other parts

self-harm

'sɛlf ˈhɑːm noun the act of looking after yourself properly, so that you remain healthy

self-catheterisation

'sɛlf keθətəraɪzəʃən noun a procedure in which a person puts a catheter through the
self-governing hospital

urine

self-

semen

flows out of the ventricles

valve and the aortic valve, through which blood

semilunar cartilage

being woken up

semicomatose

are partly filled with fluid and help to maintain

semicircular

taining spermatozoa, produced by the testes and

semeiology

the pituitary gland sits. Also called pituitary fossa

self-harm

sella turcica

a hollow in the upper surface of the sphenoid bone in which

sensation

earns its revenue from services provided to the

District Health Authorities and family doctors. Also called hospital trust

self-

semen

verb

waived

one of two glands at the end of the vas deferens

which secrete the fluid part of semen. See illustration: urogenital system (male) in Supplement

seminiferous tubule

a tube in the testis which carries

seminoma

a malignant tumour in the testis (NOTE: The plural is semino-

mas or seminomata.)

semipermeable

membrane

which allows some substances in liquid solution to pass through but not others

semiprone

self-inducing referring to a position in which someone lies face downwards, with one knee and one arm bent forwards and the face turned to one side

SEN abbreviation State Enrolled Nurse

senescence

the ageing process

senescent

approaching the last stages of the natural life span

Sengstaken tube

a tube with a balloon, which is passed through the

mouth into the oesophagus to stop oesophageal bleeding [After Robert William Sengstaken (b. 1923), US surgeon.]

senile

referring to the last stages of the natural life span or to the medical conditions associated with it

senile dementia

mental degeneration affecting elderly people (dated)

senilis

arcus senilis

senility

the deterioration of mental activity associated with the last stages of the natural life span

senna

taxative made from the dried fruit and leaves of a tropical tree

sensation

a feeling or information about something which has been sensed by a sensory nerve and is passed to the brain

sense

one of the five faculties by which a person notices things in the outside world: sight, hearing, smell, taste and touch

When she had a cold, she lost her sense of smell.

2. the ability to discern or judge something

verb to notice something by means other than sight

Teeth can sense changes in temperature.
sense organ /ˈsɛns ərən/ noun an organ in which there are various sensory nerves which can detect environmental stimuli such as scent, heat or pain, and transmit information about them to the central nervous system, e.g. the nose or the skin.
sensibility /ˈsɛnsəbɪləti/ noun the ability to detect and interpret sensations.
sensible /ˈsɛnsəbl/ adjective 1. showing common sense or good judgment 2. able to be detected by the senses.
sensible perspiration /ˈsɛnsəbl pɜːsəpər/ noun drops of sweat which can be seen on the skin, secreted by the sweat glands.
sensitisation /ˌsɛnsɪtɪˈzaʃən/ noun 1. the process of making a person sensitive to something 2. an unexpected reaction to an allergen or to a drug, caused by the presence of antibodies which were created when the person was exposed to the drug or allergen in the past.
sensitive /ˈsɛnsətɪv/ adjective 1. able to detect and respond to an outside stimulus 2. having an unexpected reaction to an allergen or to a drug, caused by the presence of antibodies which were created when the person was exposed to the drug or allergen in the past.
sensitivity /ˈsɛnsɪtɪvɪtɪ/ noun 1. the fact of being able to detect and respond to an outside stimulus 2. the rate of positive responses in a test from persons with a specific disease. A high rate of sensitivity means a low rate of people being incorrectly classed as negative. Compare specificity.
sensory /ˈsɛnsərɪ/ adjective referring to the detection of sensations by nerve cells.
sensory cortex /ˈsɛnsərɪ kɔrɛktəs/ noun the area of the cerebral cortex which receives information from nerves in all parts of the body (dissolved).
sensory deprivation /ˈsɛnsərɪ,diˈprɛvɪʃən/ noun a condition in which a person becomes confused because they lack sensations.
sensory nerve /ˈsɛnsərɪ, nɜːrv/ noun a nerve which registers a sensation such as heat, taste or smell and carries impulses to the brain and spinal cord. Also called afferent nerve.
sensory neuron /ˈsɛnsərɪ, nɔːrən/ noun a nerve cell which transmits impulses relating to sensations from the receptor to the central nervous system.
sensory receptor /ˈsɛnsərɪ, rɛsɪptər/ noun a cell which senses a change in the surrounding environment, e.g. cold or pressure, and reacts to it by sending out an impulse through the nervous system. Also called nerve ending.
sepsis /ˈsɛpsɪs/ noun the presence of bacteria and their toxins in the body, which kill tissue and produce pus, usually following the infection of a wound.
sept- /ˈsept/ prefix same as sept- (used before vowels).
septa /ˈseptə/ plural of septum.
septal /ˈseptəl/ adjective referring to a septum.
septal defect /ˈseptəl dɪˈfɛkt/ noun a congenital condition in which a hole exists in the wall between the left and right sides of the heart allowing an excessive amount of blood to flow through the lungs, leading in severe cases to pulmonary hypertension and sometimes heart failure.
septate /ˈseptət/ adjective divided by a septum.
septi- /ˈseptɪ/ prefix referring to septis.
septic /ˈseptɪk/ adjective referring to or produced by sepsis.
septicemia /ˌsɛptɪkˈsɛmɪə/ noun a condition in which bacteria or their toxins are present in the blood, multiply rapidly and destroy tissue (NOTE: The US spelling is septicemia.)
septic shock /ˈsɛptɪk ˈʃɒk/ noun shock caused by bacterial toxins in the blood as a result of infection. There is a dramatic drop in blood pressure, preventing the delivery of blood to the organs. Toxic shock syndrome is one type of septic shock.
septo- /ˈsɛptəʊ/ prefix referring to a septum.
septoplasty /ˈsɛptəpləstɪ/ noun a surgical operation to straighten the cartilage in the septum (NOTE: The plural is septoplasties.)
Seprin /ˈseprɪn/ a trade name for co-trimoxazole.
septum /ˈseptəm/ noun a wall between two parts of an organ, e.g. between two parts of the heart or between the two nostrils in the nose. See illustration at heart in Supplement (NOTE: The plural is septa.)
sequela /skwəˈləʊə/ noun a disease or disorder that is caused by a disease or injury which the person had previously or a case of osteomyelitis as a sequel of multiple fractures of the mandible. Biochemical and hormonal sequelae of the eating disorders Kaposi's sarcoma can be a sequela of AIDS. (NOTE: The plural is sequelae.)
sequestrar /skwɛˈstrər/ plural noun plural of sequestrum.
sequestration /ˌsɪkwaˈstrəʃən/ noun 1. the act of putting someone in an isolated place 2. the loss of blood into spaces in the body, reducing the circulating volume. It can occur naturally or can be produced artificially by applying tourniquets. Pulmonary sequestration A dry hacking cough can cause sequestration of the perito-
sequestrum /ˈsiːkwestrəm/ noun a piece of dead bone which is separated from whole bone (NOTE: The plural is sequestra.)

sequestrum /ˈsiːkwestrəm/ noun a surgical operation to remove a sequestrum (NOTE: The plural is sequestrumies.)

sequestrum /ˈsiːkwestrəm/ noun a fluid which separates from clotted blood and is similar to plasma except that it has no clotting agents. Also called blood serum 2.

sequestrum /ˈsiːkwestrəm/ noun a major protein in blood plasma

sero- /ˈsɛro-/ prefix same as sero- (used before vowels)

seroconvert /ˈsɛrəkənˈvɛrət/ verb to produce specific antibodies in response to the presence of an antigen such as a bacterium or virus

serological /ˈsɛrələdʒɪk(ə)l/ adjective referring to serology

serological type /ˈsɛrələdʒɪk(ə)l ˈtʌɪp/ noun same as serotype

serology /ˈsɛrəlɒdʒi/ noun the scientific study of serum and the antibodies contained in it

seropos /ˈsɛrəpəs/ noun a mixture of serum and pus

serosar /səˈrɒsər/ noun same as serous membrane (NOTE: The plural is serosas or seroseae.)

serositis /ˈsɛrəsɪtɪs/ noun inflammation of a serous membrane

serotherapy /ˈsɛrəθərəpi/ noun treatment of a disease using serum from immune people or immunised animals

serotonin /ˈsɛrətəʊˈmɪn/ noun a compound which is a neurotransmitter and exists mainly in blood platelets. It is released after tissue is injured and is important in sleep, mood and vasocostriction.

serotype /ˈsɛrətaɪp/ noun a group of closely related microorganisms which all have the same type of antigens

serous /ˈsɛrəs/ adjective referring to, producing, or like serum

serous membrane /ˈsɛrəs ˈmembriən/ noun a membrane which both lines an internal cavity and covers the organs in the cavity, e.g. the peritoneum lining the abdominal cavity or pleura lining the chest cavity. Also called serosa

seropiginous /ˈsɛrpɪdʒənəs/ adjective referring to an ulcer or erosion which creeps across the skin

serrated /ˈsɛrtɪtɪd/ adjective with a zigzag or saw-like edge

seration /ˈsɛrəʃən/ noun one of the points in a zigzag or serrated edge

Sertoli cells /ˈsɜrtəli ˈselz/ plural noun cells which support the seminiferous tubules in the testis [Described 1865. After Enrico Sertoli (1842–1910), Italian histologist, Professor of Experimental Physiology at Milan, Italy]

sertraline /ˈsɛrtrəlɪn/ noun an antidepressant drug which extends the action of the neurotransmitter serotonin. It is also used in the treatment of obsessive-compulsive disorder and post-traumatic stress disorder.

serum /ˈsɜrəm/ noun 1. a fluid which separates from clotted blood and is similar to plasma except that it has no clotting agents. Also called blood serum 2. blood serum taken from an animal which has developed antibodies to bacteria, used to give humans temporary immunity to a disease. Also called antisera 3. a clear watery body fluid, especially a fluid that comes from a serous membrane (NOTE: The plural is sera or serum.)

serum albumin /ˈsɜrəm ˈælbjʊmɪn/ noun a major protein in blood plasma

serum bilirubin /ˈsɜrəm ˈbɪlərəbɪn/ noun bilirubin in serum, converted from haemoglobin as red blood cells are destroyed

serum globulin /ˈsɜrəm ˈɡləbljʊln/ noun a major protein in blood serum that is an antibody

serum glucamoxicacetic transaminase /ˈsɜrəm ˈɡluːtəməsɪkətɛs ˌtrænsəˈmeɪnəs/ noun an enzyme excreted by damaged heart muscle, which appears in the blood of people who have had a heart attack. Abbreviation SGOT

serum glutamic–pyruvic transaminase /ˈsɜrəm ˈɡluːtəmɪk ˈpɪrʊvɪk ˌtrænsəˈmeɪnəs/ noun an enzyme secreted by the parenchymal cells of the liver, occurring in increased amounts in the blood of people with infectious hepatitis. Abbreviation SGPT

serum hepatitis /ˈsɜrəm ˈhepətɪtɪs/ noun a serious form of hepatitis transmitted by infected blood, unsterilised surgical instruments, shared needles or sexual intercourse. Also called hepatitis B, viral hepatitis

serum sickness /ˈsɜrəm ˈsɪksəs/ noun an allergic reaction to serum therapy which was formerly used as a way of boosting passive immunity

serum therapy /ˈsɜrəm ˈθɛrəpi/ noun the administration of treated serum, often from horses, formerly used as a way of boosting passive immunity

serve /sɜrv/ verb 1. to give a person food or drink ○ Lunch is served in the ward at 12:30. 2. to be useful or helpful to a person or group ○ The clinic serves the local community well. 3. to have a particular effect or result ○ The letter serves to remind you of your outpatients’ appointment. (NOTE: all senses serves – serving – served)

sesamoid /ˈsɛzəmɔɪd/ noun any small bony nodule in a tendon, the largest being the kneecap
severe acute respiratory disorder /ˌsɪːˈvɪər əˈkrɪptɪəriˈriːznəl ˈdɪzɜːrˈpəriət/ noun full form of SARS

sex /ˈseks/ noun one of two groups, male and female, into which animals and plants can be divided ○ The sex of a baby can be identified before birth.

sexarche /ˈsekˈsərki/ noun the age when a person first has sexual intercourse

sex chromosome /ˈseks ˌkrəʊməʊsəm/ noun a chromosome which determines if a person is male or female

sex determination /ˈseks ˈdɪtərmination/ noun the way in which the sex of an individual organism is fixed by the number of chromosomes which make up its cell structure

sex hormone /ˈseks ˈhɔrəmən/ noun an estrogen or androgen which promotes the growth of secondary sexual characteristics

sex-linked /ˈseks ˈlɪŋkt/ adjective referring to genes which are linked to X chromosomes

sexology /ˈsekˈnɔlədʒi/ noun the study of sex and sexual behaviour

sexuptet /ˈseksˈjʌpət/ noun one of six babies born to a mother at the same time

sexual /ˈsekʃʊəl/ adjective referring to sex

sexual act /ˈseksʊəl ˈækt/ noun an act of sexual intercourse

sexual deviation /ˈseksʊəl ˈdeviʃən/ noun any sexual behaviour which is not accepted as usual in the society in which you live. Examples in Western society are sadism and voyeurism.

sexually transmitted disease /ˈseks ˈtransˌmɪtəd ˈdɪˈziːs/ noun a disease or infection transmitted from an infected person to another person during sexual intercourse. Abbreviation STD, STI

sexual reproduction /ˈseksʊəl ˈrɪˌprəˌdʌkʃən/ noun reproduction in which gametes from two individuals fuse together

SGOT abbreviation serum glutamic-oxalacetic transaminase

SGPT abbreviation serum glutamic-pyruvic transaminase

SHA abbreviation Strategic Health Authority

shock /ʃɔk/ noun long central section of a long bone

shaken baby syndrome /ˈʃeɪkən ˈbeɪbi ˌsɪndrəʊm/ noun a series of internal head injuries in a very young child, caused by being shaken violently. It can result in brain damage leading to speech and learning disabilities, paralysis, seizures and hearing loss, and may be life-threatening.

shaky /ˈʃeɪkɪ/ adjective feeling weak and unsteady

share /ʃeər/ verb 1. to use or do something together with others 2. to divide something and give parts of it to different people or groups (NOTE: [all verb senses] shares – sharing – shared) ■ noun a single part of something divided among different people or groups

shared care /,ʃeəd ˈkeər/ noun antenatal care given jointly by an obstetrician in a hospital together with a general practitioner or a midwife working in the community

sharps /ʃεəps/ plural noun objects with points, e.g. syringes (informal)

sheath /ʃiːθ/ noun 1. a layer of tissue which surrounds a muscle or a bundle of nerve fibres 2. same as condom

shiat-su /ʃiˈætsu/ noun a form of healing massage in which the hands are used to apply pressure at acupuncture points on the body in order to stimulate and redistribute energy

Shigella /ʃiˈɡela/ noun a genus of bacteria which causes dysentery

shigellosis /ʃiˈɡeləsɪs/ noun infestation of the digestive tract with Shigella, causing bacillary dysentery

shin /ʃɪn/ noun the front part of the lower leg

shinbone /ʃɪnˈbəʊn/ noun same as tibia

shiner /ˈʃaɪnaɪ/ noun same as black eye (informal)

shingles /ˈʃɪŋɡəlz/ noun same as herpes zoster

shin splints /ʃɪn splɪnts/ plural noun extremely sharp pains in the front of the lower leg, felt by athletes

Shirodkar’s operation /ˈʃiərdəkər ˈɒpərəʃən/ noun a surgical operation to narrow the cervix of the uterus in a woman who experiences habitual abortion in order to prevent another miscarriage, the suture being removed before labour starts. Also called pursestring operation [After N. V. Shirodkar (1900–71), Indian obstetrician.]

Shirodkar suture /ˈʃiərdəkər ˈsətʃuər/ noun a type of suture which is placed around a cervix to tighten it during pregnancy and prevent miscarriage. Also called pursestring stitch

shivery /ˈʃiəvəri/ adjective trembling from cold, fear or a medical condition

shock /ʃɒk/ noun a state of weakness caused by illness or injury that suddenly reduces the blood pressure ○ The patient went into shock. ○ Several of the passengers were treated for shock. ■ verb to give someone an unpleasant surprise, and so put him or her in a state of shock ○ She was still shocked several hours after the accident. (NOTE: You say that someone is in shock, in a state of shock or that they went into shock.)
shock lung /ʃəʊklɒŋ/ noun a serious condition in which a person's lungs fail to work following a trauma

shock syndrome /ʃəʊkˌsɪndrəʊm/ noun a group of symptoms, a pale face, cold skin, low blood pressure and rapid and irregular pulse, which show that someone is in a state of shock. → anaphylactic shock

shock therapy /ʃəʊk ˈθerəpi, ˌʃɒk ˈtrɛktəmənt/ noun a method of treating some mental disorders by giving an anaesthetised patient an electric shock to induce an epileptic convulsion

shunt /ʃʌnt/ verb (of pain) to seem to move suddenly through the body with a piercing feeling. → The pain shot down his arm.

shooting /ʃuːtɪŋ/ adjective (of pain) sudden and intense

short of breath /ʃɔːt əv ˈbretʃ/ adjective unable to breathe quickly enough to supply the oxygen needed. → After running up the stairs he was short of breath.

shortsighted /ˈʃɔːtsɪtɪd/ adjective same as myopic

shortsightedness /ˈʃɔːtsɪtɪdznəs/ noun same as myopia

shot /ʃɔt/ noun same as injection (informal) → The doctor gave her a tetanus shot.

shoulder /ˈʃɔldər/ noun a joint where the top of the arm joins the main part of the body. → He dislocated his shoulder. → She was complaining of pains in her shoulder or of shoulder pains.

shoulder blade /ˈʃɔldər ˈblɛd/ noun same as scapula

shoulder girdle /ˈʃɔldə ɡɜzd(ə)l/ noun same as pectoral girdle

shoulder joint /ˈʃɔldər dʒɔnt/ noun a ball and socket joint which allows the arm to rotate and move in any direction

shoulder presentation /ˈʃɔldər ˈprɛzəˈʃɔn/ noun a position of a baby in the uterus, in which the shoulder will first appear

show /ʃɔʊ/ noun the first discharge of blood at the beginning of childbirth. → verb 1, to cause or allow something to be visible. → 2, to provide convincing evidence of something

shunt /ʃɔnt/ noun the passing of fluid through a channel which is not the usual one. → verb (of blood) to pass through a channel which is not the usual one. → As much as 3% of venous blood can be shunted unoxygenated back to the arteries.

shunting /ʃɔntɪng/ noun a common complication of sickle-cell disease, with chest pain, fever and leucocytosis

sick/ˈsɪk/ adjective 1. having an illness. → He was sick for two weeks. → to report or call in sick to say officially that you are unwell and cannot work. → The patient got up this morning and felt sick. → to be sick to vomit. → The child was sick all over the floor. → to make someone sick to cause someone to vomit. → He was given something to make him sick.

sick building syndrome /ˈsɪk ˈbɪldɪŋ ˌsɪndrəʊm/ noun a condition in which many people working in a building feel ill or have headaches, caused by blocked air-conditioning ducts in which stale air is recycled round the building, often carrying allergenic substances or bacteria.

sibling /ˈsɪblɪŋ/ noun same as conjoined twins

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red cells become sickle-shaped, but there are not enough affected cells to cause anaemia.

side-effect /ˈsaɪd ɪˈfɛkt/ noun an effect produced by a drug or treatment which is not the main effect intended ○ One of the side-effects of chemotherapy is that the patient’s hair falls out.

sidero- /ˈsaɪdəro-/ prefix referring to iron

sideropenia /ˈsaɪdərəˌpiːnə/ noun a lack of iron in the blood usually caused by insufficient iron in the diet

siderophillin /ˈsaɪdərəˌfəlɪn/ noun same as transferrin

siderosis /ˈsaɪdərəˌsɪsɪs/ noun a condition in which iron deposits form in tissue

SIDS abbreviation sudden infant death syndrome

sigmoid /ˈsaɪɡməd/ adjective 1. shaped like the letter S 2. referring to the sigmoid colon ■ noun same as sigmoid colon

sigmoid colon /ˈsaɪɡməd ˈkɒlən/ noun the fourth section of the colon which continues as the rectum. See illustration at digestivesystem in Supplement. Also called pelvic colon, sigmoid, sigmoid flexure

sigmoidectomy /ˈsaɪɡmədəˌdɛktəmi/ noun a surgical operation to remove the sigmoid colon (NOTE: The plural is sigmoidectomies.)

sigmoid flexure /ˈsaɪɡməd ˈflektʃər/ noun same as sigmoid colon

sigmoidoscope /ˈsaɪɡmədəˌsɒskəp/ noun a surgical instrument with a light at the end which can be passed into the rectum so that the sigmoid colon can be examined

sigmoidoscopy /ˈsaɪɡmədəˌsɒskəpi/ noun a procedure in which the rectum and sigmoid colon are examined with a sigmoidoscope

sigmoidostomy /ˈsaɪɡmədəˌstəmə/ noun a surgical operation to bring the sigmoid colon out through a hole in the abdominal wall (NOTE: The plural is sigmoidostomies.)

sign /ˈsɪɡn/ noun a movement, mark, colouring or change which has a meaning and can be recognised by a doctor as indicating a condition (NOTE: A change in function which is also noticed by the patient is a symptom.)

sign language /ˈsaɪɡn ˈlæŋɡwɪdʒ/ noun a set of agreed signs made with the fingers and hands, used to indicate words by or for people who cannot hear or speak

sildenafil citrate /ˌsɪldəˈnɛfəl ˈsaɪtrət/ noun an enzyme-inhibiting drug used in the treatment of male impotence

silicon /ˈsaɪlkən/ noun a non-metallic chemical element (NOTE: The chemical symbol is Si.)

silicosis /ˈsaɪləˌkɒsɪs/ noun a disease of the lungs caused by inhaling silica dust from mining or stone-crushing operations

silver nitrate /ˌsaɪlər ˈnætrət/ noun a salt of silver that is mixed with a cream or solution and used, e.g., to disinfect burns or to kill warts

Simmonds' disease /ˈsɪməndz ˈdaɪz/ noun a condition of women due to postpartum haemorrhage, in which there is lack of activity in the pituitary gland, resulting in wasting of tissue, brittle bones and premature senility [Described 1914. After Morris Simmonds (1855–1925), German physician and pathologist.]

simple fracture /ˈsɪmpl ˈfræktʃər/ noun a fracture where the skin surface around the damaged bone has not been broken and the broken ends of the bone are close together. Also called closed fracture

simple tachycardia /ˈsɪmpl ˈtækiərədiə/ noun same as sinus tachycardia

simplex /ˈsɪmplɛks/ adjective referring to a sinus

simplex herpes simplex

Sims' position /ˈsɪms ˈpəʊʃən/ noun a position of the body in which the person lies on his or her left side with their left arm behind their back and their right knee and thigh flexed. It is used to allow the anal or vaginal area to be examined easily.

simvastatin /ˈsaɪmˌvæstətən/ noun a drug which lowers lipid levels in the blood, used in the treatment of high cholesterol

sinew /ˈsaɪnju/ noun same as tendon

singer's nodule /ˈsɪŋəz ˈnəʊdəl/ noun a small white polyp which can develop in the larynx of people who use their voice too much or too loudly

singultus /ˈsaɪŋɡəltəs/ noun same as hiccup

sino-/ˈsaɪnəʊ/ prefix referring to a sinus

sinoatrial /ˈsaɪnəˌeɪtrɪəl/ adjective relating to the sinus venosus and the right atrium of the heart

sinoatrial node /ˈsaɪnəˌeɪtrɪəl ˈnəʊd/ noun a node in the heart at the junction of the superior vena cava and the right atrium, which regulates the heartbeat. Also called SA node, sinus node

sinogram /ˈsaɪnəɡrəm/ noun an X-ray photograph of a sinus

sinography /ˈsaɪnəˌɡrəfi/ noun examination of a sinus by taking an X-ray photograph

sino-/ˈsaɪnəʊ/ prefix same as sino-

sinoatrial /ˈsaɪnəˌeɪtrɪəl/ adjective same as sinoatrial

sinus /ˈsaɪnəs/ noun a cavity inside the body, including the cavities inside the head behind the cheekbone, forehead and nose ○ The doctor diagnosed a sinus infection.

sinusitis /ˈsaɪnəsˌɪtiːtəs/ noun inflammation of the mucous membrane in the sinuses, especially the maxillary sinuses

sinusoid /ˈsaɪnəsɔɪd/ noun a specially shaped small blood vessel in the liver, adrenal glands and other organs
sinus tachycardia

sinus tachycardia /ˈsʌɪnəs ˈtækiˌtʃɑrdɪə/ noun rapid beating of the heart caused by stimulation of the sinoatrial node. Also called simple tachycardia.

sinus trouble /ˈsʌɪnəs ˈtrʌbl/ noun same as sinusitis (informal).

sinus venosus /ˈsʌɪnəs ˈvɛnəsəs/ noun a cavity in the heart of an embryo, part of which develops into the coronary sinus and part of which is absorbed into the right atrium.

siphonage /ˈsaɪfənædʒ/ noun the removal of liquid from one place to another with a tube, as used to empty the stomach of its contents.

sinusitis /ˈsʌɪnəs ɪˈtɪtəs/ noun inflammation of a sinus.

skeletal /ˈskɛlət(ə)l/ adjective referring to the skeleton.

skeletal muscle /ˈskɛlət(ə)l ˈmæsk(ə)l/ noun a muscle attached to a bone, which makes a limb move.

skelton /ˈskɛlt(ə)n/ noun all the bones which make up a body.

skel- /ˈskɛl/ prefix referring to shadow.

skier’s thumb /ˈskiərz ˈθʌm/ noun an injury to the thumb caused by falling directly onto it when it is outstretched, resulting in tearing or stretching of the ligaments of the main thumb joint.

skill /skɪl/ noun an ability to do difficult work, which is acquired by training. 

skills mix /ˈskɪlz ˈmɪks/ noun the range of different skills possessed by the members of a group or required for a particular job.

skin /skɪn/ noun the tissue which forms the outside surface of the body. 

skull /skʌl/ noun the eight bones which are fused or connected together to form the head, along with the fourteen bones which form the face. Also called cranium.

SLE abbreviation systemic lupus erythematosus.

sleep /slɛp/ noun the state or a period of resting, usually at night, when the eyes are closed and you are not conscious of what is happening. 

sleep apnoea /ˈslɛjp əˈpnoʊə/ noun a condition related to heavy snoring, with prolonged respiratory pauses leading to cerebral hypoxia and subsequent daytime drowsiness.

sleeping sickness /ˈslɛpiŋ ˌsiːksəs/ noun an African disease, spread by the tsetse fly, where trypanosomes infest the blood. Also called African trypanosomiasis.

sleeping tablet /ˈslɛpiŋ ˈtæбл/ noun a tablet containing a drug, usually a barbiturate, which makes a person sleep.

sleepwalker /ˈslɛpˌwɔːkər/ noun same as somnambulist.

sleepwalking /ˈslɛpˌwɔːkɪŋ/ noun same as somnambulism.

sliding sheet /ˈslædɪŋ ˈʃɪt/ noun a silicon-coated nylon sheet used for transferring and repositioning patients.

sling /slɪŋ/ noun a triangular bandage attached round the neck, used to support an injured arm and prevent it from moving. 

slipped disc /ˈslɪpt ˈdɪsk/ noun same as prolapsed intervertebral disc.

silt lamp /ˈsɪlt ˈlæmp/ noun a piece of equipment which provides a narrow beam of light and is connected to a special microscope, used to examine the eye.

slough /ˈslɔː/ noun dead tissue, especially dead skin, which has separated from healthy tissue.

slow-release vitamin tablet /ˌslɔː riˈlīs ˈvɪtəmən ˈtæblet/ noun a vitamin tablet which will dissolve slowly in the body and give a longer and more constant effect.

small for dates /ˈsmɔːlfər ˈdeɪts/ adjective referring to an unborn baby which is small in comparison to the average size for that number of weeks.

small intestine /ˈsmɔːl ɪnˈtestɪn/ noun a section of the intestine from the stomach to the caecum, consisting of the duodenum, the jejunum and the ileum.

small of the back /ˈsmɔːl əv ˈbæk/ noun the middle part of the back between and below the shoulder blades.

smallpox /ˈsmɔːlpɔks/ noun a very serious, usually fatal, contagious disease caused by the...
pox virus, with a severe rash, leaving masses of small scars on the skin. Also called variola

smear /ˈsmaːr/ noun a sample of soft tissue, e.g. blood or mucus, taken from a person and spread over a glass slide to be examined under a microscope

smear test /ˈsmaːr ˈtes/ noun same as Papanicolou test

smegma /ˈsmɪɡmə/ noun an oily secretion with an unpleasant smell which collects on and under the foreskin of the penis

Smith-Petersen nail /ˈsmɪθ ˈpiːtəsən/ noun a metal nail used to attach the fractured neck of a femur [Described 1931. After Marius Nygaard Smith-Petersen (1886–1953), Norwegian-born Boston orthopaedic surgeon.] Smith’s fracture /ˈsmɪθz ˈfræktʃər/ noun a fracture of the radius just above the wrist

smoke inhalation /ˈsməʊk ɪnˈhæləʃən/ noun the breathing in of smoke, as in a fire

smoking /ˈsməʊkɪŋ/ noun the action of smoking a cigarette, pipe or cigar ○ Smoking can injure your health.

smooth /ˈsmʊð/ adjective flat, not rough ○ verb to make something smooth ○ She smoothed down the sheets on the bed.

smooth muscle /ˈsmʊð ˈmʌsk(ə)l/ noun a type of muscle found in involuntary muscles. Also called unstriated muscle

SMR abbreviation submucous resection

snare /ˈsnɛər/ noun a surgical instrument made of a loop of wire, used to remove growths without the need of an incision

sneeze /ˈsnɛiz/ noun a reflex action to blow air suddenly out of the nose and mouth because of irritation in the nasal passages ○ She gave a loud sneeze, ■ verb to blow air suddenly out of the nose and mouth because of irritation in the nasal passages ○ The smell of flowers makes her sneeze. ○ He was coughing and sneezing and decided to stay in bed. (NOTE: sneezing – sneezed)

Snellen chart /ˈsnɛlən ˈtʃært/ noun a chart commonly used by opticians to test eyesight [Described 1862. After Hermann Snellen (1834–1908), Dutch ophthalmologist.]

sniffles /ˈsnɪflz/ plural noun a slight head cold, or an allergy that causes a running nose (informal, used to children) ○ Don’t go out into the cold when you have the sniffles.

snoring /ˈsnɔːrɪŋ/ noun noisy breathing while asleep

snow blindness /ˈsnɔʊ ˈblændɪznəs/ noun temporary painful blindness caused by bright sunlight shining on snow

snuffles /ˈsnʌflz/ plural noun the condition of breathing noisily through a nose which is blocked with mucus, which is usually a symptom of the common cold, but can sometimes be a sign of congenital syphilis (informal, used to children)

social /ˈsəʊʃ(ə)l/ adjective referring to society or to groups of people

socialisation /ˌsəʊʃ(ə)ˈlaɪzəʃ(ə)n/ noun the process involved when young children are becoming aware of society and learning how they are expected to behave

social services /ˌsəʊʃ(ə)l ˈsɜːvɪsɪz/ plural noun the special facilities which the government or local authorities provide to people in the community who need help, such as the elderly, children whose parents have died or the unemployed

social worker /ˌsəʊʃ(ə)l ˈwɜːkər/ noun a government employee who works to provide social services to people in need and improve their living standards

society /ˈsoʊsəti/ noun 1. the community of people who live in a particular country and share its institutions and customs 2. an organisation of people who have a shared interest

sociology /ˌsoʊsɪˈɒlədʒi/ noun 1. the study of the origin, development and structure of human societies and the behaviour of individual people and groups in society 2. the study of a particular social institution and the part it plays in society

sociopath /ˈsoʊsɪˌpæθ/ noun same as psycho-path

socket /ˈsɒktʃər/ noun a hollow part in a bone, into which another bone or organ fits ○ The tip of the femur fits into a socket in the pelvis.

sodium /ˈsəʊdiəm/ noun a chemical element which is the basic substance in salt (NOTE: The chemical symbol is Na.)

sodium balance /ˈsəʊdiəm ˈbæləns/ noun the balance maintained in the body between salt lost in sweat and urine and salt taken in from food. The balance is regulated by aldosterone.

sodium bicarbonate /ˈsəʊdiəm ˈbɪkærəbərt/ noun sodium salt used in cooking, and also as a relief for indigestion and acidity. Also called bicarbonate of soda

sodium fusidate /ˈsəʊdiəm ˈfjuːsɪdeɪt/ noun an antibiotic used mainly to treat penicillin-resistant staphylococcal infections

sodium pump /ˈsəʊdiəm pʌmp/ noun a cellular process in which sodium is immediately excreted from any cell which it enters and potassium is brought in

sodium valproate /ˈsəʊdiəm ˈvælprəʊeɪt/ noun an anticonvulsant drug used especially to treat migraines, seizures and epilepsy

soft /soft/ adjective not hard or not resistant to pressure

soft palate /soft ‘pəlæt/ noun the back part of the palate leading to the uvula. ○ cleft palate
noun - some growth hormone somatropin gland, which stimulates the growth of long bones

somatotrophic hormone /sɔmətɔtropsθ/ noun a hormone produced in the hypothalamus which helps to prevent the release of the growth hormone somatotrophic hormone /sɔmətɔtropsθ/ noun a growth hormone, secreted by the pituitary gland, which stimulates the growth of long bones somatropin /sɔmətɔTripleθ/ noun same as growth hormone

-some /sʌm/ suffix tiny cell bodies

sommambulism /səˈmɛmbjʊləzθ/ noun a condition especially affecting children where the person gets up and walks about while still asleep. Also called sleepwalking

sommambulist /səˈmɛmbjʊlɪst/ noun a person who walks in his or her sleep. Also called sleepwalker

somnolent /səˈmɒnlənt/ adjective sleepy

somnolism /səˈmɒnlɪzθ/ noun a trance which is induced by hypnotism

Somogyi effect /səˈmɒgi ɪˌɛktθ/ noun in diabetes mellitus, a swing to a high level of glucose in the blood from an extremely low level, usually occurring after an untreated insulin reaction during the night. It is caused by the release of stress hormones to counter low glucose levels.

-somy /sʌmɪ/ suffix the presence of chromosomes

son /sɔn/ noun a male child of a parent O They have two sons and one daughter.

Sonne dysentery /sɔn ˌdɪzəntɪθ/ noun a common form of mild dysentery in the UK, caused by Shigella sonnei [Described 1915. After Carl Olaf Sonne (1882–1948), Danish bacteriologist and physician.]

sonogram /səˈnɒɡræm/ noun a chart produced using ultrasound waves to find where something is situated in the body

sonography /səˈnɒgrəfiθ/ noun same as ultrasonography

sonotopography /sɔnəˈtɒpəɡrəfiθ/ noun the use of ultrasound waves to produce a sonogram

soporific /sɔˈprɪfɪk/ noun a drug which makes a person go to sleep ■ adjective causing sleep

sorbitol /səˈsɒrɪtɒl/ noun a white crystalline sweet alcohol which is used as a sweetener and a moisturiser, and in the manufacture of Vitamin C

sordes /sɔrˈdɛsθ/ plural noun dry deposits round the lips of someone who has a fever

sore /sɔr/ noun a small wound on any part of the skin, usually with a discharge of pus ■ adjective 1. rough and inflamed O a sore patch on the skin 2. painful O My ankle still feels very sore.

sore throat /sɔːr/ noun a condition in which the mucous membrane in the throat is inflamed, sometimes because the person has been talking too much, but usually because of an infection (inflarn\n
sos. adverb (on prescriptions) if necessary. Full form si opus sit (NOTE: It means that the dose should be taken once.)

sotalol /səˈtɒləl/ noun a drug used to treat an irregular heartbeat and high blood pressure

souffle /suːfθ/ noun a soft breathing sound, heard through a stethoscope
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sound /sound/ noun 1, something which can be heard (The doctor listened to the sounds of the patient's lungs.) 2, a long rod, used to examine or to dilate the inside of a cavity in the body. spasm /spæzm/ noun a sudden, usually painful, involuntary contraction of a muscle, as in cramp (His breathing made a whistling sound.) spasm /spæzm/ verb to examine the inside of a cavity using a rod

spasms /spæzms/ plural noun a drug in the form of a capsule which is specially designed to release its contents slowly in the stomach

special /spleɪzl/ adjective 1, designed for a particular purpose 2, concentrating on a particular activity or subject (specialised skills)

special hospital /speɪʃəl/ noun a hospital for people whose mental condition

specialist /speɪʃəlist/ noun 1, a group of living things of the range of organisms that an antibiotic which kills a large number of different organisms 2, the range of organisms that an antibiotic or chemical can kill (NOTE: The plural is species.)

specific /speʃifik/ adjective referring to a disease caused by one type of microorganism only. Opposite non-specific

specific gravity /spa_sifik_ˈgrævəti/ noun same as relative density

specificity /speʃəˈstɪʃɪti/ noun the rate of negative responses in a test from persons free from a disease. A high specificity means a low rate of false positives. Compare sensitivity

specific urethritis /speʃəsjuˈrəθrɪtɪs/ noun inflammation of the urethra caused by gonorrhoea

spectrography /ˈspɛktroɡræfi/ noun the recording of a spectrum on photographic film

spectroscope /ˈspɛktroskɔp/ noun an instrument used to analyse a spectrum
speculum /ˈspek jʊləm/ noun a surgical instrument which is inserted into an opening in the body such as a nostril or the vagina to keep it open in order to allow a doctor to examine the inside (NOTE: The plural is specula or speculum.)
sperm /ˈspɜːrm/ noun 1. the ability to make intelligible sounds with the vocal cords 2. a talk given to an audience
speech block /ˈspɪtʃ blok/ noun a temporary inability to speak, caused by the effect of nervous stress on the mental processes
speech impediment /ˈspɪtʃ ɪmˌpɛdɪmənt/ noun an inability to speak easily or in the usual way because of the physical structure of the mouth or other disorders
speech therapist /ˈspɪtʃ ˌθɛə rɪpəst/ noun a qualified person who practises speech therapy
speech therapy /ˈspɪtʃ ˌθɛərəpi/ noun treatment for a speech disorder such as stammering or one which results from a stroke or physical malformation
sperm /ˈspɜːrm/ noun same as spermatozoon (NOTE: The plural is sperm.)
sperm- /ˈspɜːrm-/ prefix same as spermato- (used before vowels)
spermatic /ˈspɜːrmətɪk/ adjective referring to sperm
spermatic artery /ˈspɜːrmətɪk ərˈtɪrɪ/ noun an artery which leads into the testes. Also called testicular artery
spermatic cord /ˈspɜːrmətɪk ˈkɔrd/ noun a cord running from the testis to the abdomen carrying the vas deferens, the blood vessels, nerves and lymphatics of the testis
spermatid /ˈspɜːrmətɪd/ noun an immature male sex cell that develops into a spermatozoon
spermat- /ˈspɜːrmət-/ prefix 1. referring to sperm 2. referring to the male reproductive system
spermatocoele /ˈspɜːrmətəkɔʊl/ noun a cyst which forms in the scrotum
spermatogenesis /ˈspɜːrmətədʒənəsɪs/ noun the formation and development of spermatozoa in the testes
spermatorrhea /ˈspɜːrmətrɪrθiə/ noun the discharge of a large amount of semen frequently and without an orgasm (NOTE: The US spelling is spermatorrhea.)
spermatozoan /ˈspɜːrmətəˈzoʊn/ noun a mature male sex cell, which is ejaculated from the penis and is capable of fertilising an ovum. Also called sperm (NOTE: The plural is spermatozoa.)
spermaturia /ˈspɜːrmətərjuəriə/ noun sperm in the urine
sperm bank /ˈspɜːrm bæŋk/ noun a place where sperm can be stored for use in artificial insemination
sperm count /ˈspɜːrm ˈkaʊnt/ noun a calculation of the number of sperm in a quantity of semen
sperm donor /ˈspɜːrm ˈdəʊnə/ noun a male who gives sperm, for a fee, to allow a childless woman to bear a child
sperm- /ˈspɜːrm-/ prefix referring to sperm and semen
spermicidal /ˈspɜːrmɪsɪdəl/ adjective killing or able to kill sperm
spermicidal jelly /ˈspɜːrmɪsɪdəl ˈdʒeɪl/ noun a jelly-like product which acts as a contraceptive
spermicide /ˈspɜːrmɪsɪd/ noun a substance which kills sperm
sperm- /ˈspɜːrm-/ prefix same as spermi-
spermiogenesis /ˈspɜːrməˌdʒenəsɪs/ noun the stage of spermatogenesis during which a spermatid changes into a spermatozoon
spheno-/ˈspɪfnəʊ/ prefix referring to the sphenoid bone
spheno-/ˈspɪfnəʊ/ adjective 1. relating to the sphenoid bone 2. shaped like a wedge ■ noun same as sphenoid bone
sphenoid bone /ˈspɪfnəʊd bɔʊn/ noun one of two bones in the skull which form the side of the socket of the eye. Also called sphenoid
sphenoid sinus /ˈspɪfnəʊd ˈsaɪnəs/ noun one of the sinuses in the skull behind the nasal passage
spherocyte /ˈspɜːrɪsəʊtʃi/ noun a red blood cell that is round rather than the usual disc shape
spherocytosis /ˈspɜːrɪsəʊtəsɪs/ noun a condition in which someone has spherocytes in the blood, causing anaemia, enlarged spleen and gallstones, as in acholic jaundice
sphincter /ˈspɪŋktər, ˈspɪŋktər ˈmʌsl/ noun a circular band of muscle which surrounds an opening or passage in the body, especially the anus, and can narrow or close the opening or passage by contracting
sphincterectomy /ˈspɪŋktərɪktəmɪ/ noun 1. a surgical operation to remove a sphincter 2. a surgical operation to remove part of the edge of the iris in the eye (NOTE: The plural is sphincterectomies.)
sphincteroplasty /ˈspɪŋktərəˈplæstɪ/ noun a surgical operation to relieve a tightened sphincter (NOTE: The plural is sphincteroplasties.)
sphincterotomy /ˈspɪŋktərəˌtɒmɪ/ noun a surgical operation to make an incision into a sphincter (NOTE: The plural is sphincterotomies.)
sphyg /ˈsfɪɡ/ noun same as sphygmomanometer (informal)
sphygmo-/ˈsfɪɡməʊ/ prefix referring to the pulse
noun
a cone-shaped mass of cells on the posterior root, the main axons of which form the posterior root of the spinal nerve.

spinal nerve /ˈspiːnl nɜrv/ noun one of the 31 pairs of nerves which lead from the spinal cord and govern mainly the trunk and limbs.

spinal puncture /ˈspiːnl pʌŋktʃər/ noun a loss of feeling in the lower part of the body below a point at which the spine has been injured.

spinal shock /ˈspiːnl ʃɔk/ noun a way of bandaging a joint where the bandage crosses over itself like the figure 8 on the inside of the bend of the joint (NOTE: The plural is spicae or spicas.)

spinal block /ˈspiːnl bɔk/ noun a small splinter of bone

spinal accessory nerve /ˈspiːnl æksesəri nɜrv/ noun a nerve which supplies the muscles in the neck and shoulders.

spinal anaesthesia /ˈspiːnl ənæˈsθiəsiə/ noun local anaesthesia in which an anaesthetic is injected into the cerebrospinal fluid.

spinal anaesthetic /ˈspiːnl ænəˈæstektik/ noun an anaesthetic given by injection into the spine, which results in large parts of the body losing the sense of feeling.

spinal block /ˈspiːnl bɔk/ noun analgesia produced by injecting the spinal cord with an anaesthetic.

spinal canal /ˈspiːnl kænl/ noun the hollow channel running down the back of the vertebrae, containing the spinal cord. Also called vertebral canal.

spinal column /ˈspiːnl kələm/ noun same as spine.

spinal cord /ˈspiːnl kɔrd/ noun part of the central nervous system, running from the medulla oblongata to the filum terminale, in the vertebral canal of the spine (NOTE: For other terms referring to the spinal cord, see words beginning with myel-, myelo-).

spinal curvature /ˈspiːnl kərveʃər/ noun an abnormal bending of the spinal column.

spinal fusion /ˈspiːnl fjuːʒən/ noun a surgical operation to join two vertebrae together to make the spine more rigid. Also called spondylodesis.

spinal ganglion /ˈspiːnl ɡæŋɡliən/ noun a cone-shaped mass of cells on the posterior root.

spina /ˈspiːnlə/ lengthmark noun the series of bones, the vertebrae, linked together to form a flexible supporting column running from the pelvis to the skull. She injured her spine in the crash. Also called backbone, spinal column, vertebral column.

Spinalbarkeit /ˈspiːnlbarkit/ noun a thread of mucus formed in the cervix which is used in determining the time of ovulation. At this time it can be drawn out on a glass slide to its maximum length.

spino-/ /ˈspiːnəʊ/ prefix referring to the spine.

spinal /ˈspiːnl/ adjective referring to the spine. She suffered spinal injuries in the crash.

spinal accessory nerve /ˈspiːnl æksesəri nɜrv/ noun an instrument which measures blood pressure in the arteries.

spina /ˈspiːnlə/ lengthmark noun a way of bandaging a joint where the bandage crosses over itself like the figure 8 on the inside of the bend of the joint. For other terms referring to the spine, see words beginning with spine.

spina /ˈspiːnlə/ lengthmark noun a serious injury in the skull and used to drain excess fluid from the ventricles.

spinal shock /ˈspiːnl ʃɔk/ noun a loss of feeling in the lower part of the body below a point at which the spine has been injured.

spindle /ˈspiːndl/ noun 1. a long thin structure to which the chromosomes are attached by their centromeres.

spine /ˈspiːn/ noun the series of bones, the vertebrae, linked together to form a flexible supporting column running from the pelvis to the skull. She injured her spine in the crash. Also called backbone, spinal column, vertebral column.

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spinal ganglion /ˈspiːnl ɡæŋɡliən/ noun a cone-shaped mass of cells on the posterior root.
spondylitis /ˈspəndəlɪtɪs/ noun inflammation of the vertebrae
spondylo- /ˈspəndɪləʊ-/ prefix referring to the vertebrae
spondyloarthropathy /ˌspændɪloʊərθəˈpæθi/ noun a condition in which one of the lumbar vertebrae moves forwards over the one beneath
spondylothesis /ˌspændɪləʊˈθɛsɪs/ noun a condition in which one of the lumbar vertebrae moves forwards over the one beneath
spondylosis /ˌspændɪləʊˈsɪs/ noun stiffness in the spine and degenerative changes in the intervertebral discs, with osteoarthrosis. This condition is common in older people.
spondylosyndesis /ˌspændɪləʊsɪdərəˈsɪs/ noun same as spinal fusion
sponge bath /ˈspɒŋʒ bæθ/ noun the act of washing someone in bed, using a sponge or damp cloth ◆ The nurse gave the elderly lady a sponge bath.
spongiform encephalopathy /ˌspɒŋʃɪfərm ənˈsɛfələpəθi/ noun a brain disease in humans and animals in which areas of the brain slowly develop holes in their cells and begin to look like a sponge
spontaneous /ˈspɒntniəs/ adjective happening without any particular outside cause
spontaneous delivery /ˈspɒntniəs dɪˈliːvrɪ/ noun a delivery of a baby which takes places naturally, without any medical or surgical help
spontaneous pneumothorax /ˌspɒntniəs ˈnɪməʊθəˈrɑːks/ noun a condition occurring when an opening is created on the surface of the lung allowing air to leak into the pleural cavity
spontaneous version /ˈspɒntniəs vərˈʃən/ noun a movement of a fetus to take up another position in the uterus, caused by the contractions of the uterus during childbirth or by the movements of the baby itself before birth
sporadic /spɔːrəˈdɪk/ adjective referring to outbreaks of disease that occur as separate cases, not in epidemics
spore /spɔːr/ noun a reproductive body of particular bacteria and fungi which can survive in extremely hot or cold conditions for a long time
sporicidal /ˈspɔːrɪkəl/ adjective killing spores
sporicide /ˈspɔrɪsɪd/ noun a substance which kills bacterial spores
Sporozoa /ˌspɔrəʊzaʊə/ noun a type of parasitic Protozoa which includes Plasmodium, the cause of malaria
sports injuries /ˈspɔːtɪs ɪnˈdʒərɪz/ noun an injury caused by playing a sport, e.g. a sprained ankle or tennis elbow
sports medicine /ˈspɔːtɪz ˈmɛdɪsən/ noun the study of the treatment of sports injuries
spotted fever /ˈspɒtɪd ˈfɛvər/ noun same as meningococcal meningitis
sprain /ˈspreɪn/ noun a condition in which the ligaments in a joint are stretched or torn because of a sudden movement  

Sprengel's deformity /ˈspreŋɡəlz diˈfɔrməti/ noun, Sprengel's shoulder /ˈspreŋɡəlz ˈʃauðər/ noun a congenitally malformed shoulder, in which one scapula is smaller and higher than the other [Described 1891. After Otto Gerhard Karl Sprengel (1852–1915), German surgeon.]

sprue /ˈsproʊ/ noun same as psoriasis

spud /spud/ noun a needle used to get a piece of dust or other foreign body out of the eye

spur /spɜːr/ noun a sharp projecting part of a bone

sputum /ˈspʌtəm/ noun mucus which is formed in the inflamed nose, throat or lungs and is coughed up  

spur /spɜːr/ a way of speaking with short pauses

staccato speech /ˈstækətəʊ ˈspɛʃ/ noun an unusual way of speaking with short pauses between each word

Stacke's operation /ˈstækɪz ˈɒpərəʃn/ noun a surgical operation to remove the posterior and superior wall of the auditory meatus [After Ludwig Stacke (1859–1918), German otologist.]

stadium /ˈstedɪəm/ noun a particular stage of a disease (NOTE: The plural is stadia.)

stadium invasion /ˈstedɪəm ɪnˌvɛʒn/ noun same as incubation period

staff nurse /ˈstæf nɜːz/ noun a nurse who is on the permanent staff of a hospital

stage /ˈsteɪdʒ/ noun a point in the development of a disease at which a decision can be taken about the treatment which should be given or at which distinctive developments take place  

stage/stədʒ/ noun the process of performing tests to learn the extent of a disease within the body, in order to decide the best treatment for someone

stain /steɪn/ noun a substance used to give colour to tissues which are going to be examined under the microscope  

Stamey procedure /ˈsteɪmɪ prəˌsɪdʒ/ noun a surgical operation to cure stress incontinence in women. A minor abdominal incision is made as well as a vaginal incision, and the neck of the bladder is stitched to the abdominal wall.

stammer /ˈsteɪmər/ noun a speech difficulty in which someone repeats parts of a word or the whole word several times or stops to try to pronounce a word  

stammer /ˈsteɪmər/ noun a person who stammers

stammering /ˈsteɪmərɪŋ/ noun difficulty in speaking, in which the person repeats parts of a word or the whole word several times or stops to try to pronounce a word. Also called dysphemia

stand /stænd/ verb 1. to be in an upright position with your bodyweight resting on your feet, or to put a person in this position 2. to get to your feet from a sitting position (NOTE: stood)

standard /ˈstændərd/ adjective usual, recommended or established  

standardise /ˈstændəzdəz/ standarˌdaɪz/ verb to make all things of the same type follow the same standard

Standard Precautions /ˈstændərd prˋstɛkˈteɪʃn/ plural noun the most recent set of guidelines for health care workers on dealing with blood, all body fluids, secretions and excretions (except sweat), non-intact skin and mucous membranes. They are designed to reduce the risk of
stapedectomy, 290

Transmission of microorganisms. The Standard Precautions are implemented automatically for everyone, as all patients are presumed to be potentially infectious.

stapedectomy /stipid/ noun a surgical operation to remove the stapes (NOTE: The plural is stapedectomies.)

stapedial mobilisation /sta.pi.dial/ noun a surgical operation to relieve deafness by detaching the stapes from the fenestra ovalis (NOTE: The plural of stapediolsis is stapediols.)

stapes /steipiz/ adverb (written on prescriptions)

stapler /steipl/ noun a device used in surgery to attach tissues together

staple /steipal/ noun a small piece of bent metal, used to attach tissues together

starch /staft/ noun the usual form in which carbohydrates exist in food, especially in bread, rice and potatoes. It is broken down by the digestive process into sugars.

startle reflex /staft/ verb (written on prescriptions)

starvation /staft/ noun the usual response of a young baby to a sudden loud noise or a sudden fall through the air, by contracting the limb and neck muscles

status /staistiz/ noun a surgical operation to relieve deafness

status asthmaticus /staistiz.as/ noun an attack of bronchial asthma which lasts for a long time and results in exhaustion and collapse

status epilepticus /staistiz.epiz/ noun repeated and prolonged epileptic seizures without recovery of consciousness between them

status lymphatic /staistiz.limfazikiz/ noun a condition in which the glands in the lymphatic system are enlarged

statutory bodies /sta.toe.joiz/ nounorganisations set up by Acts of Parliament to carry out specific functions, e.g. the Nursing and Midwifery Council, set up to regulate the nursing and midwifery professions

STD abbreviation sexually transmitted disease

steam inhalation /steo.in.hale/ noun a treatment for respiratory disease in which someone breathes in steam with medicinal substances in it

steatopygia /steo.pei.ɡia/ noun excessive fat on the buttocks

steatorrhoea /steo.әro.ә/ noun a condition in which fat is passed in the faeces


Steinmann's pin /steinmэнz/ noun a pin for attaching traction wires to a fractured bone [Described 1907. After Fritz Steinmann (1872–1932), Swiss surgeon.]

stellate /steliz/ adjective shaped like a star

stellate fracture /steliz.fraktiz/ noun a fracture of the kneecap shaped like a star

stellate ganglion /steliz.gæŋɡliən/ noun a group of nerve cells in the neck, shaped like a star

Steinwag's sign /stelwagz.ən/ noun a symptom of exophthalmic goitre, where someone does not blink often, because the eyeball is protruding [After Carl Steinwag von Carion (1823–1904), ophthalmologist in Vienna, Austria.]
sterility /ster'ælitI/ noun 1. the state of being free from microorganisms 2. the state of being unable to have children

Steri-Strips /steri 'stripz/ a trademark for thin paper strips which are placed over an incision in the skin. They help its edges to come together and form a scar.

sternal /ster'ænəl/ adjective referring to the sternum

sternocleidomastoid muscle /ster'ænəkloııd'mastəd/ noun a muscle in the neck which runs from the sternum to the mastoid process

sternocostal joint /ster'ænəkostəl/ noun a joint where the breastbone joins a rib

sternohyoidoid /ster'ænəhi'oid/ adjective relating to the sternum and the hyoid bone

sternohyoid muscle /ster'ænəhi'oid/ noun a muscle in the neck which runs from the sternum into the hyoid bone

sternomastoid /ster'ænəmastəd/ adjective referring to the sternum and the mastoid

sternomastoid muscle /ster'ænəməstəd/ noun a muscle in the neck which runs from the sternum to the mastoid process

sternotomy /ster'ænətəmə/ noun surgical operation to cut through the sternum, so as to be able to operate on the heart

sternum /ster'ænum/ noun same as breastbone

steroid /ster'ærid/ noun any of several chemical compounds, including the sex hormones, which have characteristic ring systems and which affect the body and its functions

stertor /ster'tor/ noun noisy breathing sounds in someone unconscious

stertorous /ster'torəs/ adjective characterised by heavy snoring

stetho- /stetho-/ prefix referring to the chest

stethoscope /sterθa'skəp/ noun a surgical instrument with two earpieces connected to a tube and a metal disc, used by doctors to listen to sounds made inside the body, e.g. the sounds of the heart or lungs

Stevens-Johnson syndrome /stevəns' 'dʒʌŋkənz/ noun a severe form of erythema multiforme affecting the face and genitals, caused by an allergic reaction to drugs [Described 1922. After Albert Mason Stevens (1884–1945), Frank Chambers Johnson (1884–1934), physicians in New York, USA]
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sthenia /"stein/ noun a condition of great strength or vitality

STI abbreviation sexually transmitted infection

sticking plaster /stik/ /plast/ noun an adhesive plaster or tape used to cover a small wound or to attach a pad of dressing to the skin

stoma /stoma/ noun a condition in which moving the neck is painful, usually caused by a strained muscle or by sitting in a cold wind

stigmata /stigma/ /nouns/ visible symptom which shows that someone has a particular disease (NOTE: The plural is stigmas or stigmata.)

stilet /stelet/ noun 1. a fine wire used as a probe in surgery 2. a wire inserted in a catheter to give it rigidity

stillbirth /stilb/ /noun/ the birth of a dead fetus, more than 28 weeks after conception (informal)

Still's disease /stil diziz/ noun arthritis affecting children, similar to rheumatoid arthritis in adults (Described 1896. After Sir George Frederic Still (1868–1941), British paediatrician and physician to the king.)

stimulant /stimjulant/ noun a substance which makes part of the body function faster 1 Caffeine is a stimulant. 2 adjective increasing body function

stimulate /stimjulet/ verb to make a person or organ react, respond or function 1 The therapy should stimulate the patient into attempting to walk unaided. 2 The drug stimulates the heart

stimulus /stimjulos/ noun something which has an effect on a person or a part of the body and makes them react (NOTE: The plural is stimuli.)

stinging /stimj/ adjective referring to a sharp unpleasant feeling of prickling or burning 1 a sudden stinging sensation in the back of her leg

stirrup /stirup/ /noun/ same as stapes

stitch /stitch/ noun 1. He had three stitches in his head. 2. The doctor told her to come back in ten days' time to have the stitches taken out. 3. pain caused by cramp in the side of the body after running 4. He had to stop running because he developed a stitch. 5. verb same as suture They tried to stitch back the fin- ger which had been cut off in an accident

stitch abscess /stif abses/ noun an abscess which forms at the site of a stitch or suture

Stokes–Adams syndrome /staukz /e dig am/ /sindrom/ noun a loss of consciousness due to the stopping of the action of the heart because of asystole or fibrillation (After William Stokes (1804–78), Irish physician; Robert Adams (1791–1875), Irish surgeon.)

stoma /stoma/ noun any opening into a cavity in the body (NOTE: The plural is stomata.)

stomach /stamak/ noun 1. the part of the body shaped like a bag, into which food passes after being swallowed and where the process of digestion continues 2 She complained of pains in the stomach or of stomach pains 3 He has had stomach trouble for some time. See illustration at DIGESTIVE SYSTEM in Supplement 2. the abdomen (informal) 4 He had been kicked in the stomach. (NOTE: For other terms referring to the stomach, see words beginning with gastro-, gastr-) stomach ache /stamak /eik/ /noun/ pain in the abdomen or stomach, caused by eating too much food or by an infection

stomach cramp /stamak /kraemp/ /noun/ a sharp spasm of the stomach muscles

stomach hernia /stamak hznia/ noun same as gastrocele

stomach pump /stamak /pamp/ /noun/ an instrument for sucking out the contents of the stomach, e.g. to extract a poison that has been swallowed

stomach upset /stamak /aspekt/ /noun/ a slight infection of the stomach 1 She is in bed with a stomach upset. Also called upset stomach

stomach washout /stamak /wanfout/ /noun/ same as gastric lavage

stomal //stoməl/ /adjective/ referring to a stoma

stomat- /stomət-/ prefix same as stomato-

stomatitis /stomətətis/ /noun/ inflammation of the inside of the mouth

stomato- /stomətə- /prefix referring to the mouth

stomatology /stoməteleuji/ /noun/ a branch of medicine which studies diseases of the mouth

stomach ache /stamak /eik/ /noun/ pain in the abdomen or stomach, caused by eating too much food or by an infection
streptolysin  
enzyme formed by streptococci which can break 
streptokinase  
rheumatic fever  
causes fevers such as scarlet fever, tonsillitis and 
of bacteria which grows in long chains, and 
streptococcus  
which grow in chains  
red birthmark in children, which will often disap-
pearance in later life  

stratum /ˈstreɪtəm/ noun 1. a condition in which a 
muscle has been stretched or torn by a strong or 
sudden movement 2. a group of microorganisms 
which are different from others of the same type  
© a new strain of influenza virus 3. nervous ten-
sion and stress  © Her work is causing her a lot of 
strain  © He is suffering from nervous strain and 
needs to relax  © verb to stretch a muscle too far  
© He strained his back lifting the table  © She 
had to leave the game with a strained calf muscle  
© The effort of running upstairs strained his heart. 

strangulated /ˈstreɪŋɡələtɪd/ adjective  
referring to part of the body which is caught in an 
opening in such a way that the circulation of 
blood is stopped  

strangulated hernia /ˈstreɪŋɡələtɪd ˈhɛrnıə/ noun  
a condition in which part of the 
intestine is squeezed in a hernia and the supply of 
blood to it is cut off  

strangulation /ˈstreɪŋɡələʃən/ noun the 
act of squeezing a passage in the body  

strangury /ˈstreɪŋɡəɹɪə/ noun a condition 
in which very little urine is passed, although the 
person wants to urinate, caused by a bladder disorder 
or by a stone in the urethra  

Strategic Health Authority /strəˈtædʒɪk ˈheɪlɪt/ noun in the UK, an organisation, 
accountable to government, that assesses the 
health needs of local people and ensures that local 
health services are commissioned and provided to 
meet those needs. Abbreviation SHA  

stratified /ˈstrætɪfaɪd/ adjective  
made of several layers  

stratified epithelium /ˈstrætɪfaɪd ˈɛplɪθəlɪəm/ noun epithelium formed of several lay-
ers of cells  

strawberry mark /ˈstreɪbrə ˈmɑrk/ noun a 
red birthmark in children, which will often disappear 
in later life  

streax /ˈstrɛk/ noun a long thin line of a differ-
ent colour  

strepto- /ˈstreptəʊ/ prefix referring to organisms 
which grow in chains  

strep-tococcal /ˈstreptəʊkəkəl/ adjective 
caused by a streptococcus  

strep-tococcus /ˈstreptəʊkəkəs/ noun a genus 
of bacteria which grows in long chains, and 
causes fevers such as scarlet fever, tonsillitis and 
rheumatic fever (NOTE: The plural is strepto-
coccus.)  

streptokinase /ˈstreptəkəˌneɪz/ noun an 
enzyme formed by streptococci which can break 
down blood clots and is therefore used in the 
treatment of myocardial infarction  

streptolysin /ˈstreptələsɪn/ noun a toxin pro-
duced by streptococci in rheumatic fever, which 
acts to destroy red blood cells  

stress /streʃ/ noun 1. physical pressure on an 
object or part of the body 2. a factor or combina-
tion of factors in a person’s life which make him 
or her feel tired and anxious 3. a condition in 
which an outside influence such as overwork or a 
mental or emotional state such as anxiety changes 
the working of the body and can affect the hor-
monal balance  

stress disorder /ˈstreʃ dɪˈsɔrdər/ noun a disor-
der caused by stress  

stress fracture /ˈstreʃ ˈfɹæktʃər/ noun a frac-
ture of a bone caused by excessive force, as in 
some types of sport. Also called fatigue fracture  

stress incontinence /ˈstreʃ ɪnˌkənˈtɪnəns/ noun 
a condition in women in which the muscles 
in the floor of the pelvis become incapable of 
retaining urine when the intra-abdominal pressure 
is raised by coughing or laughing  

stress reaction /ˈstreʃ rɪˈækʃən/ noun a 
response to an outside stimulus which disturbs the 
usual physiological balance of the body  

stress-related illness /ˈstreʃ riˈleɪtɪd ′ɪlɪnəs/ noun an illness which is due in part or completely 
to stress  

stretch /streʃ/ verb to pull something out, 
or make something longer  

stretch mark /ˈstreʃ ˈmɑrk/ noun a mark on the 
skin of the abdomen of a pregnant woman or 
of a woman who has recently given birth. © striae 
gravidarum  

stretch reflex /ˈstreʃ ʃrɛlɛks/ noun a reflex 
reaction of a muscle which contracts after being 
stretched  

stria /ˈstrɪə/ noun a pale line on skin which is 
stretched, as in obese people (NOTE: The plural is 
striae.)  

striae gravidarum /ˌstrɪəˌɡrævəˈdɔːrəm/ plural noun the lines on the skin of the 
abdomen of a pregnant woman or of a woman who 
has recently given birth  

striated /strəˈeɪtɪd/ adjective marked with 
pale lines  

striated muscle /strəˈeɪtɪd ˈmɜsk(ə)l/ noun a 
type of muscle found in skeletal muscles whose 
movements are controlled by the central nervous 
system. Also called striped muscle  

stricture /ˈstrɪktʃər/ noun the narrowing of a 
passage in the body  

stricturoplasty /ˈstrɪktʃərəʊplæstɪ/ noun a 
surgical operation in which a part of the intestine 
is widened  

stridor /ˈstrɪdər/ stridulus /ˈstrɪdələs/ noun a sharp high sound made when air passes an 
obstruction in the larynx. © laryngismus  

striped muscle /strɪpəd ˈmɜsk(ə)l/ noun same 
as striped muscle  

stroke /strɔʊk/ noun same as cerebrovascular 
accident  © He had a stroke and died. © She was
stroke patient 294

paralysed after a stroke. ■ verb to touch something or someone solidly with the fingers

stroke volume /'straʊk_ˌvɒl.juːm/ noun the amount of blood pumped out of the ventricle at each heartbeat

stroma /'strəʊmə/ noun tissue which supports an organ, as opposed to the parenchyma or functioning tissues in the organ

strobilium /'strobɪli.əm/ noun a metallic element (NOTE: The chemical symbol is Sr.)
strobilium-90 /'strəbɪli.əm ˈnɔnti/ noun an isotope of strobilium which is formed in nuclear reactions and, because it is part of the fallout of nuclear explosions, can enter the food chain, attacking in particular the bones of humans and animals

strychnine /'strɪknaɪn/ noun a poisonous alkaloid drug, made from the seeds of a tropical tree, and formerly used in small doses as a tonic

Stryker frame /'strɪkər freɪm/ noun a special piece of equipment on which a patient can easily be rotated by a nurse, used for patients with spinal injuries

ST segment /esˈtiː_,ˌsɛntəm/, S-T segment noun the part of an electrocardiogram, between the points labelled S and T, immediately before the last phase of the cardiac cycle, or POST complex

study /'stʌdi/ noun the act of examining something to learn about it or She’s making a study of diseases of small children. ○ They have finished their study of the effects of the drug on pregnant women. ■ verb to examine something to learn about or He’s studying pharmacy. ○ Doctors are studying the results of the screening programme.

stupe /stjuːp/ noun a latent medicated dressing used as a compress

stupor /stjuːpə/ noun a state of being semi-conscious ○ After the party several people were found lying on the floor in a stupor.

Sturge-Weber syndrome /'stʌrdʒ ˈwɛbə ˌsɜːrnəm/ noun a dark red mark on the skin above the eye, together with similar marks inside the brain, possibly causing epileptic fits

stuttering /'stʌtərɪŋ/ noun same as stammering

style /'stɑːl/ noun same as hordeolum

stylet /'stɑːlət/ noun 1. a very thin piece of wire which is put into a catheter or hollow needle so that it will not become blocked when it is not being used 2. any long thin pointed instrument

stylo-/ˈstæləʊ/ prefix referring to the styloid process

styloid /ˈstæləʊd/ adjective pointed

styloid process /ˈstæləʊd ˌprəʊses/ noun a piece of bone which projects from the bottom of the temporal bone

stylum /ˈstæləm/ noun a long thin instrument used for applying antisepsics or ointments to the skin

styptic /ˈstɪptɪk/ noun a substance which stops bleeding ■ adjective used to stop bleeding

styptic pencil /ˈstɪptɪk ˈpɛns(ə)l/ noun a stick of alum, used to stop bleeding from small cuts

sub-/ˈsæb/ prefix underneath or below

subacute /ˈsəbˌækʃuːt/ adjective referring to a condition which is not acute but may become chronic

subacute bacterial endocarditis /ˈsəbˌækʃuːt ˈbæktrɪəl ˌendəkərˈdɪtɪs/ noun a rare inflammatory disease of the heart caused by bacteria

subacute combined degeneration of the spinal cord /ˈsəbˌækʃuːt kəm,bʌnd ˌdiˌdʒɛnəˈreɪʃən/ noun a condition, caused by Vitamin B₁₂ deficiency, in which the sensory and motor nerves in the spinal cord become damaged and the person has difficulty in moving

subacute sclerosing panencephalitis /ˈsəbˌækʃuːt sklərəʊs ˈpænənˌɛntəlɪtɪs/ noun a rare inflammatory disease of the brain, mostly affecting children. It is linked to having measles at a very young age, and is usually fatal

subarachnoid /ˈsəbəˌrækənɔɪd/ adjective beneath the arachnoid membrane

subarachnoid haemorrhage /ˈsəbəˌrækənɔɪd ˈhɛməˈrərɪdʒ/ noun bleeding into the cerebrospinal fluid of the subarachnoid space

subarachnoid space /ˈsəbəˌrækənɔɪd ˈspeɪs/ noun a space between the arachnoid membrane and the pia mater in the brain, containing cerebrospinal fluid

subclavian /ˈsəbəˌkleɪvɪən/ adjective underneath the clavicle

subclavian artery /ˈsəbəˌkleɪvɪən ˈaɪtrəri/ noun one of two arteries branching from the aorta on the left and from the innominate artery on the right, continuing into the brachial arteries and supplying blood to each arm

subclavian vein /ˈsəbəˌkleɪvɪən ˈvɛn/ noun one of the veins which continue the axillary veins into the brachiocephalic vein

subclinical /ˈsəbəˌklaɪnɪkl/ adjective referring to a disease which is present in the body, but which has not yet developed any symptoms

subconscious /ˈsəbəˌkənʃəs/ noun part of a person’s mental processes which he or she is not aware of most of the time, but which can affect his or her actions. ■ adjective present in the mind although a person is not aware of it
subcostal plane /səbˈkɒstəl/ 'pleɪn/ noun an imaginary horizontal line drawn across the front of the abdomen below the ribs
subcutaneous /səbˈkjʊəniəs/ adjective under the skin. Abbreviation s.c.
subcutaneous injection /səbˈkjʊəniəʃən/ noun same as hypodermic injection
subcutaneous oedema /səbˈkjʊəniəs əˈdɛmə/ noun a fluid collecting under the skin, usually at the ankles
subcutaneous tissue /səbˈkjʊəniəs tjuːˈtɪz/ noun fatty tissue under the skin
subdural /səbˈdʒʊərəl/ adjective between the dura mater and the arachnoid
subdural haematoma /səbˈdʒʊərəl ˈheɪmətəmə/ noun a haematoma between the dura mater and the arachnoid which displaces the brain, caused by a blow on the head
subglostis /səbˈɡlɒstɪs/ noun the lowest part of the laryngeal cavity, below the vocal folds
subinvolution /səbɪnˈvɒljuʃən/ noun a condition in which a part of the body does not go back to its former size and shape after having swollen or stretched, as in the case of the uterus after childbirth
subjective /səbˈdʒektɪv/ adjective representing the views or feelings of the person concerned and not impartial. The psychiatrist gave a subjective opinion on the patient’s problem. Compare objective
sublimate /səbˈlɪmət/ noun a deposit left when a vapour condenses. Verb to convert violent emotion into action which is not antisocial
sublimation /səbˈlɪmeɪʃən/ noun a psychological process in which violent emotions which would otherwise be expressed in antisocial behaviour are directed into actions which are socially acceptable
subliminal /səbˈlɪmɪnl/ adjective too slight to be noticed by the senses
sublingual /səbˈlɪŋgwəl/ adjective under the tongue
sublingual gland /səbˈlɪŋgwəl ɡlænd/ noun a salivary gland under the tongue
subluxation /səbˈlʊkʃən/ noun a condition in which a joint is partially dislocated
submandibular gland /səbˈmænˈdɪbjuələr ɡlænd/ noun a salivary gland on each side of the lower jaw
submental /səbˈmɛntəl/ adjective under the chin
submucosa /səbˈmjuːkəsə/ noun tissue under a mucous membrane
submucous /səbˈmjuːkəs/ adjective under a mucous membrane
submucous resection /səbˈmjuːkəs riˈsɛkʃən/ noun the removal of a bent cartilage from the septum in the nose. Abbreviation SMR
subnormal /səbˈnɔrəməl/ adjective with a mind which has not developed fully. (Note: This term is regarded as offensive.)
subphrenic /səbˈfrenɪk/ adjective under the diaphragm
subphrenic abscess /səbˈfrenɪk ˈæbˌsɛs/ noun an abscess which forms between the diaphragm and the liver
substance /səbˈstʌns/ noun a chemical material, e.g. a drug or toxic substances released into the bloodstream. He became addicted to certain substances.
substance abuse /səbˈstʌns əˈbʌs/ noun the misuse or excessive use of drugs, alcohol or other substances for pleasure or to satisfy addiction, which often causes health, emotional or social problems for the user
substitution /səbˈstɪtjuˈʃən/ noun the act of replacing one thing with another
substitution therapy /səbˈstɪtʃən ˌθɛrəpi/ noun a way of treating a condition by using a different drug from the one used before
substrate /səbˈstreɪt/ noun a substance which is acted on by an enzyme
subtus /səbˈtʌs/ noun a twitching of the muscles and tendons, caused by fever
subtussive /səbˈtjuːsɪv/ adjective a type of malaria, where the fever is present most of the time
subtotal gastrectomy /səbˈtəʊlət ˈgæstrəktaʊmɪ/ noun the surgical removal of all but the top part of the stomach in contact with the diaphragm
subtotal hysterectomy /səbˈtəʊlət ˈhʌsterəktaʊmɪ/ noun the surgical removal of most of the pancreas
subungual /səbˈʌŋkwəl/ adjective under a nail
succus /səkəs/ noun juice secreted by an organ
succus entericus /səkəs ˈɛntərɪkəs/ noun juice formed of enzymes, produced in the intestine to help the digestive process
succession /səˈkjuːʃən/ noun a splashing sound made when there is a large amount of liquid inside a cavity in the body, e.g. the stomach
sucrose /ˈsʌkroʊs/ noun a sugar, formed of glucose and fructose, found in plants, especially in sugar cane, beet and maple syrup
suction /səkʃən/ noun a force created by the action of sucking. The dentist hooked a suction tube into the patient’s mouth.
sudden /səˈdʌn/ adjective happening quickly
sudden death

sudden death /ˈsʌdən dɛθ/ noun death without any identifiable cause, not preceded by an illness

sudden infant death syndrome /ˈsʌdən ɪnfənt dɛθ ˈsɜːndrəm/ noun the sudden death of a baby under the age of about twelve months in bed, without any identifiable cause. Abbreviation SIDS. Also called cot death

sudor /ˈsʌdər/ noun sweat

sudorific /ˈsʌdərəfɪk/ noun a drug which makes someone sweat

suffer /ˈsʌfər/ verb 1. to have an illness for a long period of time. 2. to feel pain 3. to receive an injury 4. to suffer multiple injuries in the accident.

suffering /ˈsʌfərɪŋ/ noun the experiencing of pain over a long period of time

suffocation /ˈsʌfəkeɪʃən/ noun the act of making someone become unconscious by cutting off his or her supply of air

suffusion /ˈsʌfəʃən/ noun the spreading of a red fluid over the skin

sugar /ˈsʌɡər/ noun any of several sweet carbohydrates (NOTE: For other terms referring to sugar, see words beginning with glyco-). sugar intolerance /ˈsʌɡər ɪntəˈlɜːrəns/ noun diarrhoea caused by sugar which has not been absorbed

suggestibility /ˈsʌdʒɪstəbɪləti/ noun a mental state in which somebody just accepts other people’s ideas, attitudes or instructions, without questioning them. It is usually increased under hypnosis.

suggestible /ˈsʌdʒɪstəbəl/ adjective easily influenced by other people

suggestion /ˈsʌdʒɪstʃən/ noun 1. an idea which has been mentioned. 2. the doctor didn’t agree with the suggestion that the disease had been caught in the hospital. 3. (in psychiatry) the process of making a person’s ideas change, by suggesting different ideas which the person can accept, such as that he or she is in fact cured

suicide /ˈsjuːsɪdɪə/ noun the act of killing oneself.

sulcus /ˈsʌlkəs/ noun a groove or fold, especially between the gyri in the brain

sulfa drug /ˈsʌlfə drʌɡ/ noun a compound of sulfa, sulfa compound /ˈsʌlfə kəmpəˈpound/ noun same as sulfonamide

sulfasalazine /ˈsʌlfəsələˌzeɪn/ noun a drug belonging to the sulfonamide group of antibacterial drugs. It is used in the treatment of ulcerative colitis and Crohn’s disease, and also of severe rheumatoid arthritis.

sulfonamide /ˈsʌlfənəˈmɑːd/ noun a bacteriostatic drug, e.g., trimethoprim, used to treat bacterial infection, especially in the intestine and urinary system, but now less important due to increasing bacterial resistance

sulfonylurea /ˈsʌlfəʊnəˈljuːrə/ noun any of a group of drugs which lower blood sugar, used in the treatment of diabetes

sulfur /ˈsʌlfər/ noun another spelling of sulphur

sulphur /ˈsʌlfər/ noun a yellow non-metallic chemical element which is contained in some amino acids and is used in creams to treat some skin disorders (NOTE: The chemical symbol is S.)

sulphuric acid /ˈsʌlfərɪk ˈæsɪd/ a strong colourless oily corrosive acid which has many uses

sumatriptan /ˌsʌmətrɪˈtræptən/ noun a drug which helps to narrow the blood vessels, used in the treatment of acute migraine

sun blindness /ˈsʌn ˈblɪndnəs/ noun same as photoretinitis

sunburn /ˈsʌnbɜːn/ noun damage to the skin by excessive exposure to sunlight

sunstroke /ˈsʌnstrəʊk/ noun a serious condition caused by excessive exposure to the sun or to hot conditions, in which the person becomes dizzy and has a high body temperature but does not perspire

super-/suːpər/ prefix 1. above 2. extremely

superciliary /ˈsuːpərˈsɪlɪərɪ/ adjective referring to the eyebrows

superego /ˈsuːpərˈeɪdʒəʊ/ noun (in psychology) that part of the mind which is a person’s conscience, which is concerned with right and wrong

supercordination /ˌsuːpərˈkɔrdənʃən/ noun a condition in which two or more ova produced at the same time are fertilised by different males

superfetation /ˌsuːpərˈfɛtəʃən/ noun a condition in which an ovum is fertilised in a woman who is already pregnant

superficial /suːˈprɪʃəl/ adjective on the surface, close to the surface or on the skin

superficial thickness burn /ˌsuːpərˈfɪʃəl ˈθɪŋkəs ˈbrʌn/ noun same as partial thickness burn

superinfection /ˌsuːpərɪnˈfɛkʃən/ noun a second infection which affects the treatment of the first infection, because it is resistant to the drug used to treat the first

superior /suːˈprɪər/ adjective (of part of the body) higher up than another part

superior aspect /suːˈprɪər əˈspekt/ noun a view of the body from above

superiority complex /suːˈprɪərɪtɪ ˈkɒmplɛks/ noun a condition in which a person feels he or she is better and more important than others and pays little attention to them

superior mesenteric artery /suːˈprɪər ˈmesətərɪk ˈɑːrtəri/ noun one of the arteries which supply the small intestine

superior vena cava /suːˈprɪər ˈveɪnə kəˈveɪə/ noun a branch of the large vein into the heart, car-
The release of a hormone

The drug suppresses the body's natural instinct to reject the transplanted tissue. The release of adrenaline from the adrenal cortex is suppressed.
surgical diathermy /ˌsʌdʒɪk(ə)l ˈdaɪəθərmi/ noun 1 a procedure which uses a knife or electrode which is heated by a strong electric current until it coagulates tissue

surgical fixation /ˌsʌdʒɪk(ə)l ˈfɪkʃən/ noun a method of immobilising something such as a bone either externally by the use of a splint or internally by a metal plate and screws

surgical gloves /ˌsʌdʒɪk(ə)l ˈɡloʊvz/ plural noun thin plastic gloves worn by surgeons

surgical intervention /ˌsʌdʒɪk(ə)l ɪn ˈtɜrəns/ noun the treatment of disease or other condition by surgery

surgical neck /ˌsʌdʒɪk(ə)l ˈnɛk/ noun the narrow part at the top of the humerus, where the arm can easily be broken

surgical wound /ˌsʌdʒɪk(ə)l ˈwʌnd/ noun an incision made during a surgical operation

surrogate /ˈsɜrəˌgreɪt/ adjective taking the place of another person or thing

surrogate mother /ˈsɜrəˌgreɪt ˈmʌðər/ noun a woman who has a child by artificial insemination for a woman who cannot become pregnant, with the intention of handing the child over to her when it is born

Susceptibility /ˈsəskwətəlɪti/ noun lack of resistance to a disease

suspension /ˈsʌspənʃən/ noun a liquid with solid particles in it

suspensory /ˈsʌspənsoʊri/ adjective hanging down

suspensory bandage /ˈsʌspənsoʊri ˈbændidʒ/ noun a bandage to hold a part of the body which hangs

suspensory ligament /ˈsʌspənsoʊri ˈlɪɡəmənt/ noun a ligament which holds a part of the body in position. See illustration at EYE in Supplement

sustentacular /ˈsʌstəntəkəlær/ adjective referring to a sustentaculum

sustentaculum /ˈsʌstəntəkələm/ noun a part of the body which supports another part

suture /ˈsʌtʃər/ noun 1, a fixed joint where two bones are fused together, especially the bones in the skull 2, a procedure for attaching the sides of an incision or wound with thread, so that healing can take place. Also called stitch 3, a thread used for attaching the sides of a wound so that they can heal

swab /ˈswæb/ noun 1, a cotton wool pad, often attached to a small stick, used, e.g., to clean a wound, to apply ointment or to take a specimen 2, a specimen taken with a swab 3, a surgical operation to amputate the foot above the ankle [Described 1842. After James Syme (1799–1870), Edinburgh surgeon and teacher; one of the first to adopt antisepsis and a method of teaching children, frequently associated with endocarditis and rheumatism [Described 1866. After Thomas Sydenham (1624–89), English physician.]

sybosis /ˈsɪmbəs/ noun a condition in which two organisms exist together and help each other to survive

symblepharon /ˌsɪmbəlˈfɜrən/ noun a condition in which the eyelid sticks to the eyeball

symbol /ˈsɪmbəl/ noun a sign or letter which means something

Syme’s amputation /ˈsɪmz əmˈpətʃən/ noun a surgical operation to amputate the foot above the ankle [Described 1842. After James Syme (1799–1870), Edinburgh surgeon and teacher; one of the first to adopt antisepsis
adjective

sign

being a symptom of something

symptomatic

the symptoms of rheumatic fever.

making his diagnosis.

eyes.

symptoms of hay fever are a running nose and

symptom

symptom

symphysis pubis

the joint rigid

symphysis

ence produced on any part of the body by disease

expression of pity or sorrow for the pain or dis-

sympathy

cardiac surgery

diac shock following myocardial infarction and in

sympathetic nervous system and is used in car-

sympathomimetic

sympatholytic

sympatholytic

the lungs and the sweat glands, and which pre-

go to various important organs such as the heart,

autonomic nervous system, which leaves the spi-

system

sympathetic nervous system

sympathectomy

each side of the body being structurally similar to

symmetry

(Joseph Lister was his son-in-law), and also

among the early users of anaesthesia.)

symmetrical

/sim'etrık/ noun the regularity of structure and distribution of parts of the body, each side of the body being structurally similar to the other

sympathectomy /ˌsɪmˈæθɛktəmi/ noun a surgical operation to cut part of the sympathetic nervous system, as a treatment of high blood pres-

sympathetic /ˌsɪmˈæθetık/ adjective 1. feeling or showing shared feelings, pity or compass-

sion 2. relating to or belonging to the sympathetic nervous system, or to one of its parts

sympathetic nervous system

/sɪmˈæθetɪk ˈnɜːvəs ˌsɪstərn/, sympathetic system /ˌsɪmˈæθetɪk ˈsɪstərn/ noun part of the autonomic nervous system, which leaves the spi-

cnal cord from the thoracic and lumbar regions to go to various important organs such as the heart, the lungs and the sweat glands, and which pre-

pares the body for emergencies and vigorous muscular activity. ☘ parasympathetic nervous system

sympatholytic /ˌsɪmˈæθəlɪtɪk/ noun a drug which stops the sympathetic nervous system working

sympathomimetic /ˌsɪmˈæθəmɪmɪtɪk/ adjective referring to a drug such as dopamine hydrochloride which stimulates the activity of the sympathetic nervous system and is used in car-

diac shock following myocardial infarction and in cardiac surgery

sympathy /ˌsɪmˈæθi/ noun 1. the feeling or expression of pity or sorrow for the pain or dis-

tress of somebody else 2. the relationship between people which causes one of them to pro-

voke a similar condition to their own in the other one. For example, when the first person yawns, the second feels an urge to yawn too. 3. the influ-

ence produced on any part of the body by disease or change in another part

symphysia /ˌsɪmˈfɪsiə/ noun the point where two bones are joined by cartilage which makes the joint rigid

symphysia pubis /ˌsɪmˈfɪsiə ˈpjuːbɪs/ noun same as pubic symphysia

symptom /ˌsɪmˈptəm/ noun a change in the way the body works or a change in the body’s appear-

ance, which shows that a disease or disorder is present and which the person is aware of ☐ The symptoms of hay fever are a running nose and eyes. ☐ A doctor must study the symptoms before making his diagnosis. ☐ The patient presented all the symptoms of rheumatic fever. [NOTE: If a symptom is noticed only by the doctor, it is a sign.]

symptomatic /ˌsɪmˈptəˈmætɪk/ adjective being a symptom of something ☐ The rash is symptomatic of measles.

symptomatology /ˌsɪmˈptəməˈteɪdʒi/ noun a branch of medicine concerned with the study of symptoms. Also called semiology

syn- /sɪn/ prefix joint, or fused

synalgia /ˈsɪnəlˌdʒiə/ noun a pain which is felt in one part of the body, but is caused by a condi-

tion in another part, e.g. pain in the groin which can be a symptom of a kidney stone or pain in the right shoulder which can indicate gall bladder infection. Also called referred pain

synapse /ˌsɪnəˈpɛs/ noun a point in the nervous system where the axons of neurons are in contact with the dendrites of other neurons ☛ verb to link something with a neuron

synaptic /ˌsɪnˈæptɪk/ adjective referring to a synapse

synarthrosis /ˌsɪnəˈθɜːrəsɪs/ noun a joint, e.g. in the skull, where the bones have fused together

synchondrosis /ˌsɪnθɔːnˈdrəʊsɪs/ noun a joint, as in children, where the bones are linked by cartilage, before the cartilage has changed to bone

synchysis /ˌsɪntʃəˈsɪs/ noun a condition in which the vitreous humour in the eye becomes soft

syncope /ˌsɪŋkəpi/ noun a condition in which someone becomes unconscious for a short time because of reduced flow of blood to the brain. Also called fainting fit

syndactyly /ˌsɪndəˈktrɪli/ syndactylism /ˌsɪndəˈktrɪlɪzəm/ noun a condition in which two toes or fingers are joined together with tissue

syndesm- /ˈsɪndɛsm-, ˌsɪndɛsməʊ/ syndesmo-/sɪndɛsməʊ/ prefix referring to ligaments

syndesmosis /ˌsɪndɛsməˈsɪs/ noun a branch of medicine which studies joints

syndrom- /ˈsɪndrɒm-, ˌsɪndrəʊməʊ/ syndrôme-/sɪndrəʊməʊ/ noun a group of symp-

toms and other changes in the body’s functions which, when taken together, show that a particu-

lar disease is present

synecchia /ˌsɪnəˈnɛkʃə/ noun a condition in which the iris sticks to another part of the eye

synergism /ˌsɪnəˈdʒɪzm/ noun a situation where two or more things are acting together in such a way that both are more effective. Also called synergy

synergist /ˌsɪnəˈdʒɪst/ noun a muscle or drug which acts with another and increases the effec-

tiveness of both

synergy /ˌsɪnəˈdʒɪri/ noun same as synergism

syngeneic /ˌsɪnɡiˈniːək/ adjective referring to individuals or tissues that have an identical or closely similar genetic make-up, especially one that will allow the transplanting of tissue without provoking an immune response

synostosed /ˌsɪnəˈstəʊzd/ adjective (of bones) fused together with new bone tissue
synostosis /sɪnˈstɒstɪs/ noun the fusing of two bones together by the formation of new bone tissue

synovectomy /ˌsɪnəʊˈvɛktəmɪ/ noun a surgical operation to remove the synovial membrane of a joint

synovia /ˈsɪnəvɪə/ noun same as synovial fluid

synovial /ˌsɪnəˈvɪəl/ adjective referring to the synovium

synovial fluid /ˌsɪnəˈvɪəl ˈflʌɪd/ noun a fluid secreted by a synovial membrane to lubricate a joint. See illustration at SYNOVIAL JOINT in Supplement

synovial joint /ˌsɪnəˈvɪəl ˈdʒɒnt/ noun a joint where the two bones are separated by a space filled with synovial fluid which nourishes and lubricates the surfaces of the bones. Also called diarthrosis

synovial membrane /ˌsɪnəˈvɪəl ˈmembraɪn/, synovium noun a smooth membrane which forms the inner lining of the capsule covering a joint and secretes the fluid which lubricates the joint. See illustration at SYNOVIAL JOINT in Supplement

synovitis /ˌsɪnəˈvɪtɪs/ noun inflammation of the synovial membrane

synthesis /ˈsɪnθɪsɪs/ noun 1. the process of combining different ideas or objects into a new whole 2. a new unified whole resulting from the combination of different ideas or objects 3. the formation of compounds through chemical reactions involving simple compounds or elements 4. in psychiatry, the fusing together of all the various elements of the personality (Note: The plural is syntheses.)

synthesise /ˌsɪnθəˈsaɪz/ verb to make a chemical compound from its separate components. Essential amino acids cannot be synthesised. The body cannot synthesise essential fatty acids and has to absorb them from food.

synthetic /sɪnˈθetɪk/ adjective made by humans, made artificially

syphilis /ˈsɪflɪs/ noun a sexually transmitted disease caused by a spirochaete Treponema pallidum

syringe /ˈsɜːrɪndʒ/ noun a medical instrument made of a tube with a plunger which either slides down inside the tube, forcing the contents out through a needle as in an injection, or slides up the tube, allowing a liquid to be sucked into it. A verb to wash out the ears using a syringe.

syringo- /ˈsɜːrɪŋəʊ-/ prefix referring to tubes, especially the central canal of the spinal cord

syringomyelia /ˌsɜːrɪŋəʊˈmɔɪəliə/ noun a disease which forms cavities in the neck section of the spinal cord, affecting the nerves so that the person loses the sense of touch and pain

syringomyelitis /ˌsɜːrɪŋəʊˈmɔɪəlɪtɪs/ noun a swelling of the spinal cord, which results in the formation of cavities in it

syringomyelocele /ˌsɜːrɪŋəʊˈmɔɪəloʊsəl/ noun a severe form of spina bifida where the spinal cord pushes through a hole in the spine

system /ˈsɪstəm/ noun 1. the body as a whole 2. Amputation of a limb gives a serious shock to the system. 3. the arrangement of particular parts of the body so that they work together. 4. the lymphatic system

systemic /ˈsɪstɪmɪk/ adjective referring to or affecting the whole body. 5. Septicaemia is a systemic infection.

systemic circulation /ˈsɪstɪmɪk, ˌsɪstɪkˈsɜːlər/ noun the circulation of blood around the whole body, except the lungs, starting with the aorta and returning through the veins cavae

systemic lupus erythematosus /ˌsɪstɪmɪk ˌljuːps ˌɛrɪθəˈmeɪtəsəs/ noun one of several collagen diseases which are forms of lupus, where red patches form on the skin and spread throughout the body. Abbreviation SLE

systole /ˈsɪstəli/ noun a phase in the beating of the heart when it contracts as it pumps blood out

systolic /ˈsɪstəlɪk/ adjective referring to the systole

systolic murmur /ˈsɪstəlɪk ˈmɜːrmər/ noun a sound produced during systole which indicates an unusual condition of a heart valve

systolic pressure /ˈsɪstəlɪk ˈprɛʃər/ noun the high point of blood pressure which occurs during the systole. Systolic pressure is always higher than diastolic pressure.
TAB abbreviation typhoid-paratyphoid A and B
O He was given a TAB injection. O TAB injections give only temporary immunity against paratyphoid. O TAB vaccine
tabes /ˈteɪbɪz/ noun a condition in which someone is wasting away
tabes dorsalis /ˈteɪbɪz dɔrˈsɔlis/ noun a disease of the nervous system, caused by advanced syphilis, in which the person loses the sense of feeling, control of the bladder and the ability to coordinate movements of the legs, and has severe pains. Also called locomotor ataxia
tablet /ˈteɪblət/ noun 1. a small flat round object containing medicine that is taken by swallowing O a bottle of aspirin tablets O Take two tablets three times a day. 2. any tablet, pill or capsule taken by swallowing (informal)
taboparesis /ˌteɪboʊpəˈrɛsɪs/ noun the final stage of syphilis in which the person has locomotor ataxia, general paralysis and mental deterioration
TAB vaccine /ˈteɪbəvɪns/ a vaccine which immunises against typhoid fever and paratyphoid A and B
tachy-/təkɪ/ prefix fast
tachycardia /təkɪˈkɑrdiə/ noun a rapid beating of the heart
tachyphasia /təkɪˈfɛziə/, tachyphasia /təkɪˈfɛzɪə/ noun a particularly rapid way of speaking, as occurs with some people with mental disorders

tachynoea /ˈteɪkpnɪəs/ noun very fast breathing
tacrolimus /ˈtækroʊɪˌməs/ noun a powerful immunosuppressant drug used to reduce the risk of organ transplant rejection
tactile /ˈtæktɪl/ adjective able to be sensed by touch
taeniasis /ˈteɪnəsɪs/ noun infestation of the intestines with tapeworms
Tagamet /ˈteɪgəmɛt/ a trade name for a preparation of cimetidine
tai chi /ˈtэɪ chэi, tэi chэi/ noun an ancient Chinese system of exercises designed for health, self-defence and spiritual development
talc /ˈtælk/ noun a soft white powder used to dust on irritated skin
tailies /ˈtælɪz/ noun a foot with a shape that does not allow usual walking, a congenital condition. Also called club foot, club foot
tailo- /ˈteɪləʊ/ prefix referring to the ankle bone
talis /ˈteɪləs/ noun the top bone in the tarsus which articulates with the tibia and fibula in the leg, and with the calcaneus in the heel. Also called anklebone. See illustration at FOOT in Supplement (NOTE: The plural is talli.)
tamoxifen /ˈteɪmɒksɪfən/ noun a drug which helps to prevent the actions of oestrogen, used especially in the treatment of breast cancer and some types of infertility
tampon /ˈteɪmpən/ noun 1. a wad of absorbent material put into a wound to soak up blood during an operation 2. a cylindrical plug of soft material put into the vagina to absorb blood during menstruation
tamponade /ˈteɪmpənəd/ noun the action of putting a tampon into a wound
tan /ˈteɪn/ verb (of skin) to become brown in sunlight O He tans easily. O She is using a tanning lotion.
tantalum /ˈteɪntələm/ noun a rare metal, used to repair damaged bones (NOTE: The chemical symbol is Ta.)
tantalum mesh /ˈteɪntələm mɛʃ/ noun a type of net made of tantalum wire, used to repair cranial conditions
tantrum /ˈteɪntrəm/ noun a sudden episode of bad behaviour, usually in a child, where the child throws things or lies on the floor and screams
tap /ˈteɪp/ noun a surgical procedure to drain off body fluid with a hollow needle or a tube ■ verb to remove or drain liquid from part of the body; ○ spinal
tapeworm /ˈteɪpwɜrn/ noun a parasitic worm with a small head and long body like a ribbon. Tapeworms enter the intestine when a person eats raw meat or fish. The worms attach themselves with hooks to the side of the intestine and grow longer by adding sections to their bodies.
tartar /ˈtɑrtər/ n noun a dental deposit of calcium and phosphorus
Tarsal /ˈtɑrsəl/ adj adjective referring to the tarsus
Tarsal bone /ˈtɑrslən/ n noun one of seven small bones in the ankle, including the talus and calcaneus. Also called tarsal bone
Tarsalgia /ˈtɑrsəˌɡeɪə/ n noun an inflammation of the tarsal bone
Tarsitis /ˈtɑrsəˌtɪsɪs/ n noun an inflammation of the eyelid
Tarsorrhaphy /ˈtɑrsəˈrɑfɪ/ n noun a surgical operation to remove one or both of the tarsal bones in the eyelid, or to operate on the tarsus of the eyelid
Tarsitis /ˈtɑrsəˌtɪsɪs/ n noun an inflammation of the edge of the eyelid
Tarsorrhaphy /ˈtɑrsəˌrɑfɪ/ n noun an operation to join the two eyelids together to protect the eye after an operation
Tarsus /ˈtɑrsəs/ n noun 1. the seven small bones of the ankle. See illustration at foot in Supplement 2. a connective tissue which supports an eyelid (NOTE: The plural is tarsi.)
Tartar /ˈtɑrtər/ n noun a hard deposit of calcium which forms on teeth, and has to be removed by scaling. Also called scale
Task allocation /ˈtɑsk əˈləkʃən/ n noun a system in which patient care is divided into tasks which are given to different nurses with specific skills
Taste /teɪst/ n noun one of the five senses, where food or substances in the mouth are noticed through the tongue. O He doesn’t like the taste of onions. O He has a cold, so food seems to have lost all taste or seems to have no taste. ■ verb to notice the taste of something with the tongue. O I have a cold so I can’t taste anything. O You can taste the salt in this batter.
Taste bud /ˈteɪst bʌd/ n noun a tiny sensory receptor in the vallate and fungiform papillae of the tongue and in part of the back of the mouth
COMMENT: The taste buds can tell the difference between salt, sour, bitter and sweet tastes. The buds on the tip of the tongue identify salt and sweet tastes, those on the sides of the tongue identify sour, and those at the back of the mouth the bitter tastes. Note that most of what we think of as taste is in fact smell, and this is why when someone has a cold and a blocked nose, food seems to lose its taste. The impulses from the taste buds are received by the taste cortex in the temporal lobe of the cerebral hemisphere.
Taxis /ˈtɑksɪs/ n noun the procedure of pushing or massaging dislocated bones or hernias to make them return to their usual position
Taxonomy /teɪˈkɒmənə/ n noun 1. the practice or principles of classification generally. O Any diagnostic task can be aided by a taxonomy of symptoms and a taxonomy of causes together with connections between them. 2. the science of classifying plants, animals and microorganisms into increasingly broader categories based on shared features. Traditionally, organisms were grouped by physical resemblances, but recently other criteria such as genetic matching have also been used.
Tay-Sachs disease /ˈteɪ sɪks dɪzəs/ n noun an inherited condition affecting the metabolism, characterised by progressive paralysis of the legs, blindness and learning disabilities. [Described 1881. After Warren Tay (1843–1927), British ophthalmologist; Bernard Sachs (1858–1944), US neurologist.]
TB abbreviation tuberculosis O He is suffering from TB. O She has been admitted to a TB sanatorium.
TBI abbreviation total body irradiation
T-cell /ˈtiː sɛl/ n noun same as T-lymphocyte
TCP /ˈtiː sɪt/ n noun a trade name for various mild antiseptic liquids
T.D.S. /ˈtiː diː ˈɛs, TDS/ adv (written on prescriptions) three times a day. Full form ter in diem sumendus
Teaching hospital /ˈtiː tiŋ ˈhɒpəstərəl/ n noun a hospital attached to a medical school where student doctors work and study as part of their training
Team nursing /ˈtiːəm ˈtɛrnɪŋ/ n noun a system in which the care of a group of patients is assigned to a team of four or five health workers, led by a professional nurse who assigns them various tasks. They meet at the beginning and end of each shift to exchange information.
Tear /teər/ n noun a drop of the salty fluid which forms in the lacrimal gland. The fluid keeps the eyeball moist and clean and is produced in large quantities when a person cries. O Tears ran down her face. (NOTE: For other terms referring to tears, see words beginning with dacryo- or lacrimal.)
Tear duct /teər ˈdækt/ n noun same as lacrimal duct
Tear gland /teər ˈɡlænd/ n noun same as lacrimal gland
Teat /teɪt/ n noun a rubber nipple on the end of a baby’s feeding bottle
TED abbreviation thrombo-embolic deterrent stocking
The doctor asked the nurse what the temperature chart was slightly above normal.

telangiectasia /te.lan'jē-ass-tər-əs/ telangiectasia /te.lan'jē-ass-tər-əs/ noun small dark red spots on the skin, formed by swollen capillaries
telangioma /te.lan'jē-ə-mə/ noun a tumour or haematoma of the blood capillaries
teleceptor /tel'i-sept-ər/ noun a sensory receptor which receives sensations from a distance. These occur in the eyes, ears and nose. Also called telereceptor

telemedicine /tel'i-měd'ə-sən/ noun the provision of diagnosis and health care from a distance using media such as interactive computer programs or off-site advisers
telenchophalon /te-len'kə-fə-lən/ noun same as cerebrum
telepathy /te'lep-a-thē/ noun the apparent communication directly from one person’s mind to another person’s, without the use of speech, writing or other signs or symbols
teleradiology /tel'i-rā'de-ə-ləj/ noun the process of transmitting scans and other images electronically so that they can be viewed by surgeons or other health care workers in different locations at the same time
teleceptor /tel'i-sept-ər/ noun same as teleceptor

telophase /tel'o-faz/ noun the final stage of mitosis, the stage in cell division after anaphase
temazepam /tem'səz-pəm/ noun a hypnotic drug used in the short-term treatment of insomnia
temperature /tem'prər-i/ noun the heat of the body or of the surrounding air, measured in degrees. The doctor asked the nurse what the patient’s temperature was. Her temperature was slightly above normal. The thermometer showed a temperature of 99°F.
temperature chart /tem'prər-i/ chart noun a chart showing changes in a person’s temperature over a period of time
temple /tem'pəl/ noun the flat part of the side of the head between the top of the ear and the eye

temporal /tem'prə-l/ adjective referring to the temple

temporal arteritis /tem'prə-lər-'ar-ə-ti-təs/ noun a headache caused by inflammation of the region over the temporal artery, usually occurring in older people

temporal bone /tem'prə-l bən/ noun one of the bones which form the sides and base of the cranium. See illustration at EAR in Supplement

temporalis /tem'prə-lis, tem'prə-lis/ temporalis muscle /tem'prə-lis, tem'prə-lis/ noun a flat muscle running down the side of the head from the temporal bone to the coroid process, which makes the jaw move up

temporal lobe /tem'prə-l ləb/ noun the lobe above the ear in each cerebral hemisphere

temporal lobe epilepsy /tem'prə-l ləb 'ep-sil-o-ē/ noun epilepsy due to a disorder of the temporal lobe and causing impaired memory, hallucinations and automatism

tempero- /tem'pər-o-/ prefix 1. referring to the temple 2. referring to the temporal lobe

temporomandibular /tem'prə-mænd'ə-bə-lər/ noun a joint between the jaw and the skull, in front of the ear

tenacious /tə'nəs-əs/ adjective sticking or clinging to something else, especially a surface

tenaculum /tə'nək-jə-ləm/ noun a surgical instrument shaped like a hook, used to pick up small pieces of tissue during an operation
tender /tən'dər/ adjective referring to skin or a body part which is painful when touched. Her bruises are still tender. Her shoulders are still tender where she got sunburnt. A tender spot on the abdomen indicates that an organ is inflamed.
tendinitis /tend'i-ni-tis/ noun an inflammation of a tendon, especially after playing sport, and often associated with tenosynovitis

tenacious /tən-'ə-nəs/ adjective referring to a tendon

tendon /tən'dən/ noun a strip of connective tissue which attaches a muscle to a bone. Also called sinew (NOTE: For other terms referring to a tendon, see words beginning with teno-)
tendonitis /tən'də-ni-tis/ noun same as tendinitis

tendon sheath /tən'dən səf/ noun a tube of membrane which covers and protects a tendon

tendovaginitis /tən'dəv-a-gə-ni-tis/ noun an inflammation of a tendon sheath, especially in the thumb

tenen /tə'nən/ noun a condition in which someone feels the need to pass faeces, or sometimes urine, but is unable to do so and experiences pain
tennis elbow /ˈtenɪs ˈɛlbəʊ/ noun an inflammation of the tendons of the extensor muscles in the hand which are attached to the bone near the elbow. Also called lateral epicondylitis
tenogenesis /ˌterəˈdʒenəsɪs/ noun an unusual pattern of development in an embryo and fetus.
tenogenesis /ˌterəˈdʒenɪk/ adjective 1. having the tendency to produce physical disorders in an embryo or fetus 2. relating to the production of physical disorders in an embryo or fetus.
tenotomist /ˈtɛnətəˈmɪst/ noun a surgeon who performs tenotomies.
tenoplasty /ˌtenəpləstɪ/ noun a surgical operation to repair a torn tendon.
tenorrhaphy /ˈtenərəfɪ/ noun a surgical operation to stitch pieces of a torn tendon together.
tension /ˈtenʃən/ noun 1. the act of stretching or the state of being stretched 2. an emotional strain or stress.
tension headache /ˈtenʃən ˈhedsɛrk/ noun a headache all over the head, caused by worry and stress.
tension neurone /ˈtenʃən njuərən/ a neurone in which the impulse forms an opening like a valve, through which air is forced during coughing but cannot escape.
tensor /ˈtɛnsər/ noun a muscle which makes a joint stretch out.
tent /ˈtent/ noun a small shelter put over and around someone’s bed so that gas or vapour can be passed inside.
tera- /ˈtɛrə/ prefix 1012. Symbol T
teratogen /ˈtɛrətɒdʒɪn/ noun a substance which causes the usual development of an embryo or fetus to be disrupted, e.g. the German measles virus.
teratology /ˌterəˈtɒlədʒi/ noun the study of the unhealthy development of embryos and fetuses.
teratoma /ˌterəˈtɒmə/ noun a tumour, especially in an ovary or testis, which is formed of tissue not normally found in that part of the body.
terbutaline /ˈtɛrˌbjuːtəˈleɪn/ noun a drug which relaxes muscles, used in the treatment of respiratory disorders and to control premature labour.
terces /ˈtɜːrəs/ noun one of two shoulder muscles running from the shoulder blade to the top of the humerus. The larger of the two muscles, the teres major, makes the arm turn towards the inside, and the smaller, the teres minor, makes it turn towards the outside.
terfenadine /ˌtɛrəˈfɛnədɪn/ noun an antihista-mine used in the treatment of hay fever and urticaria.
terminally ill /ˌtɪmənəlɪ ɪl/ adjective very ill and about to die. She was admitted to a hospice for terminally ill patients or for the terminally ill.
terminator /ˈtɛrmiˌneɪtər/ noun a surgically operated excision of a tendon, usually under local anaesthetic.
termitidae /ˈtɛrmiˌtɪdə/ plural of termites.
terminology /ˌtɪmənəˈlɒdʒi/ noun the act of stretching or the state of being stretched.
terminology /ˌtɛrmiˌnɒlədʒi/ noun the act of stretching or the state of being stretched.
tertiary bronchi /ˈtɛrəriərɪ ˈbrɒŋkɪ/ noun the third set of lungs, following the trachea and bronchi, in which the lungs are divided into segments.
tertiary care /ˈtɛrəriərɪ keə/ noun highly specialised treatment given in a health care centre, often using very advanced technology. Compare primary care, secondary care.
test /test/ noun a short examination to see if a sample is healthy or if part of the body is working well. He had an eye test this morning.
testicular /ˈtɛstrɪkʃəl/ adjective referring to the testes. Testicular cancer comprises only 1% of all malignant neoplasms in the male.
testicular artery /ˈtɛstrɪkʃəl əˈtɜːrəri/ noun same as spermatic artery.
testis /ˈtɛstɪs/ noun one of two male sex glands in the scrotum. See illustration at urogenital tract.
### System (Male) in Supplement

**Thalamo-tetraplegia**

Thalamo-<sup>1</sup>/thalam/o-<sup>2</sup>/prefix referring to the thalamus

**Thalasmos**<sup>1</sup>/thalam/o-<sup>2</sup>/noun one of two masses of grey matter situated beneath the cerebrum where impulses from the sensory neurones are transmitted to the cerebral cortex. See illustration at **Brain** in Supplement. **Note**: The plural is thalam.)

**Thalassaemia**<sup>1</sup>/θalas/sizm/i-<sup>2</sup>/noun a hereditary disorder of which there are several forms caused by anomalies in the protein component of the haemoglobin, leading to severe anaemia. It is found especially in people from Mediterranean countries, the Middle East and East Asia. Also called Cooley’s anaemia

**Thalidomide**<sup>1</sup>/θa/lidomad/i-<sup>2</sup>/noun a synthetic drug given to pregnant women for morning sickness in the 1960s which caused babies to be born with stunted limbs. It is now used in the treatment of leprosy.

**Thallium scan**<sup>1</sup>/θal/ium skan/-<sup>2</sup>/noun a method of finding out about the blood supply to the heart muscle by scanning to see how the radioactive element thallium moves when injected into the bloodstream and where it attaches itself to the heart wall

**Therapeutic abortion**<sup>1</sup>/θer/a/pjju/jitk/i-<sup>2</sup>/order to cure a disorder or disease.

**Therapeutic**<sup>1</sup>/θer/a/pjju/jitk/-<sup>2</sup>/adjective given in order to cure a disorder or disease

**Therapeutic index**<sup>1</sup>/θer/a/pjju/jitik /ˈɪndɛks/-<sup>2</sup>/noun the ratio of the dose of a drug which causes cell damage to the dose of that drug which is typically needed to effect a cure, by which the safety of the drug is decided
therapeutic radiographer /ˈθɛərəˈpiːdʒɪtɪk/ noun someone specially trained to use X-rays or radioactive isotopes in the treatment of patients

therapeutics /ˈθɛərəˈpiːdʒɪtɪks/ noun the study of various types of treatment and their effect on patients

therapist /ˈθɛərəpɪst/ noun a person specially trained to give therapy ○ an occupational therapist ○ psychotherapist

therapy /ˈθɛərəpi/ noun the treatment of a person to help cure a disease or disorder

thiopentone /θiəˈpɛntən/ noun one of the four molars at the back of the jaw, which only appears at about the age of 20 and sometimes does not appear at all. Same as wisdom tooth

thirst /θɜːst/ noun a feeling of wanting to drink ○ He had a fever and a violent thirst.

Thomas's splint /ˈθəʊməz splint/ Thomas splint ○ an instrument used to keep a fractured leg still. It has a padded ring at the hip attached to rods to which bandages are bound and a bar under the foot at the lower end. [Described 1875. After Hugh Owen Thomas (1834–91), British surgeon and bonesetter.]

thorac- /θɔərəks/ prefix same as thoraco- (used before vowels)

thoracectomy /θɔərəˈsektəmi/ noun a surgical operation to remove one or more ribs

thoracentesis /θɔərəˈsentɪsɪs/ noun same as thoracocentesis

thoracic /θɔərəsɪk/ adjective referring to the chest or thorax

thoracic cavity /θɔərəsɪkˈkeɪvɪti/ noun the chest cavity, containing the diaphragm, heart and lungs

thoracic duct /θɔərəsɪk dʌkt/ noun one of the main terminal ducts carrying lymph, on the left side of the neck

thoracic vertebrae /θɔərəsɪk værtɪbrəʊ/ plural noun the twelve vertebrae in the spine behind the chest, to which the ribs are attached

thoracoscope /θɔərəˈskəʊp/ noun an instrument, like a tube with a light at the end, used to examine the inside of the chest

thoracotomy /θɔərəˈkəʊtəmi/ noun a surgical operation to make a hole in the wall of the chest

thorax /θɔərəks/ noun the cavity in the top part of the front of the body above the abdomen, containing the diaphragm, heart and lungs, and surrounded by the ribcage

threadworm /θredˈwɜːm/ noun a thin parasitic worm, Enterobius vermicularis, which infests the large intestine and causes itching round the anus. ○ Enterobius. Also called pinworm

thready pulse /ˈθredi ˈpʌls/ noun a very weak pulse which is hard to detect

thioridazine /ˌθaɪərɪdɪˈziːzn/ noun a synthetic compound used as a tranquilliser for people who are suffering from a psychosis

third-degree haemorrhoids /θɜːd diˈɡriː ˈheɪmərərθɔɪdz/ plural noun haemorrhoids which protrude into the anus permanently

third molar /θɜːd ˈmoʊlər/ noun one of the four molars at the back of the jaw, which only appears at about the age of 20 and sometimes does not appear at all. Same as wisdom tooth
threatened abortion /ˈbreθ(ə)nd ðə'bɔ:ʃ(ə)n/ noun a possible abortion in the early stages of pregnancy, indicated by bleeding

threshold /ˈθresʰoʊld/ noun the point at which something starts, e.g. where something can be perceived by the body or where a drug starts to have an effect. She has a low hearing threshold.

thril /θrɪl/ noun a vibration which can be felt with the hands
-thrix /θrɪks/ suffix relating to a hair

throat /θrɔʊt/ noun the top part of the tube which goes down from the mouth to the stomach

throbbing pain /ˈθrɔbɪŋ/ˈpen/ noun pain which continues in repeated short attacks

thrombectomy /θrɔmˈbɛktəmi/ noun a surgical operation to remove a blood clot

thrombin /θrɔmˈbɪn/ noun a substance which converts fibrinogen to fibrin and so coagulates blood

thrombo- /θrɔmboʊ-/ prefix 1. referring to a blood clot  2. referring to thrombosis

thromboangiitis /θrɔmˈboʊəndʒɪtɪs/ noun a condition in which the blood vessels swell and develop blood clots along their walls

thromboangiitis obliterans /θrɔmˈboʊəndʒɪtiətɪs əˈlɪtərəns/ noun a disease of the arteries in which the blood vessels in a limb, usually the leg, become narrow, causing gangrene. Also called Buerger’s disease

thromboarteritis /θrɔmˈboʊərdərtərɪtɪs/ noun inflammation of an artery caused by thrombosis

thrombocyte /θrɔmˈboʊsasɪt/ noun same as platelet

thrombocythaemia /θrɔmˈboʊsɪθeəmɪə/ noun a disease in which someone has an unusually high number of platelets in the blood

thrombocytopenia /θrɔmˈboʊsətˈpəniə/ noun a condition in which someone has an unusually low number of platelets in the blood

thrombocytopenic /θrɔmˈboʊsətˈpenɪk/ adjective referring to thrombocytopenia

thrombocytosis /θrɔmˈboʊsəsɪs/ noun an increase in the number of platelets in some one’s blood

thrombo-embolic deterrent stocking /θrɔmˈboʊ əmˈblɪs(ə)m/ noun a support stocking to prevent thrombus formation following surgery. Abbreviation TED

thromboembolism /θrɔmˈboʊəmˈblɪz(ə)m/ noun a condition in which a blood clot forms in one part of the body and moves through the blood vessels to block another, usually smaller, part

thromboendarterectomy /θrɔmˈboʊərˌdɛnərˈtərtərɪktɪ/ noun a surgical operation to open an artery to remove a blood clot which is blocking it

thromboendarteritis /θrɔmˈboʊəndərərtərɪtɪs/ noun inflammation of the inside of an artery, caused by thrombosis

thrombokinase /θrɔmˈboʊkɪnəs/ noun an enzyme which converts prothrombin into thrombin, so starting the sequence for coagulation of blood. Also called thromboplastin

thrombolysis /θrɔmˈboʊləsɪs/ noun same as fibrinolysis

thrombolytic /θrɔmˈboʊlɪtɪk/ adjective same as fibrinolytic

thrombophlebitis /θrɔmˈboʊfliˈbɪtɪs/ noun the blocking of a vein by a blood clot, sometimes causing inflammation

thromboplastin /θrɔmˈboʊplæsˈtɪn/ noun same as thrombokinase

thrombosis /θrɔmˈboʊsɪs/ noun the blocking of an artery or vein by a mass of coagulated blood

thrombus /θrɔmˈboʊs/ noun same as blood clot

throw up /θrɔʊ ˈʌp/ verb same as vomit (informal)

thrust /θrʌst/ noun an infection of the mouth or the vagina with the bacterium Candida albicans

thumb /θʌm/ noun the short thick finger, with only two bones, which is separated from the other four fingers on the hand

thym- /θaɪm/ prefix referring to the thymus gland

thymectomy /θaɪmˈektəmi/ noun a surgical operation to remove the thymus gland

-thymia /θaɪmɪə/ suffix referring to a state of mind

thymic /θaɪmɪk/ adjective referring to the thymus gland

thymine /θaɪmɪn/ noun one of the four basic chemicals in DNA

thymol /θaɪməʊl/ noun a colourless compound which is made synthetically or extracted from thyme oil, used as an antiseptic

thymus /θaɪməs, θæməs/ noun one of the two endocrine glands in the front part of the top of the thorax, behind the breastbone

thyro- /θaɪrəʊ- prefix referring to the thyroid gland

thyrocalcitonin /θaɪrəʊkɔlkətəˈnɪn/ noun same as calcitonin

thyroglossal /θaɪrəˈglɒs(ə)l/ adjective referring to the thyroid gland and the throat

thyroglossal cyst /θaɪrəˈɡlɔs(ə)l/ noun a cyst in the front of the neck

thyroid /θaɪrɔrd, θaɪrəʊd/ noun an endocrine gland in the neck, which is activated by the pituitary gland and secretes a hormone which regulates the body’s metabolism. It is also the adjective referring to the thyroid gland
tibial torsion /ˌtɪbɪəl ˈtɔrʃən/ noun a condition in which the foot is turned inward at the ankle. Also called shinbone.

tibia | tibial /ˈtɪbiəl/ adjective referring to the tibia

tibialis /ˈtɪbiəlɪs/ noun one of two muscles in the lower leg running from the tibia to the foot

tibial torsion /ˈtɪbiəl ˈtɔrʃən/ noun a persistent slight twist in the tibia, caused by a cramped position in the uterus. It makes the feet of young children point forwards for up to a year after they begin to walk on their own, but it corrects itself as the leg grows.

tibio- /ˈtɪbiəʊ-/ prefix referring to the tibia

tibiofibular /ˌtɪbiəʊˈfɪbjuələr/ adjective referring to both the tibia and the fibula

tidal air | tidal volume /ˈtɪd(ə)l ˈvɑlvjuː/ noun the amount of air that passes in and out of the body in breathing

t. i. d. /ˈtiːə/ noun an abbreviation for twice a day

t. i. d. /ˈtiːə/ noun an abbreviation for every day

t. i. d. /ˈtiːə/ noun an abbreviation for three times a day. Full form ter in die

tid. a. /ˈtɪdənjəl/ adjective referring to something that happens gradually

t. i. c. /ˈtiːə/ noun an abbreviation for every other day

t. i. q. /ˈtiːə/ noun an abbreviation for every other hour

t. i. d. /ˈtiːəd/ noun an abbreviation for every other day

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t. i. c. /ˈtiːəd/ noun an abbreviation for every day

t. i. q. /ˈtiːəd/ noun an abbreviation for every other hour
titanium /ˌtaɪˈtəniəm/ noun a light metallic element which does not corrode (NOTE: The chemical symbol is Ti.)
titration /ˌtaɪt्रɪˈeɪʃən/ noun the process of measuring the strength of a solution
titre /tɪˈtre/ noun a measurement of the quantity of antibodies in a serum
t-lymphocyte /tɪ; ˈlɪmɨsət/ noun a lymphocyte formed in the thymus gland. Also called T-cell
TNM classification /ˈtiː en ʻɛm klasɪfɪˈkeɪʃən/ noun an internationally agreed standard which is the most widely used means for classifying the extent of cancer. T refers to the size of the tumour, N to the lymph node involvement and M to the presence or absence of metastasis
toco /ˈtɒkəʊ/ prefix referring to childbirth
tocopherol /ˌtɒkəˈfɔrəl/ noun one of a group of fat-soluble compounds which make up vitamin E, found in vegetable oils and leafy green vegetables
toddler’s diarrhoea /ˈtɒdləz dɪəˈrəʊə/ noun a condition in which recurrent loose stools are produced, often containing partially digested food. It usually occurs in children between the ages of one and three years.
toiletting /ˈtɒlɪtɪŋ/ noun the act of helping someone to perform the actions of urinating or opening their bowels, including helping them to do so if they are unable to get out of bed or are incompetent
tolbutamide /ˌtɒlbjuːtəməd/ noun a drug which lowers blood-glucose levels by stimulating the pancreas to produce more insulin. It is used in the treatment of Type II diabetes.
tolerance /ˈtɒlərəns/ noun the ability of the body to tolerate a substance or an action. He has been taking the drug for so long that he has developed a tolerance to it.
tolerate /ˈtɒlərət/ verb 1. not to be affected by the unpleasant effects of something, especially not to experience bad effects from being exposed to something harmful 2. not to react to a drug through having developed a resistance to it
-tome /ˈtɒm/ suffix 1. a cutting instrument 2. a segment of a dermatome
tomo- /ˈtɒməʊ/ prefix referring to cutting or a section
tomogram /ˈtɒməɡrɑːm/ noun a picture of part of the body taken by tomography
tomography /ˈtɒməˌɡrɑːfi/ noun the scanning of a particular part of the body using X-rays or ultrasound
-tomy /ˈtɒmɪ/ suffix referring to a surgical operation
tone /təʊn/ noun the slightly tense state of a healthy muscle when it is not fully relaxed. Also called tonicity, tonus
tongue /ˈtɒŋ/ noun the long muscular organ inside the mouth which can move and is used for tasting, swallowing and speaking. The top surface is covered with papillae, some of which contain taste buds. The doctor told him to stick out his tongue and say ‘Ah’. Also called glosa (NOTE: For other terms referring to the tongue, see lingual and words beginning with gloss-.)
tongue depressor /ˈtɒŋ dɪˈpresər/ noun an instrument, usually a thin piece of wood, used by a doctor to hold someone’s tongue down while the throat is being examined
tongue-tie /ˈtɒŋ təɪ/ noun the condition of being unable to move your tongue with the usual amount of freedom, because the small membrane which attaches the tongue to the floor of the mouth is unusually short
 tonic /ˈtɒnɪk/ adjective referring to a muscle which is contracted. It is muscle in which improves the someone’s general health or which makes a tired person more energetic. She asked the doctor to prescribe a tonic for her anaemia.
tonicity /ˈtɒnɪsəti/ noun same as tone
tono- /ˈtɒnəʊ/ prefix referring to pressure
tonography /ˌtɒnəˈɡrɑːfi/ noun a measurement of the pressure inside an eyeball
tonometer /ˌtɒnəˈmɛtər/ noun an instrument which measures the pressure inside an organ, especially the eye
 tonometry /ˌtɒnəˈmɛtrɪ/ noun a measurement of pressure inside an organ, especially the eye
tonsil /ˈtɒnzɪl/ noun an area of lymphoid tissue at the back of the throat in which lymph circulates and protects the body against germs entering through the mouth. Also called palatine tonsil
tonsillar /ˈtɒnsɪlər/ adjective referring to the tonsils
tonsillectomy /ˌtɒnsɪlˈɛktəmi/ noun a surgical operation to remove the tonsils
tonsillitis /ˌtɒnsɪlˈlɪtɪs/ noun inflammation of the tonsils
tonsillotomy /ˌtɒnsɪlˈtɒmə/ noun a surgical operation to make a cut into the tonsils
tonus /ˈtɒnəs/ noun same as tone
tooth /tʊθ/ noun one of a set of bones in the mouth which are used to chew food (NOTE: The plural is teeth. For other terms relating to the teeth, see words beginning with dent-.)
tophus /ˈtɒfəs/ noun a deposit of solid crystals in the skin or in the joints, especially in someone with gout (NOTE: The plural is tophi.)
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vowels

Tourette syndrome

body

toxicology

toxico-

of poisonous or harmful material in a substance

toxic

in the urine

/vertstrokesuperior

nsi

toxaemia of pregnancy

poisonous substances in the blood

toxaemia

tight bandage wrapped round a limb to constrict

tourniquet

disorders. Also called "Gilles de la Tourette Syndrome"
torts, tic, use of foul language and respiratory

condition which includes involuntary move-
iments, tics, use of foul language and respiratory

tics, use of foul language and respiratory

tic, use of foul language and respiratory

tics, use of foul language and respiratory

Tourette's syndrome

Tu:t'ets, syndrom/,

Tourette syndrome

Tu:t'ets, syndrom/ noun a condition which includes involuntary move-
mants, tics, use of foul language and respiratory
disorders. Also called "Gilles de la Tourette Syn-
drome"


tourniquet

/noun an instrument or tight bandage wrapped round a limb to constrict

an artery, so reducing the flow of blood and stop-
ping bleeding from a wound

tox-

/toxks/ prefix same as toxo- (used before vowels)
toxaemia

/toxks'inim/ noun the presence of poisonous substances in the blood

toxaemia of pregnancy

/toxks'inim av 'pregnansi/ noun a condition which can affect

women towards the end of pregnancy, in which

develop high blood pressure and pass protein in the urine

toxic

/toxks/ adjective poisonous

toxicity

/tox'sisit/ noun 1, the degree to which a substance is poisonous or harmful 2, the amount of poisonous or harmful material in a substance

toxicoo-/toxks'ksos/ prefix referring to poison

toxicologist

/toxks'ksol'jist/ noun a scientist who specialises in the study of poisons

toxicology

/toxks'ksol'jist/ noun the scientific study of poisons and their effects on the human body

toxicosis

/toxks'ko'sis/ noun poisoning
toxic shock syndrome

/toxks'ks/ 'toxks'shsan/ a serious condition caused by a

staphylococcus infection of the skin or soft tissue. Its symptoms include vomiting, high fever, faint-
ness, muscle aches, a rash and confusion. Abbrevi-
tation TSS

toxin

/toxksin/ noun a poisonous substance pro-
duced in the body by microorganisms, and which, if injected into an animal, stimulates the produc-
tion of antitoxins

toxo-

/toxks/ prefix referring to poison
toxocariasis

/toxks'ksarai'asis/ noun the infestation of the intestine with worms from a dog or cat. Also called visceral larva migrans

toxoid

/toxksid/ noun a toxin which has been treated and is no longer poisonous, but which can still provoke the formation of antibodies. Toxoids are used as vaccines, and are injected into a patient to give immunity against specific diseases.
toxoplasmosis

/toxks'plaz'mousis/ noun a disease caused by the parasite Toxoplasma which is carried by animals. Toxoplasmosis can cause encephalitis or hydrocephalus and can be fatal.

TPA abbreviation tissue plasminogen activator

trabecula

/trb'bekjula/ thin strip of stiff
tissue which divides an organ or bone tissue into sections (NOTE: The plural is "trabeculae")

trabeculectomy

/trb,bek'julektom/ noun a surgical operation to treat glaucoma by cutting a channel through trabeculae to link with Sch-

lenm's canal

trace

/tris/ noun a very small amount (NOTE: There are traces of the drug in the blood sample. (NOTE: The doctor found traces of alcohol in the patient’s urine.)

verb to find someone or something that you are looking for

trace element

/tris el'ment/ noun a sub-

stance which is essential to the human body, but only in very small quantities

COMMENT: The trace elements are cobalt, chromium, copper, magnesium, manganese, molybdenum, selenium and zinc.

tracer

/tris/ noun a substance, often a radio-
active one, injected into a substance in the body, so that doctors can follow its passage round the body

trache-/trek'ki/ prefix same as tracheo- (NOTE: used before vowels)

trachea

/trr'kira/ noun the main air passage which runs from the larynx to the lungs, where it divides into the two main bronchi. It is about 10 cm long, and is formed of rings of cartilage and connective tissue. See illustration at LUNGS in Supplement. Also called windpipe

tracheal

/trr'kira/ adjective referring to the tra-

chea

tracheal tugging

/trr'kira/ 'tjug/ noun the feeling that something is pulling on the windpipe
when the person breathes in, a symptom of aneurysm

tracheitis /trækiˈætɪs/ noun inflammation of the trachea due to an infection

tracheolarynghitis /trækiˈlæriŋgɪtɪs/ noun a surgical operation to repair tears in the cervix of the uterus

tracheo-, trache/o- prefix relating to the trachea

tracheobronchitis /trækiˈəbrɒŋkɪtɪs/ noun inflammation of both the trachea and the bronchi

tracheostomy /trækiˈɒstəmi/ tracheotomy /trækiˈɒtəmi/ noun a surgical operation to make a hole through the windpipe, so as to allow air to get to the lungs in cases where the trachea is blocked, as in pneumonia, poliomyelitis or diphtheria

tract /trækt/ noun a series of organs or tubes which allow something to pass from one part of the body to another

traction /trækʃən/ noun a procedure that consists of using a pulling force to straighten a broken or deformed limb ○ The patient was in traction for two weeks.

tragus /træɡəs/ noun a piece of cartilage in the outer ear which projects forward over the entrance to the auditory canal

trait /treɪt/ noun 1. a typical characteristic of someone 2. a genetically controlled characteristic

trance /træns/ noun a condition in which a person is in a dream, but not asleep, and seems not to be aware of what is happening around him or her ○ a hypnotic trance

tranexamic acid /trænˌɛksɪmək/ noun a drug used to control severe bleeding

tranniquiliser /trænˈkwɪlɪzarəs/, tranquillizer, tranquilling drug /trænˈkwɪlɪzarɪŋ druːg/ noun an antipsychotic, anxiolytic or hypnotic drug which relieves someone’s anxiety and calms him or her down (informal) ○ She’s taking tranquillisers to calm her nerves. ○ He’s been on tranquillisers ever since he started his new job.

trans-, trans- prefix through or across

transaminase /trænˈsæmənɪz/ noun an enzyme involved in the transamination of amino acids

transcendental /trænsˌsɛndəntl/ meditation /,medɪˈteɪʃən/ noun a type of meditation in which the same words or sounds are repeated silently

transcription /trænˈskrɪpʃən/ noun 1. the act of copying something written, or of putting something spoken into written form 2. the first step in carrying out genetic instructions in living cells, in which the genetic code is transferred from DNA to molecules of messenger RNA, which then direct protein manufacture

transcutaneous /trænˈskjuːtənəs/ electrical nerve stimulation /ˌstɪməˈlætʃən/ noun a method of applying electrical current to the surface of the skin to stimulate the motor nerves of a muscle

transdermal /ˌtrænsdəˈməl/ adjective referring to a drug which is released through the skin

transference /trænzfərəns/ noun 1. (in psychiatry) a condition in which someone transfers to the psychoanalyst the characteristics belonging to a strong character from his or her past such as a parent, and reacts as if the analyst were that person

transferrin /ˌtrænzfərˈin/ noun a substance found in the blood, which carries iron in the bloodstream. Also called siderophilin

transfer RNA /ˌtrænsfər ˈeər en ˈkʌr noun RNA which attaches amino acids to protein chains being made at ribosomes

transfusion /ˌtrænzʃən noun the procedure of transferring blood or saline fluids from a container into someone’s bloodstream

transient /ˌtrænzɪənt/ adjective not lasting long

transient ischaemic attack /ˌtrænzɪənt ɪˈʃeɪmɪk əˈtæk noun a mild stroke caused by a brief stoppage of blood supply to the brain.

translational /ˌtrænsəˈlæʃən/ noun an examination of an organ by shining a bright light through it

transitional epithelium /ˌtrænsərˈjʊələnl/ noun a type of epithelium found in the urethra

transplant /ˌtrænspɔlənt/ noun 1. the act of putting something written or spoken in one language into words of a different language 2. the process by which information in messenger RNA controls the sequence of amino acids assembled by a ribosome during protein synthesis

translocation /ˌtrænsləˈkʃən noun the movement of part of a chromosome to another part of the same chromosome or to a different chromosome pair, leading to genetic disorders

translucent /ˌtrænsˈluːsnt/ adjective allowing light to pass through, but not enough to allow objects on the other side to be clearly distinguished

transmission-based precautions /ˌtrænsˌmɪʃən bɪˈprɛkərənsi/ plural noun the most recent set of guidelines for health care workers on dealing with highly infectious diseases, to be used in addition to the Standard Precautions. There are three categories: Airborne Precautions, Droplet Precautions and Contact Precautions, sometimes used in combination for diseases which can be transmitted in various ways.

transplacental /ˌtrænzpləˈsɛntəl/ adjective through the placenta

transplant /ˌtrænspɔlənt/ noun 1. a procedure which involves taking an organ such as the heart
transplantation 312

or kidney, or tissue such as skin, and grafting it
into someone to replace an organ or tissue which
is diseased or not functioning properly. She had
a heart-lung transplant. 2. the organ or tissue
which is grafted. The kidney transplant was
rejected. 3. verb, transplantes to graft an organ
or tissue onto or into someone to replace an organ
or tissue which is diseased or not functioning cor-
rectly.

transplantation /transˈplæntə/ noun the act of transplanting something.

transposition /transˈpɔzəʃən/ noun a congenital condition where the aorta and pulmonary
artery are placed on the opposite side of the body
to their usual position.

transspyroric plane /trasˈpɜrərɪk/ noun a plane at right angles to the sagittal plane,
passing midway between the suprarenal notch
and the symphysis pubis. See illustration at ANA-
TOMICAL TERMS in Supplement.

transsexual /trænˈsɛksjuəl/ adjective feeling uncomfortable with the birth gender. noun a person, especially a man, who feels uncomforta-
tive with their birth gender.

transsexualism /trænˈsɛksjuəlizəm/ noun the condition in which a person, especially a man, feels uncomfortable with their birth gender.

transspycal plane /trasˈpɜrəkəl/ noun an imaginary horizontal line drawn across the lower abdomen at the level of the projec-
ting parts of the iliac bones. See illustration at ANA-
TOMICAL TERMS in Supplement. Also called intertubercular plane.

transudate /transˈjuədeit/ noun a fluid which passes through the pores of a membrane. It con-
tains less protein or solid material than an exu-
date.

transudation /transˈjuədeiʃən/ noun the process of passing a fluid from the body’s cells
through the pores of a membrane.

transuretero-ureterostomy /transˌjuərəˈtɛrəˌrʊərɛˈtəstəm/ noun a surgical operation in which both ureters are brought to the same side
in the abdomen, because one is dam-
aged or obstructed.

transurethral /transˈjuərəˈθɜrl/ adjective through the urethra.

transurethral prostatectomy /transˌjuərəˈθɜrl prəˈstɑrtəkˈtəmɪ/ noun a surgical operation to remove the prostate
gland, where the operation is carried out through
the urethra. Abbreviation TUR. Also called
urethrotomy.

transurethral resection /transˌjuərəˈθɜrl rɪˈsɛkʃən/ noun a surgical operation to remove the prostate
gland, where the operation is carried out through
the urethra. Abbreviation TUR. Also called
urethrotomy.

transverse /trænˈzɜrvəs/ adjective across or through the vagina.

transverse arch /trænˈzɜrvəs ərtʃ/ noun same as metatarsal arch.

transverse colon /trænˈzɜrvəs kələn/ noun the second section of the colon which crosses the body below the stomach. See illustration at DIGESTIVE SYSTEM in Supplement.

transverse fracture /trænˈzɜrvəs fræktrə/ noun a fracture where the bone is broken straight across.

transverse lie /trænˈzɜrvəs ˈlaɪ/ noun the position of a fetus across the body of the mother.

transverse plane /trænˈzɜrvəs ˈplɛn/ noun a plane at right angles to the sagittal plane, running horizontally across the body. See illustration at ANATOMIC TERMS in Supplement.

transverse presentation /trænˈzɜrvəs prɛzˌəsentəˈʃən/ noun a position of the baby in the uterus, where the baby’s side will appear
first, usually requiring urgent manipulation or caesarean section to prevent complications.

transverse process /trænˈzɜrvəs prəˈses/ noun the part of a vertebra which protrudes at the side.

transvesical prostatectomy /trænˈvɛskəl prəˈstɑrtəkˈtəmɪ/ noun an operation to remove the prostate gland, carried out through
the bladder.

transvestism /trænˈvɛstɪzəm/ noun the condition of liking to dress and behave as a member of the opposite sex.

transvestite /trænˈvɛstɪt/ noun a person who dresses and behaves as a member of the opposite sex.

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TRH abbreviation thyrotropin-releasing hormone
triacyl noun the system in which a doctor or nurse sees patients briefly in order to decide who should be treated first

trial /traɪəl/ noun a process of testing something such as a drug or treatment to see how effective it is, especially before allowing it to be used generally ○ clinical trials ○ a six-month trial period ○ We’re supplying it on a trial basis. ■ verb to test something as part of a trial

triamcinolone /ˌtraɪəmˈsɪnələʊn/ noun a synthetic corticosteroid drug used in the treatment of skin, mouth and joint inflammations

triangular bandage /ˌtrɪənɡjələr/ noun a bandage made of a triangle of cloth, used to make a sling for the arm

Trendelenburg sign /trɛnˈdɛlənər/ noun a symptom of congenital dislocation of the hip, where the person’s pelvis is lower on the opposite side to the dislocation

Trendelenburg’s operation /ˈtrɛnədlənɜːbɜːk/ noun an operation to tie a saphenous vein in the groin before removing varicose veins [After Friedrich Trendelenburg (1844–1924), German surgeon.]

Trendelenburg’s position /ˈtrɛnədlənɜːbɜːk/ noun a position in which someone lies on a sloping bed, with the head lower than the feet, and the knees bent. It is used in surgical operations to the pelvis and for people who have shock.

Trendelenburg’s sign /ˈtrɛnədlənɜːbɜːk/ noun a symptom of congenital dislocation of the hip, where the person’s pelvis is lower on the opposite side to the dislocation

trephine /triːfɪn/ noun a surgical instrument for making a round hole in the skull or for removing a round piece of tissue

trichiasis /trɪkɪəˈsɪs/ noun a painful condition in which the eyelashes grow in towards the eye and scratch the eyeball

trichomoniasis /trɪkəˌmənəˈeɪʃəs, trɪkəˈmənəsɪs/ noun a disease caused by infestation of the intestine by larvae of roundworms or nematodes, which pass round the body in the bloodstream and settle in muscles

trichomaniac /trɪkəˌməneɪˈæk/ noun referring to hair

trichomy /trɪkəˈməʊmi/ noun the study of hair and the diseases which affect it

Trichomonas /trɪkəˈmənas/ noun a species of long thin parasite which infests the intestines

trichomoniasis /trɪkəˌmənəˈeɪʃəs, trɪkəˈmənəsɪs/ noun infestation of the intestine or vagina with Trichomonas

trichophytosis /trɪkəˌfɪtəˈsɪs/ noun an infection caused by Trichophyton

trichosis /trɪkəˈsɪs/ noun any unusual condition of the hair

trichomatosis /trɪkəˈməmətəsɪs/ noun vision which allows the difference between the three primary colours to be seen. Compare dichromatism, monochromatism

tricuspid /trɪkʌspɪd/ noun something which has three cusps, e.g. a tooth or leaf ■ adjective 1. having three cusps or points 2. referring to a tricuspid valve or tooth

tricuspide valve /trɪkʌspɪd vɛlv/ noun an inlet valve with three cusps between the right atrium and the right ventricle in the heart. See illustration at heart in Supplement

tricyclic antidepressant /trɪsɪkˈlɪk/ noun a drug used to treat depression and panic disorder, e.g. amitriptyline and nortriptyline
tridactyly /ˈtraɪdæktɪli/ noun the condition of having only three fingers or toes
trifocal lenses /ˈtraɪfəʊk(ə)lɪnz/ trifocals /ˈtraɪfəʊk(ə)ls/ plural noun spectacles which have three lenses combined in one piece of glass to give clear vision over different distances.

trigeminal /ˈtraɪdʒəmɪn(ə)l/ adjective in three parts
trigeminal nerve /ˈtraɪdʒəmɪn(ə)nl nɜːr/ noun the fifth cranial nerve, formed of the ophthalmic nerve, the maxillary nerve and the mandibular nerve, which controls the sensory nerves in the forehead, face and chin, and the muscles in the jaw

trigeminal neuralgia /ˈtraɪ.dʒəmɪn(ə)nl njuː ˈreɪdʒɪəlɪdʒɪə/ noun a disorder of the trigeminal nerve, which sends intense pains shooting across the face. Also called tic douloureux

trigeminy /ˈtraɪdʒəmɪnɪ/ noun an irregular heartbeat, where a regular beat is followed by two ectopic beats

trigger finger /ˈtraɪɡəˌfɪŋər/ noun a condition in which a finger can bend but is difficult to straighten, probably because of a nodule on the flexor tendon

triglyceride /ˈtraɪɡlɪsərɪd/ noun a substance such as fat which contains three fatty acids

trigonometer /traɪɡəˈnɒmɪtə/ noun an instrument or pointed rod which slides inside a cannula to make a hole in tissue to drain off fluid

trichoderma /ˈtraɪkɒdərma/ noun a branch of medicine which deals with tropical diseases which is found in tropical countries, e.g. malaria, dengue or Lassa fever

disease which is found in tropical countries, e.g. malaria, dengue or Lassa fever

trichophytosis /traɪkəˈfɪtəsɪs/ noun a contagious skin disorder which can cause a ring to turn towards something which influences

trihexyphenidyl /ˌtraɪ.hek.ˌsaɪˈfen.dɪl/ noun a drug used in the treatment of malaria

triple marker test /ˈtraɪp(ə)l ˈmærkə tɛst/ noun a blood test performed on pregnant women which can detect Down’s syndrome in a fetus by analysing the relative levels of substances produced by the mother’s placenta and the fetus itself

tripli
triplet /ˈtraɪplɪt/ noun one of three babies born to a mother at the same time

triple vaccine /ˈtraɪp(ə)l ˈvækʃən/ noun a vaccine which induces protection against three diseases e.g. diphtheria, tetanus and whooping cough

triquetrum /ˈtrɪkweɪtrəm/ triquetal /ˈtrɪkweɪtəl/ triquetral bone /ˈtrɪkweɪtrəl/ bone one of the eight small carpal bones in the wrist. See illustration at Wrist in Supplement

trismus /traɪz̩məs/ noun a spasm in the lower jaw, which makes it difficult to open the mouth, a symptom of tetanus

trisomy /traɪsəˈmiː/ noun a condition in which someone has three chromosomes instead of a pair

trisomy 21 /traɪsəˈmiː, twɛntɪ ˈwæn/ noun same as Down’s syndrome

trocar /ˈtraʊkər/ noun a surgical instrument or pointed rod which slides inside a cannula to make a hole in tissue to drain off fluid

trochanter /ˈtrɔkəntər/ noun two bony lumps on either side of the top end of the femur where muscles are attached

trochea /ˈtraʊkliə/ noun any part of the body shaped like a pulley, especially part of the lower end of the humerus, which articulates with the ulna, or a curved bone in the frontal bone through which one of the eye muscles passes (NOTE: The plural is trocheae.)

trochee /ˈtroʊklɪə/ adjective referring to a ring in a bone

troclear nerve /ˈtraʊklɪər nɜːr/ noun the fourth cranial nerve which controls the muscles of the eyeball

trochoid joint /ˈtraʊkɔɪd ʃɔnt/ noun a joint where a bone can rotate freely about a central axis as in the neck, where the atlas articulates with the axis. Also called pivot joint

troph- /traʊf-/ prefix same as tropho- (used before vowels)

trophic /traʊfɪk/ adjective relating to food and nutrition

trophic ulcer /traʊfɪk ˈəlsə/ noun an ulcer caused by lack of blood, e.g. a bedsore

trophic /traʊfɪk/ adjective located in or coming from areas around the equator where the climate is generally very hot and humid

tropical medicine /traʊpəˈmiːdʒɪn/ noun a branch of medicine which deals with tropical diseases

tropical ulcer /traʊpəˈmiːlər/ noun a large area of infection which forms around a wound,
the most common form of ectopic pregnancy, in
tubal pregnancy
blocked, either as a result of disease or surgery
a sterilisation procedure
TSS
TSH
tsetse fly
amino acid
tryptophan
secreted by the pancreas into the duodenum
trypsinogen
trypsin
sickness and other serious illnesses.
trumpet
/tramp/ noun a fortek of leaves or shells that can be
brought together to make sounds as air passes
between them
trunk
/trʌŋk/ noun same as torso
true vocal cords
/trju:vɔl/ noun the cords in the larynx which can be
brought together to make sounds as air passes
between them
trust status
/trʌstr/ noun the position of a hospital which is a self-governing trust
trypanosome
/trɪpænʌs/ noun a microscopic organism which lives as a parasite in human blood. It is transmitted by the bite of
insects such as the tsetse fly and causes sleeping sickness and other serious illnesses.
trypsin
/trɪpsɪn/ noun an enzyme converted from trypsinogen by the duodenum and secreted into the digestive system where it absorbs protein
trypsinogen
/trɪpˈsɪnəɡən/ noun an enzyme secreted by the pancreas into the duodenum
tryptophan
/trɪpˈtɒfən/ noun an essential amino acid
tsetse fly
/tʃɛtsi/ noun an African insect which passes trypanosomes into the human bloodstream, causing sleeping sickness
TSH abbreviation thyroid-stimulating hormone
TSS abbreviation toxic shock syndrome
tubal
/tjuːb(ə)l/ adjective referring to a tube
tubal ligation
/tjuːb(ə)lədʒ/ noun a surgical operation to tie up the Fallopian tubes as a sterilisation procedure
tubal occlusion
/tjuːb(ə)l əkˈkluːʒən/ noun a condition in which the Fallopian tubes are blocked, either as a result of disease or surgery
regnancy
/tjuːb(ə)l ˈpreɡnənsi/ noun the most common form of ectopic pregnancy, in which the fetus develops in a Fallopian tube instead of the uterus
tube
/tjuːb/ noun 1. a long hollow passage in the body 2. a soft flexible pipe for carrying liquid or gas 3. a soft plastic or metal pipe, sealed at one end and with a lid at the other, used to dispense a paste or gel
tube feeding
/tjuːb ˈfiːdɪŋ/ noun the process of giving someone nutrients through a tube directly into their stomach or small intestine
tuber
/tjuːbər/ noun a swollen or raised area
tubercle
/tjuːbərk(ə)l/ noun 1. a small bony projection, e.g. on a rib 2. a small infected lump characteristic of tuberculosis, where tissue is destroyed and pus forms
tubercular
/tjuːbərˈkjuːlər/ adjective causing or referring to tuberculosis
tuberculin
/tjuːbərˈkjuːlɪn/ noun a substance which is derived from the culture of the tuberculosis bacillus and is used to test people for the presence of tuberculosis
tuberculin test
/tjuːbərˈkjuːlɪn ˈtest/ noun a test to see if someone has tuberculosis, in which someone is exposed to tuberculin and the reaction of the skin is noted
tuberculosis
/tjuːbərˈkjuːlɪsəs/ noun an infectious disease caused by the tuberculosis bacillus, where infected lumps form in the tissue. Abbreviation TB

found especially in tropical countries. Also called
Naga sore
trots
/troʊts/ □ the trots an attack of diarrhoea (informal)
trouble
/trʌbl/ noun a disorder or condition (informal) □ treatment for back trouble □ She has kidney trouble.

Trousseau’s sign
/trʌsˈsuːz/ sain/ noun a spasm in the muscles in the forearm when a tourniquet is applied to the upper arm, which causes the index and middle fingers to extend. It is a sign of lateral trunk-nervy, showing that the blood contains too little calcium. [After Armand Trousseau (1801–67), French physician.]
true vocal cords
/trjuː vɔl/ noun the cords in the larynx which can be brought together to make sounds as air passes between them

tumescence
/tjuːməsəns/ noun a swelling of the skin is noted

of the skin is noted

of the skin is noted

of the skin is noted

of the skin is noted

of the skin is noted

of the skin is noted

of the skin is noted

of the skin is noted

of the skin is noted
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tumid /ˈtjuːmɪd/ adjective swollen
tummy /ˈtʌmi/ noun stomach or abdomen (informal)
tummy ache /ˈtʌmi ək/ noun stomach pain (informal)
tumoral /ˈtjuːmərəl/, tumorous /ˈtjuːmərəs/ adjective referring to a tumour
tumour /ˈtjuːmər/ noun an unusual swelling or growth of new cells  ○ The X-ray showed a tumour in the breast.  ○ a brain tumour. (NOTE: For other terms referring to tumours, see words beginning with onco-)
tunica /ˈtuːnɪkə/ noun a layer of tissue which covers an organ
tunica albuginea testis /ˌtjuːnɪkə əlˈbjuːdʒiə ˈtɛstɪs/ noun a white fibrous membrane covering the testes and the ovaries

Turner’s syndrome /ˈtʊnərɪz ˈsɪndrəʊm/ noun a congenital condition in females, caused by the absence of one of the pair of X chromosomes, in which sexual development is retarded and no ovaries develop [Described 1938. After Henry Hubert Turner (1892–1970), US endocrinologist, Clinical professor of Medicine, Oklahoma University, USA.]
turriccephaly /təˈrɪsɛfəli/ same as oxycephaly
tussis /ˈtʌsɪs/ noun coughing
twenty-twenty vision /ˈtwɛntiˌtwɛnti ˈvɪʒən/ noun perfect vision
twilight sleep /ˈtwilaːst, ˈslɪp/ noun a type of anaesthetic sleep, in which the patient is semi-conscious but cannot feel any pain
twilight state /ˈtwilaːst ˈstɛt/ noun a condition of epileptics and alcoholics in which the person can do some automatic actions, but is not conscious of what he or she is doing

COMEENT: Twilight state is induced at childbirth, by introducing anaesthetics into the rectum.
twin /ˈtwɪn/ noun one of two babies born to a mother at the same time
tylosis /ˈtaɪləʊsɪs/ noun the development of a callus
tympan- /ˈtaɪmpən-/ prefix same as tympano-

(tympano-) NOTE: used before vowels

tympanectomy /ˈtaɪmpəˌɛktəmɪ/ noun a surgical operation to remove the tympanic membrane
tympanic /ˈtaɪmpənɪk/ adjective referring to the eardrum
tympanic membrane /ˈtaɪmpənɪk ˈmembraɪn/ noun the membrane at the inner end of the external auditory meatus leading from the outer ear, which vibrates with sound and passes the vibrations on to the ossicles in the middle ear. Also called tympanum, eardrum. See illustration at EAR in Supplement
tympanites /ˈtaɪmpəˈnɪtɪs/ noun an expansion of the stomach with gas. Also called meteorism
tympanitis /ˈtaɪmpəˌnɪtɪs/ noun same as otitis media
tympano- /ˈtaɪmpənəʊ-/ prefix referring to the eardrum
tympanoplasty /ˈtaɪmpənəʊˈpleɪstɪ/ noun same as myringoplasty
tympanosclerosis /ˈtaɪmpənəʊskləʊrəsɪs/ noun irreversible damage to the tympanic membrane and middle ear, starting with the replacement of tissues or fibrin by collagen and hyalum. Then calcification occurs, leading to deafness.
tympanotomacy /ˈtaɪmpəˌtəʊməkə/ noun same as myringotomy

(Relevant terms from the text: conchae, shapes like a spiral or an inverted cone.
type B behaviour  

Type I diabetes mellitus  

Type II diabetes mellitus  

typhoid  

typhus  

tyramine  

tyrosine
ultrasonic waves /aˌlʌstrəˈsɔŋwɔz/ plural noun same as ultrasound

echography /əˌkʰəgrəfi/ noun the procedure of passing ultrasound waves through the body and recording echoes which show details of internal organs. Also called echography.

ultrasound /əˈʌstrəʊ dun/ noun very high frequency sound waves which can be reflected off internal body parts or off a fetus in the womb to create images for medical examination (NOTE: No plural for ultrasound.)

ultrasound marker /əˌʌstrəʊ dəˈmeɪkər/ noun an unusual physical characteristic seen in an ultrasound examination of a fetus which is an indication of the existence of a genetic or developmental disorder

ultrasound probe /əˌʌstrəʊ dun prəub/ noun same as ultrasonic probe

ultrasound scanning /əˌʌstrəʊ dun skænɪŋ/ noun a method of gathering information about the body by taking images using high frequency sound waves

ultrasound treatment /əˌʌstrəʊ dun ˈtɹɪtmənt/ noun the treatment of soft tissue inflammation using ultrasound waves

ultraviolet /ˌʌltrəˈvɪrəlt/ adjective referring to the short invisible rays beyond the violet end of the spectrum, which form the element in sunlight which tans the skin, helps the skin produce Vitamin D and kills bacteria. Abbreviation UV

ultraviolet lamp /ˌʌltrəˈvɪrəlt ləmp/ noun a lamp which gives off ultraviolet rays

ultraviolet radiation /ˌʌltrəˈvɪrəlt riˈdeɪʃən/ noun the invisible rays of ultraviolet light. Abbreviation UVR

umbilical /ʌmˈbɪlɪkl/ adjective referring to the navel

umbilical cord /ʌmˈbɪlɪkl kɔrd/ noun a cord containing two arteries and one vein which links the fetus inside the uterus to the placenta
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>umbilical hernia</td>
<td>a hernia which bulges at the navel, usually in young children. Also called exomphalos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>umbilicated</td>
<td>/əmˈbɪlkətɪd/ adjective with a small depression, like a navel, in the centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>umbilicus</td>
<td>/əmˈbɪlkəs/ noun same as navel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>umbo</td>
<td>/əmˈboʊ/ noun a projecting part in the middle of the outer side of the ear drum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>uninomial bone</td>
<td>/aɪˈnɪməniəl/ noun one of the eight small carpal bones in the wrist, shaped like a hook. Also called hamate bone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>uncinate</td>
<td>/ənˈsɪnt/ adjective shaped like a hook</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unconditioned response</td>
<td>/ˌʌŋkənˈdɪʃənd/ noun a response to a stimulus which occurs automatically, by instinct, and has not been learned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unconscious</td>
<td>/ənˈkənˈsərəs/ adjective not aware of what is happening; She was unconscious for two days after the accident</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>undermines</td>
<td>/ʌˌmərˌdʒʌm/ noun the state of being unconscious, e.g., as a result of lack of oxygen or from some other external cause such as a blow on the head</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>undecenoic acid</td>
<td>/ənˈdiːsəˈnɔɪk/ noun (chemistry) a substance made from castor bean oil, used in the treatment of fungal infections such as thrush</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unindine</td>
<td>/ənˈaɪndɪn/ noun a glass container for a solution to bathe the eyes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>undulant fever</td>
<td>/ənˈdʒulənt/ as in 'festival' same as brucellosis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ungual</td>
<td>/ˈʌŋgwɔl/ adjective referring to the fingernails or toenails</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unguentum</td>
<td>/ˌʌŋgwəntəm/ noun (medicine) an ointment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unguis</td>
<td>/ˈʌŋgwɪs/ noun same as nail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unii-</td>
<td>/əˈnii-/ noun prefix one</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unicellular</td>
<td>/ˌʌniˈsɛlələr/ adjective referring to an organism formed of one cell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unigravida</td>
<td>/ˌʌnɪˈɡrævɪdə/ noun same as primigravida</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unilateral</td>
<td>/ˌʌnɪˈlətəral/ adjective affecting one side of the body only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unilateral oophorectomy</td>
<td>/ˌʌnɪˈlətərəl ˌoʊθˌfoʊrəˈkɛtəm/ noun the surgical removal of one ovary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>union</td>
<td>/ˈjuːznɪn/ noun the joining together of two parts of a fractured bone. Opposite non-union, munion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>uniovular</td>
<td>/ˌjuːnɪˈvjuːlər/ noun consisting of, or coming from, one ovum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>uniovular twins</td>
<td>/ˌjuːnɪˈvjuːlər ˈtwɪnz/ plural noun same as identical twins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unipara</td>
<td>/juːˈnɪpərə/ noun same as primipara</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unipolar neurone</td>
<td>/ˈjuːniˈpɔlər ˈnjʊərən/ noun a neurone with a single process. Compare multipolar neurone, bipolar neurone.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unit</td>
<td>/ˈjuːznɪ/ noun 1. a single part of a larger whole 2. a part of a hospital that has a specialised function 3. a named and agreed standard amount used for measuring something 4. A gram is an SI unit of weight, 4. a quantity of a drug, enzyme, hormone or of blood, taken as a standard for measurement and producing a given effect 5. three units of blood 6. a unit of insulin 7. a machine or device 8. a waste-disposal unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom Central Council for Nursing, Midwifery, and Health Visiting</td>
<td>/ˌjuːniˈkɔmpənˌsəl ˌsentəl ˌkeɪənˈvɜrl/ noun in psychology which regulated nurses, midwives, and health visitors. The UKCC and the four National Boards have now been replaced by the Nursing and Midwifery Council. Abbreviation UKCC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>universal donor</td>
<td>/juːˈnɜrvəsəl dəˈnɔr/ noun a person with blood group O, whose blood may be given to anyone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Universal Precautions</td>
<td>/juːˈnɜrvəsəl prıˈkəns/ abbreviation UP. § Standard Precautions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>universal recipient</td>
<td>/ˌjuːnɪˈvɜrsəl ˈrɪtsˌrɪntɛnt/ noun a person with blood group A who can receive blood from all the other blood groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unsaturated fat</td>
<td>/ˌʌnˌsætərət/ noun fat which does not have a large amount of hydrogen, and so can be broken down more easily</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unstable angina</td>
<td>/ˌʌnˈstæbl ˈæŋjən/ noun which has suddenly become worse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unstriated muscle</td>
<td>/ˌʌnstrıətəd ˌməsklu/ noun same as smooth muscle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>upper respiratory infection</td>
<td>/ˈʌpɚ ˈrespirətəri ˈinfekʃən/ noun an infection in the upper part of the respiratory system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>upPP</td>
<td>abbreviation urology-plastic surgery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>upset stomach</td>
<td>/ˈʌp stˈəmək/ noun same as stomach upset</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>uracil</td>
<td>/ˈjuːrəsəl/ noun a pyrimidine base, one of the four bases in RNA in which it pairs with thymine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>uraemia</td>
<td>/ˈjuːrəˈmiə/ noun a disorder caused by kidney failure, where urea is retained in the blood, and the person develops nausea, convulsions and in severe cases goes into a coma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>uraeemic</td>
<td>/ˌjuːrəˈmiək/ adjective referring to uraemia, or having uraemia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>uran-</td>
<td>/ˈjuːrən-/ noun prefix referring to the palate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
urate //juˈrʌt/ noun a salt of uric acid found in urine
urateuria //juːˈrʌtjʊəriə/ noun the presence of excessive amounts of urates in the urine, e.g. in gout
urea //juˈreɪə/ noun a substance produced in the liver from excess amino acids, and excreted by the kidneys into the urine
uresis //juːˈrɪsɪs/ noun the act of passing urine
ureter //juˈrɛtər/ noun one of the two tubes which take urine from the kidneys to the urinary bladder. See illustration at KIDNEY in Supplement. Also called urinary duct
ureteral //juːrˈɛtərəl/ adjective referring to the ureters
ureterectomy //juːrˈɛtərɛktəmi/ noun the surgical removal of a ureter
ureteric //juːrˈɛtərik/ adjective same as ureteral
ureteric calculus //juːrˈɛtərɪk kɔlˈækjʊləs/ noun a kidney stone in the ureter
ureteric catheter //juːrˈɛtərik kæθɪtər/ noun a catheter passed through the ureter to the kidney, to inject an opaque solution into the kidney before taking an X-ray
ureteritis //juːrˈɛtərɪtɪs/ noun inflammation of a ureter
ureterorectomy //juːrˌɛtərəˈrekətəmi/ adjective referring to the ureter
ureterocoele //juːrˌɛtərəˈkoʊəl/ noun swelling in a ureter caused by narrowing of the opening where the ureter enters the bladder
ureterocolostomy //juːrˌɛtərəkəˈlɒstəmi/ noun a surgical operation to implant the ureter into the sigmoid colon, so as to bypass the bladder
ureteronecrotomy //juːrˌɛtərəˈnɛkroʊtəmi/ noun an artificially formed passage between the ureter and the intestine
ureterolith //juːrˌɛtərəˈlɒθɪt/ noun a stone in a ureter
ureterolithotomy //juːrˌɛtərəˈlɒθɪtəmi/ noun the surgical removal of a stone from the ureter
ureterolysis //juːrˌɛtərəˈloʊsɪs/ noun a surgical operation to free one or both ureters from adhesions or surrounding tissue
ureteroneocystotomy //juːrˌɛtərəˈnaʊsɪstətəmɪ/ noun a surgical operation to transplant a ureter to a different location in the bladder
ureteronephrectomy //juːrˌɛtərəˈnɛfərɛktəmi/ noun same as nephroureterectomy
ureteroplasty //juːrˌɛtərəˈplɔsɪtərɪs/ noun a surgical operation to repair a ureter
ureteropyelonephritis //juːrˌɛtərəˌpiˈelərənəfɪtɪs/ noun inflammation of the ureter and the pelvis of the kidney to which it is attached
ureteroscope //juːrˌɛtərəˈskɔps/ noun an instrument which is passed into the ureter and up into the kidneys, usually used to locate or remove a stone
ureteroscopy //juːrˌɛtərəˈskɒpɪ/ noun an examination of the ureter with a ureteroscope
ureterosigmoidostomy //juːrˌɛtərəˌsɪgmoʊdəstəmɪ/ noun same as ureterocolostomy
ureterostomy //juːrˌɛtərəˈstəmɪ/ noun a surgical operation to make an artificial opening for the ureter into the abdominal wall, so that urine can be passed directly out of the body
ureterotomy //juːrˌɛtərəˈtəmɪ/ noun a surgical operation to make an incision into the ureter, mainly to remove a stone
ureterovaginal //juːrˌɛtərəˈveɪdʒənəl/ adjective referring to the ureter and the vagina
urethra //juːrθərə/ noun a tube which takes urine from the bladder to be passed out of the body. See illustration at UROGENITAL SYSTEM in Supplement
urethral //juːrθərəl/ adjective referring to the urethra
urethral catheter //juːrθərəl kæθɪtər/ noun a catheter passed up the urethra to allow urine to flow out of the bladder, used to empty the bladder before an abdominal operation. Also called urinary catheter
urethral stricture //juːrθərəl strɪktʃər/ noun a condition in which the urethra is narrowed or blocked by a growth. Also called urethrostasis
urethritis //juːrθərɪˈθɪtɪs/ noun inflammation of the urethra
urethral //juːrθərəl/ adjective referring to the urethra
urethrole /ju′rɪθrəl/ noun a swelling formed in a weak part of the wall of the urethra
urethrogram //ju′rɪθrəˌɡrɑm/ noun an X-ray photograph of the urethra
urethrography /ju′rɪθrəˈɡræfı/ noun X-ray examination of the urethra
urethropasty /ju′rɪθrəˈpæstɪ/ noun a surgical operation to repair a urethra
urethrorrhaphy /ju′rɪθrəˈrɒθəri/ noun a surgical operation to repair a torn urethra
urethrorrhoea /ju′rɪθrəˈrəʊiə/ noun the discharge of fluid from the urethra, usually associated with urethritis
urethroscope /ju′rɪθrəˈskɒp/ noun a surgical instrument, used to examine the interior of a man’s urethra
urethroscope /ju′rɪθrəˈskɒp/ noun an examination of the inside of a man’s urethra with a ureteroscope
urethrostomosis /juərɪˈɛstrəʊməsis/ noun same as urethral stricture
urethrostomy /juərɪˈɛstrəʊməti/ noun a surgical operation to make an opening for a man’s urethra between the scrotum and the anus
urethrostomy /juərɪˈɛstrəʊməti/ noun a surgical operation to open a blocked or narrowed urethra. Also called Wheelhouse’s operation
urge incontinence /ərdʒ ɪnˈkəntɪnəns/ noun a condition in which someone feels a very strong need to urinate and cannot retain their urine
-uria /juərɪə/ suffix 1. a condition of the urine 2. a disease characterised by a condition of the urine
uric acid /juərɪk ˈæsɪd/ noun a chemical compound which is formed from nitrogen in waste products from the body and which also forms crystals in the joints of people who have gout
urin-, -uria/ /juərɪn-/ prefixed as urino- (used before vowel)
urinalysis /juərɪnələˈzaɪs/ noun the analysis of urine, to detect diseases such as diabetes mellitus
urinary /juərɪˈnəri/ adjective referring to urine
urinary bladder /juərɪnərriˈblædə/ noun a sac where the urine collects after passing from the kidneys through the ureters, before being passed out of the body through the urethra. See illustration at kidney, urogenital system (male) in Supplement
urinary catheter /juərɪnərriˈkæðər/ noun same as urethral catheter
urinary duct /juərɪnərriˈdʌkt/ noun same as ureter
urinary incontinence /juərɪnərri ɪnˈkəntɪnəns/ noun the involuntary emission of urine
urinary obstruction /juərɪnərriˈəbstrʌkʃn/ noun a blockage of the urethra, which prevents urine being passed
urinary retention /juərɪnərri ˈrɛtənʃən/ noun the inability to pass urine, usually because the urethra is blocked or because the prostate gland is enlarged. Also called urine retention
urinary system /juərɪnərri ˈsɪstəm/ noun a system of organs and ducts which separate waste liquids from the blood and excrete them as urine, including the kidneys, bladder, ureters and urethra
urinary tract /juərɪnərriˈtræk/ noun the set of tubes down which the urine passes from the kidneys to the bladder and from the bladder out of the body
urinary tract infection /juərɪnərriˈtræk ɪnˌfɛkʃn/ noun a bacterial infection of any part of the urinary system. Symptoms are usually a need to urinate frequently and pain on urination. Abbreviation UTI
urinate /juərɪnɪˈɪteɪt/ verb to pass urine from the body
urination /juərɪnɪˈɛʃən/ noun the passing of urine out of the body. Also called micturation
urine /juərɪn/ noun a yellowish liquid, containing water and waste products, mainly salt and urea, which is excreted by the kidneys and passed out of the body through the ureters, bladder and urethra
urine retention /juərɪnɪˈrɛtənʃən/ noun same as urinary retention
urinious tube /juərɪnjuəˈtjuːbəl/ noun same as renal tube
urino- /juərɪnəʊ-/ prefix referring to urine
urogenital /juərɪˈɡenətəl/ adjective same as urogenital
uroinometer /juərɪnəˈnɒmətər/ noun an instrument which measures the specific gravity of urine
urobilin /juərɪˈbaʊlɪn/ noun a yellow pigment formed when urobilinogen comes into contact with air
urobilinogen /juərɪˈbaɪlɪnəˈdʒenən/ noun a colourless pigment formed when bilirubin is reduced to stercobilinogen in the intestines
urochrome /juərɪˈkraʊm/ noun the pigment which colours the urine yellow
urodynamics /juərɪˈdɑːnəmɪks/ plural noun the active changes which occur during the function of the bladder, urethral sphincter and pelvic floor muscles
urogenital /juərɪˈɡenətəl/ adjective referring to the urinary and genital systems. Also called urogenital
urogenital system /juərɪˈɡenətəl ˈsɪstəm/ noun the whole of the urinary tract and reproductive system
urogram /juərɪˈɡræm/ noun an X-ray picture of the urinary tract, or of a part of it
urography /juərɪˈɡrɑːfi/ noun an X-ray examination of part of the urinary system after injection of radio-opaque dye
urokinase /juərɪˈkʌɪnəs/ noun an enzyme formed in the kidneys, which begins the process of breaking down blood clots
uroolith /juərɪˈləʊθ/ noun a stone in the urinary system
urological /juərɪˈləʊdʒɪkəl/ adjective referring to urology
urologist /juərɪˈlɒdʒɪst/ noun a doctor who specialises in urology
urology /juərɪˈlɒdʒi/ noun the scientific study of the urinary system and its diseases
urostomy /juərɪˈrɑːstəmi/ noun the surgical creation of an artificial urethra
urticaria /ˌɜtəˈkerəriə/ noun an allergic reaction to injections, particular foods or plants where the skin forms irritating reddish patches. Also called hives, nettle rash
usual /juːʒuəl/ adjective expected or typical
uter- /juːtər-/ prefix same as utero- (used before vowels)
uterine /juːtərəm/ adjective referring to the uterus
uterine cavity /juːtərən kəˈvɪtɪ/ noun the inside of the uterus
uterine procidentia /juːtərən prəsɪdəntʃiə/ noun a condition in which part of the uterus has passed through the vagina, usually after childbirth

COMMENT: Uterine procidentia has three stages of severity: in the first the cervix descends into the vagina, in the second the cervix is outside the vagina, but part of the uterus is still inside, and in the third stage, the whole uterus passes outside the vagina.

uterine retroflexion /juːtərən rəˈfleksʃən/ noun a condition in which the uterus bends backwards away from its usual position
uterine retroversion /juːtərən rəˈvɜːʃən/ noun a condition in which the uterus slopes backwards away from its usual position
uterus didelphys /juːtərəs daɪˈdɛlfɪs/ noun same as double uterus

uvula /juːvələ/ adjective referring to the palate, in order to widen the airways and treat the problem of snoring. Abbreviation UPPP
vaccinate /ˈvækəsɪnɪt/ verb to introduce vaccine into a person’s body in order to make the body create its own antibodies, so making the person immune to the disease (NOTE: You vaccinate someone against a disease.)

vaccination /ˈvækəsɪneɪʃən/ noun the action of vaccinating someone

COMMENT: Originally the words vaccination and vaccine applied only to smallpox immunisation, but they are now used for immunisation against any disease. Vaccination is mainly given against cholera, diphtheria, rabies, smallpox, tuberculosis, and typhoid.

vaccine /ˈvækəsɪn/ noun a substance which contains antigens to a disease or a weak form of a disease, used to protect people against it

vacuum /ˈvækjʊəm/ noun a space which is completely empty of all matter, including air

vacuum extraction /ˈvækjʊəm ɪkˈstrækʃən/ noun the procedure of pulling on the head of the baby with a suction instrument to aid birth

vacuum extractor /ˈvækjʊəm ɪkˈstræktər/ noun a surgical instrument formed of a rubber suction cup which is used in vacuum extraction during childbirth

vacuum suction /ˈvækjʊəm ˈvækjʊəm ˌsækˈʃən/ noun a method used to achieve an abortion, after dilatation of the cervix. Also called aspiration

vagal /ˈveɪɡ(ə)l/ adjective referring to the vagus nerve

vagal tone /ˈveɪɡ(ə)l ˈtɒn/ noun the action of the vagus nerve to slow the beat of the sinoatrial node

vagin- /ˈvædʒɪn-/ prefix referring to the vagina

vagina /ˈvædʒɪnə/ noun a passage in a woman’s reproductive tract between the entrance to the uterus, the cervix, and the vulva, able to stretch enough to allow a baby to pass through during childbirth. See illustration at UROGENITAL SYSTEM (FEMALE) in Supplement (NOTE: For other terms referring to the vagina, see words beginning with colp-, colpo-)

vaginal bleeding /ˈvædʒɪnəl ˈblidɪŋ/ noun bleeding from the vagina

vaginal delivery /ˈvædʒɪnəl ˈdɛlɪvəri/ noun the birth of a baby through the mother’s vagina, without surgical intervention

vaginal diaphragm /ˈvædʒɪnəl ˈdaɪəfræɡm/ noun a circular contraceptive device for women, which is inserted into the vagina and placed over the neck of the uterus before sexual intercourse

vaginal discharge /ˈvædʒɪnəl ˈdɪʃərəs/ noun the flow of liquid from the vagina

vaginal douche /ˈvædʒɪnəl ˈdʌʃ/ noun 1. the process of washing out the vagina 2. a device or liquid for washing out the vagina

vaginal examination /ˈvædʒɪnəl ɪˈkɑːmənɪʃən/ noun the act of checking the vagina for signs of disease or growth

vaginal suppository /ˈvædʒɪnəl ˈsʌpərətɔrɪ/ noun a substance which contains a medicine in a form that is absorbed through the vagina

vaginoscopy /ˈvædʒɪnəskəʊpɪ/ noun a surgical operation to graft tissue on to the vagina (NOTE: Colposcopy is used as a diagnostic tool to cut through the vagina tissue which controls the nerves in the stomach, as a treatment for peptic ulcers

vagus /ˈveɪɡəs, ˈvæɡəs/ noun either of the tenth pair of cranial nerves which carry sensory and motor neurons serving the heart, lungs, stomach, and various other organs and control swallowing. Also called pneumogastric nerve

valgus /ˈvælkəs, ˈvælkəs/ noun a surgical operation to cut through the vagus nerve which controls the nerves in the stomach, as a treatment for peptic ulcers

valgus /ˈvælkəs, ˈvælkəs/ adjective turning outwards. § hallux

valgus. Compare varus

validity /ˈvɛldɪtɪ/ noun (of a study) the fact of being based on sound research and methods which exclude alternative explanations of a result

valine /ˈvæliːn/ noun an essential amino acid
Valium /vəˈliːm/ a trade name for diazepam
valvula /vəlˈvulə/ plural noun a flap which opens and closes to allow liquid to pass in one direction only, e.g. in the heart, blood vessels or lymphatic vessels
valvotomy /vəlˈvotəmi/ a surgical operation to cut into a valve to make it open wider
valvula /vəlˈvulə/ noun a small valve (NOTE: The plural is valvulae.)
valvulitis /vəlˈvjuːlɪtɪs/ noun inflammation of a valve in the heart
valvuloplasty /vəlˈvjuːləpləstɪs/ surgery to repair valves in the heart without opening the heart
valvulotomy /vəlˈvjuːlətəmi/ noun same as valvotomy
vancomycin /vænˈkɒməsɪn/ an antibiotic which is effective against some bacteria which are resistant to other antibiotics. Strains of bacteria resistant to vancomycin have now developed.
van den Bergh test /væn denˈbɜːrg ˌtɛst/ a test of blood serum to see if a case of jaundice is caused by an obstruction in the liver or by haemolysis of red blood cells [After A.A. Hijmans van den Bergh (1869–1943), Dutch physician.]
vaporiser /vəˈpɒrəzər/, vaporizer noun a device which warms a liquid to which medicinal oil has been added, so that it provides a vapour which someone can inhale
vapour /ˈvæpər/ noun 1. a substance in the form of a gas 2. steam from a mixture of a liquid and a medicinal oil
vara /ˈvərə/ adjective same as varus
variant CJD /ˈvɜːrənt ˈsɛktəmə/ a disease which was observed first in the 1980s, especially affecting younger people. Abbreviation vCJD
varicectomy /ˈværɪsɛktəmi/ a surgical operation to remove a vein or part of a vein
varicella /ˈværɪsələ/ noun same as chickenpox
varices /ˈværɪsɪz/ plural of varix
varicose /ˈværɪkəs/ adjective 1. affected with or having varicose veins 2. designed for the treatment of varicose veins 3. relating to or producing swelling
varicose eczema /ˈværɪkəs ˈɛkzmə/ noun a condition which develops on the legs, caused by bad circulation. Also called hypostatic eczema
varicose ulcer /ˈværɪkəs ˈʌlsa/ noun an ulcer in the leg as a result of bad circulation and a varicose vein
varicose vein /ˈværɪkəs ˈveɪn/ noun a vein, usually in the legs, which becomes twisted and swollen
varicosity /ˈværɪkəs ˈsɪtəsɪ/ noun (of veins) the condition of being swollen and twisted
varicotomies /ˈværɪkətəməz/ a surgical operation to make a cut into a varicose vein in the leg, especially a swollen vein in the leg (NOTE: The plural is varices.)
varus /ˈvɜːrəs, ˈvɜːrəm/ varum /ˈvɜːrəm/ vara /ˈvərə/ adjective turning inwards. (cf. coxa vara. Compare valgus
vas /ˈvæs/ noun a tube in the body (NOTE: The plural is vas.)
vasea /ˈvæsə/ prefix same as vaso-
vasa efferentia /ˈvæsə ˌɛfərənˈtʃə/ plural noun the group of small tubes which sperm travel down from the testis to the epididymis
vasa vasorum /ˈvæsə ˌvæsərəm/ plural noun tiny blood vessels in the walls of larger blood vessels
vascular /ˈvæsəkjuːlə/ adjective referring to blood vessels
vascularisation /ˈvæsəkjuːləˈzɪʃən/ vascularization noun the development of new blood vessels
vasculitis /ˈvæsəkjuːlətɪs/ noun inflammation of a blood vessel
vascular lesion /ˈvæsəkjuːlə ˈlɪzən/ noun damage to a blood vessel
vascular system /ˈvæsəkjuːlə ˌsɪstəm/ noun the series of vessels such as veins, arteries and capillaries, carrying blood around the body
vasectomy /ˈvæsəkjuːtəmi/ noun a surgical operation to cut a vas deferens, in order to prevent sperm travelling from the epididymis up the duct
vas deferens /ˈvæs ˈdɛfərənz/ noun one of the tiny tubes which carry the spermatozoa from the testis to the epididymis (NOTE: The plural is vasa deferentia.)
vaso- /ˈvæzəʊ/ prefix 1. referring to a blood vessel 2. referring to the vas deferens
vasoactive /ˈvæzəʊækˈtɪv/ adjective having an effect on the blood vessels, especially constricting the arteries
vasoconstriction /ˌvəʊskənˈstrɪkʃən/ noun a contraction of blood vessels which makes them narrower

vasoconstrictor /ˌvəʊskənˈstrɪktər/ noun a chemical substance which makes blood vessels become narrower, so that blood pressure rises, e.g. epinephrine hydrochloride

vasodilatation /ˌvəʊsəˈdaɪələteɪʃən/ noun the relaxation of blood vessels, especially the arteries, making them wider and leading to increased blood flow or reduced blood pressure

vasodilator /ˌvəʊsəˈdaɪətər/ noun a chemical substance which makes blood vessels become wider, so that blood flows more easily and blood pressure falls, e.g. hydralazine hydrochloride

vaso-epididymostomy /ˌvəʊsəˌeπɪˌdɪdɪməˈstɒmi/ noun a surgical operation to reverse a vasectomy in which the cut end of the vas deferens is joined to a tubule within the epididymis above a blockage in it

vasomotion /ˌvəʊsəˈmoʊʃən/ noun the control of the diameter of blood vessels and thus of blood flow, ◆ vasoconstriction, vasodilatation

vasomotor /ˌvəʊsəˈmɔːtər/ adjective referring to the control of the diameter of blood vessels

vasomotor centre /ˌvəʊsəˈmɔːtər sɛntər/ noun a nerve centre in the brain which changes the rate of heartbeat and the diameter of blood vessels and so regulates blood pressure

vasomotor nerve /ˌvəʊsəˈmɔːtər nɜrv/ noun a nerve in the wall of a blood vessel which affects the diameter of the vessel

vasopressor /ˌvəʊsəˈprɛsər/ noun a substance which increases blood pressure by narrowing the blood vessels

vasospasm /ˌvəʊsəˈspæzm/ noun a muscle spasm causing the fingers to become cold, white and numb, ◆ Reynaud’s disease

vasovagal attack /ˌvəʊzəˈveɪɡəl ˈætək/ noun a fainting fit as a result of a slowing down of the heartbeat caused by excessive activity of the vagus nerve

vasovasostomy /ˌvəʊsəˌveɪsəsəˈstʌmi/ noun a surgical operation to reverse a vasectomy

vasovesiculitis /ˌvəʊsəˌvɛsɪkəˈlɪtɪs/ noun inflammation of the seminal vesicles and a vas deferens

VBAC abbreviation vaginal birth after Caesarean section
vCJD abbreviation variant CJD
VD abbreviation venereal disease

VD clinic /ˈvɪd ˈklɪnɪk/ noun a clinic specialising in the diagnosis and treatment of venereal diseases

vector /ˈvɛktər/ noun an insect or animal which carries a disease and can pass it to humans ◆ The tsetse fly is a vector of sleeping sickness.

vegan /ˈvijəɡən/ noun someone who does not eat meat, dairy produce, eggs or fish and eats only vegetables and fruit ◆ adjective involving a diet of only vegetables and fruit

vegetarian /ˌvɛɡəˈtʃəriən/ noun someone who does not eat meat, but eats mainly vegetables and fruit and sometimes dairy produce, eggs or fish ◆ adjective involving a diet without meat

vegetation /ˌvɛɡəˈteɪʃən/ noun a growth on a membrane, e.g. on the cusps of valves in the heart

vegetative /ˌvɛɡəˈtætɪv/ adjective referring to growth of tissue or organs

vehicle /ˈvɪkəl/ noun a liquid in which a dose of a drug is put

vein /ˈvɪn/ noun a blood vessel which takes deoxygenated blood containing waste carbon dioxide from the tissues back to the heart (NOTE: For other terms referring to veins see words beginning phleb-, phlebo- or vene-, veno-.)

vena cava /ˈvɛnə ˈkeɪvə/ noun one of two large veins which take deoxygenated blood from all the other veins into the right atrium of the heart. See illustration at heart in Supplement, kidney in Supplement (NOTE: The plural is venae cavae.)

vene- /ˈvɛni-/ prefix referring to veins

venepuncture /ˌvɛnəˈpʌŋktʃər/ noun the act of puncturing a vein either to inject a drug or to take a blood sample

venereal /vəˈniəriəl/ adjective 1, relating to sex acts or sexual desire 2, relating to the genitals 3, referring to an infection or disease which is transmitted through sexual intercourse ◆ venereal wart

venereal disease /vəˈniəriəl ˈdiːˌziəl/ noun a disease which is passed from one person to another during sexual intercourse. Abbreviation VD (NOTE: Now usually called a sexually transmitted infection (STI))

venereal wart /vəˈniəriəl ˈwɔrt/ noun a wart on the genitals or in the urogenital area

venereology /vəˈniərəˌlɒdʒɪ/ noun the scientific study of venereal diseases

venesection /ˌvɛnəˈsiːkʃən/ noun an operation where a vein is cut so that blood can be removed, e.g. when taking blood from a donor

venipuncture /ˌvɛnəˈpʌŋktʃər/ noun same as venepuncture

veno- /ˈvɪnəʊ-/ prefix referring to veins

venoclysis /vəˈnəʊklɪzɪs/ noun the procedure of slowly introducing a saline or other solution into a vein

venogram /ˈvɛnəɡrɑm/ noun same as phlebogram
venography /vənˈɡrɑːfɪ/ noun same as phlebography
venom /ˈvenəm/ noun a poison in the bite of a snake or insect
venous /ˈvɛnəs/ adjective referring to the veins
venous blood /ˈvɛnəs blʌd/ noun same as deoxygenated blood
venous system /ˈvɛnəsˌsɪstəm/ noun a system of veins which brings blood back to the heart from the tissues
venous thrombosis /ˈvɛnəs ˈθroʊmbəsɪs/ noun the blocking of a vein by a blood clot
venous ulcer /ˈvɛnəs ˈʌlsər/ noun an ulcer in the leg, caused by varicose veins or by a blood clot
ventilation /ˈventɪˌleɪʃən/ noun the act of breathing air in or out of the lungs, so removing waste products from the blood in exchange for oxygen.
ventricular /ˈventrɪklər/ adjective referring to the ventricles
ventricular fibrillation /ˈventrɪklər ˈfɜːbrɪˈleɪʃən/ noun an artificial drain used in hydrocephalus to drain cerebrospinal fluid from the ventricles
ventriculocystometry /ˈventrɪkləˌsɪstəmi/ noun an examination of the brain using an endoscope
ventricular shunt /ˈventrɪklər ʃʌnt/ noun a surgical operation to pass a hollow needle into a ventricle of the brain so as to reduce pressure, take a sample of fluid or enlarge the ventricular opening to prevent the need for a shunt
ventro-/ˈventrəʊ-/ prefix ventral
ventrozation /ˈventrəʊzəˈteɪʃən/ noun a surgical operation to treat retroversion of the uterus by attaching the uterus to the wall of the abdomen
ventrosuspension /ˈventrəʊsəˈspjuːʃən/ noun a surgical operation to treat retroversion of the uterus
venturi mask /ˈventʃəri ˈmɑːsk/ noun a type of disposable mask which gives the person a controlled mixture of oxygen and air
venturi nebuliser /ˈventʃəri ˈniːbjuˈlaɪzər/ noun a type of nebuliser which is used in aerosol therapy
venule /ˈvɛnjuːl/ noun a small vein or vessel leading from tissue to a larger vein
venule /ˈvɛnjuːl/ noun a small vein or vessel leading from tissue to a larger vein
 versa /ˈveərə/ adjective versa
verapamil /ˌvɛrəˈpəməl/ noun a synthetic compound which helps to prevent the movement of calcium ions across membranes. It is used in the treatment of angina pectoris, hypertension and irregular heartbeat.
vermiform appendix /ˌvɜːrmiˈfɔːrm əˈpɛndɪks/ noun same as appendix 1
vermilion border /ˈvɜːrmiˈljuən ˈbɜːdər/ noun the external red parts of the lips
vermix /ˈvɜːrmiːks/ noun a vermiform appendix
vermiform caseous /ˌvɜːrmiˈfɔːrm kəˈseəs/ noun an oily substance which covers a baby’s skin at birth
verruca /vəˈruːkə/ noun a small hard harmless growth on the sole of the foot, caused by a virus. [NOTE: Verrucales are a type of wart. The plural is verrucae or verrucae.]
version /ˈvɜːrʒən/ noun the procedure of turning a fetus in a uterus so as to put it in a better position for birth
vertebra /ˈvɜːtəbrə/ noun one of twenty-four ring-shaped bones which link together to form the backbone. See illustration at CARTILAGINOUS JOINT in Supplement (NOTE: The plural is vertebrae.)
vertebral /ˈvɜːtəbrəl/ adjective referring to the vertebrae
vertebral artery /ˈvɜːtəbrəl ˈærətərɪ/ noun one of two arteries which go up the back of the neck into the brain.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>vertebral canal</td>
<td>same as spinal canal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vertebral column</td>
<td>the series of bones and discs linked together to form a flexible column running from the base of the skull to the pelvis. Also called backbone, spinal column. See illustration at PELVIS in Supplement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vertebral disc</td>
<td>a disk same as intervertebral disc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vesicostomy</td>
<td>a hole in the centre of a vertebra which links with others to form the vertebral canal through which the spinal cord passes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vesicostomy/prefix</td>
<td>referring to the bladder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vesicostomy/noun</td>
<td>a small blister on the skin, e.g. caused by eczema</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vesicoureteric reflex</td>
<td>the flowing of urine back from the bladder and the ureters during urination, which may carry infection from the bladder to the kidneys. Also called vesicourethral reflex</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vesicoureteric reflex/adjective</td>
<td>referring to the urinary bladder and the ureters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vesicovaginal/noun and adjective</td>
<td>referring to the bladder and the vagina</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vesicovaginal/noun</td>
<td>an unusual opening between the bladder and the vagina</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vesicular/noun</td>
<td>referring to a vesicle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vesicular breathing</td>
<td>breathing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vesicular breath sound</td>
<td>sound made during the normal breathing process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vesiculation/noun</td>
<td>the formation of blisters on the skin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vesiculitis/noun</td>
<td>the discharge of blood other than by the vagina during menstrual periods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vesiculopapular/adjective</td>
<td>referring to a skin disorder which has both blisters and papules</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vesiculopapular/noun</td>
<td>an X-ray examination of the seminal vesicles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>victim</td>
<td>a person who is injured in an accident or who has caught a disease</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>victim/noun</td>
<td>The victims of the nail crush were taken to the local hospital. to fall victim to something to become a victim of or to experience bad effects</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
from something □ Half the people eating at the restaurant fell victim to salmonella poisoning.
vigour /ˌvɪɡər/ noun a combination of positive attributes expressed in rapid growth, large size, high fertility and long life in an organism
villous /ˈvɪloʊs/ adjective shaped like a villus, or formed of villi
villus /ˈvɪluːs/ noun a tiny projection like a finger on the surface of a mucous membrane (NOTE: The plural is villi.)
vinblastine /ˌvɪnˈblaɪstɪn/ noun an alkaloid drug used in the treatment of cancer
vincristine /ˌvɪnˈkrɪstɪn/ noun an alkaloid drug similar to vinblastine, also used in the treatment of cancer. It works by blocking cell division and is highly toxic.
viraeemia /vərˈɛiəmɪə/ noun a virus in the blood
viral hepatitis /ˌvɪrəl ˈhepətɪtɪs/ noun same as serum hepatitis
viral infection /ˈvɪrəl ɪnˈfɛkʃən/ noun an infection caused by a virus
viral pneumonia /ˈvɪrəl ˈnjuːəˈmənɪə/ noun a type of inflammation of the lungs caused by a virus. Also called virus pneumonia
virilisation /ˌvɜːrɪlɪˈzaʃən, -əˈlɪz-/ noun the development of male characteristics in a woman, caused by a hormone imbalance or therapy
virilism /ˌvɜːrɪlɪzəm/ noun male characteristics such as body hair and a deep voice in a woman
virology /vərˈɒlədʒi/ noun the scientific study of viruses
virulence /ˈvɜːrəlns/ noun 1. the ability of a microorganism to cause a disease 2. the degree of effect of a disease
virulent /ˌvɜːrəln/ adjective 1. referring to the ability of a microorganism to cause a disease 2. an unusually virulent strain of the virus 3. referring to a disease which develops rapidly and has strong effects
virus /ˈvɜːrəs/ noun a parasite consisting of a nucleic acid surrounded by a protein coat that can only develop in other cells. Viruses cause many diseases including the common cold. AIDS, herpes and polio. (NOTE: Antibiotics have no effect on viruses, but effective vaccines have been developed for some viral diseases.)
virus pneumonia /ˈvɜːrəs ˈnjuːəˈmənɪə/ noun same as viral pneumonia
viscera /ˈvɪsərə/ plural noun the internal organs, e.g. the heart, lungs, stomach and intestines
visceral /ˈvɪsərəl/ adjective referring to the internal organs
visceral larva migrans /ˌvɪsərəl ˈlɑːvə ˈmɪɡrənəs/ noun same as toxocariasis
visceral pleura /ˌvɪsərəl ˈplɪərə/ noun a membrane attached to the surface of a lung. See illustration at LUNGS in Supplement
visceral pouch /ˈvɪsərəl ˈpɔutʃ/ noun same as pharyngeal pouch
viscero- /ˌvɪsərəˈriːəl/ prefix relating to the viscera
viscid /ˈvɪsɪd/ adjective referring to a liquid which is sticky and slow-moving
viscosity /ˈvɪskəsɪtɪ/ noun the state of a liquid which moves slowly
viscous /ˈvɪskəs/ adjective referring to a liquid which is thick and slow-moving
viscus /ˈvɪskəs/ noun a parasite consisting of a villus, or formed of villi
villous /ˈvɪluːs/ adjective shaped like a villus, or formed of villi
villus /ˈvɪluːs/ noun a tiny projection like a finger on the surface of a mucous membrane (NOTE: The plural is villi.)
vixen /ˈvɪksən/ noun a female feline
vixen's tail /ˈvɪksənz təl/ noun the tail of a female feline
vitamin /ˈvɪtəmən/ noun a necessary substance in the diet
vital /ˈvɪtl/ adjective very important or necessary for life 1. if circulation is stopped, vital nerve cells begin to die in a few minutes. 2. Oxygen is vital to the human system
vital capacity /ˈvɪtl kəˈpæsəti/ noun the largest amount of air which a person can exhale at one time
vital organs /ˌvɪtl ˈɔrəɡənz/ plural noun the most important organs in the body, without which a human being cannot live, e.g. the heart, lungs and brain
vital signs /ˌvɪtl ˈsɪŋgz/ plural noun measurements of pulse, breathing and temperature
vital statistics /ˌvɪtl ˈstætɪstɪks/ plural noun a set of official statistics relating to the population of a place, such as the percentage of live births per thousand, the incidence of particular diseases and the numbers of births and deaths
vitamin /ˈvɪtəmɪn/ noun an essential substance not synthesised in the body, but found in most foods, and needed for good health

Vitamin A /ˈvɪtəmɪn ˈeɪ/ noun a vitamin which is soluble in fat and can be formed in the body from precursors but is mainly found in food such as liver, vegetables, eggs and cod liver oil. Also called retinol

Vitamin B₁₂ /ˈvɪtəmɪn ˈbiːtwɛnt/ noun a vitamn found in yeast, liver, cereals and pork. Also called cyanocobalamin

Vitamin B₁ /ˈvɪtəmɪn ˈbiː/ noun a vitamin found in eggs, liver, green vegetables, milk and yeast. Also called riboflavin

Vitamin B₂ /ˈvɪtəmɪn ˈbiːtwɛnt/ noun a vitamin found in meat, cereals and molasses. Also called pyridoxine

Vitamin B₃ /ˈvɪtəmɪn ˈbiːtwɛnt/ noun a vitamin which is soluble in water and is found in fresh fruit, especially oranges and lemons, raw vegetables and liver. Also called cyanocobalamin

Vitamin B₅ /ˈvɪtəmɪn ˈbiːtwɛnt/ noun a vitamin which is soluble in fat and is found in butter, eggs and fish. It is also produced by the skin when exposed to sunlight. It helps in the formation of bones, and lack of it causes rickets in children.

vitamin deficiency /ˈvɪtəmɪn ˈdiːfɪsənsi/ noun a lack of necessary vitamins ○ He is suffering from Vitamin A deficiency. ○ Vitamin C deficiency causes scurvy.

Vitamin E /ˈvɪtəmɪn ˈiː/ noun a vitamin found in vegetables, vegetable oils, eggs and wholemeal bread

Vitamin K /ˈvɪtəmɪn ˈkeɪ/ noun a vitamin found in green vegetables such as spinach and cabbage, and which helps the clotting of blood and is needed to activate prothrombin

vitiligo /ˈvɪtɪlɪɡəʊ/ noun a condition in which white patches appear on the skin. Also called leucoderma

vitrectomy /ˈvɪtrɪktəmɪ/ noun a surgical operation to remove some or all of the vitreous humour of the eye

vitreous /ˈvɪtrɪəs/ adjective 1. having the characteristics of glass 2. relating to the vitreous humour of the eye

vitreous body /ˈvɪtrɪəs ˈbɒdɪ/ noun same as vitreous humour

vitreous detachment /ˈvɪtrɪəs ˈdɪtətʃmənt/ noun the separation of the vitreous humour from the retina, often due to natural ageing when the vitreous humour thins, but also occurring in other conditions such as diabetes

vitreous humour /ˈvɪtrɪəs ˈhjuːmər/ noun a transparent jelly which fills the main cavity behind the lens in the eye. See illustration at eye in Supplement

vitreitis /ˈvɪtrɪtɪtɪs/ noun same as hyalitis

vitro /ˈvɪtrɪəʊ/ in vitro

Vitus /ˈvjuːtəs/ St Vitus’s dance

vivisection /ˈvɪvɪsˌʃekʃən/ noun the act of dissecting a living animal as an experiment

vocal /ˈvəʊkəl/ adjective referring to the voice

vocal cords /ˈvəʊkəl kɔːrdz/ plural noun a pair of fibrous sheets of tissue which span the cavity of the voice box (larynx) and produce sounds by vibrating. Also called ventricular folds

vocal folds /ˈvəʊkəl fəʊldz/ plural noun same as vocal cords

vocal folds abducted /ˈvəʊkəl fəʊldz əbˈdʌktɪd/ noun the usual condition of the vocal cords in quiet breathing

vocal folds adducted /ˈvəʊkəl fəʊldz ədˈdʌktɪd/ noun the position of the vocal cords for speaking

vocal fremitus /ˈvəʊkəl ˈfremɪtəs/ noun a vibration of the chest when a person speaks or coughs

vocal resonance /ˈvəʊkəl ˈrɛznəns/ noun a sound heard by a doctor when he or she listens through a stethoscope to the chest while a person is speaking

volar /ˈvəʊlər/ adjective referring to the palm of the hand or sole of the foot

volatile /ˈvɔɪsətəl/ adjective referring to a liquid which turns into gas at room temperature

volitantes /vəlɪtəntɪz/ muscae volitantes

vollion /ˈvɔɪliən/ noun the ability to use the will

Volkmann’s contracture /ˈvɒlkmaʊnz ˈkɒntrəktʃər/ noun a fibrosis and tightening of the muscles of the forearm because blood supply has been restricted, leading to contraction of the fingers

volvella /vəlɪvələ/ noun a type of surgical forceps with claw-like hooks at the end of each arm. Also called vulsellum

volume /ˈvɒlvjuːm/ noun an amount of a substance

voluntary /vɒləntərri/ adjective done because one wishes to do it

voluntary admission /vɒləntərri ədˈmiʃən/ noun the process of taking someone into a psychiatric hospital with the person’s consent

voluntary movement /vɒləntərri ˈmɪvmənt/ noun a movement directed by the person’s willpower, using voluntary muscles, e.g. walking or speaking
voluntary muscle /ˈvɒlʌnt(ə)ri ˈmʌskəl/ noun a muscle which is consciously controlled. It is usually made up of striated fibres.

COMMENT: Voluntary muscles work in pairs, where one contracts and pulls, while the other relaxes to allow the bone to move.

vomitus /ˈvɒmjʊtəs/ noun a condition in which a loop of intestine is twisted and blocked, so cutting off its blood supply.

vomera /ˈvʊmərə/ noun a thin flat vertical bone in the septum of the nose.

vomica /ˈvɒmɪkə/ noun 1. a cavity in the lungs containing pus 2. the act of vomiting pus from the throat or lungs.

vomit /ˈvɒmjɪt/ verb to bring up partly digested food from the stomach into the mouth. If His bed was covered with vomit. She died after choking on her own vomit. Also called vomitus.

vomiting /ˈvɒmjɪtɪŋ/ noun the act of bringing up vomit into the mouth. Also called emesis.

vomitus /ˈvɒmjɪtəs/ noun same as vomit.

von Hippel-Lindau syndrome /vɒn ˈhɪp(ə)l ˈlɪndəʊə ˌsɜːndrəʊm/ noun a disease in which angiomas of the brain are related to angiomas and cysts in other parts of the body. 

von Recklinghausen’s disease /vɒn ˈrɛklɪŋˈhauzn(ə)z dɪz, ˈzɪlʒ/ noun 1. same as neurofibromatosis 2. same as osteitis fibrosis.

cystica [Described 1882. After Friedrich Daniel von Recklinghausen (1833–1910), Professor of Pathology at Strasbourg, France.]

von Willebrand’s disease /vɒn ˈvɪlɪbrændz dɪz, ˈzɪlʒ/ noun a hereditary blood disease, occurring in both sexes, in which the mucous membrane starts to bleed without any apparent reason. It is caused by a deficiency of a clotting factor in the blood, called von Willebrand’s factor. [Described 1926. After E. A. von Willebrand (1870–1949), Finnish physician.]

von Willebrand’s factor /vɒn ˈvɪlɪbrændz ˈfæktr/ noun a protein substance in plasma involved in platelet aggregation.

VSD abbreviation ventricular septal defect.

tulip vulgaris /ˈvʊltəp ˈvʊlɡərəs/ noun a hereditary blood disease.

vulsectomy /ˈvʊlsɛktəmi/ noun a surgical operation to remove the vulva.

vulvitis /ˈvʊlvɪtɪs/ noun inflammation of the vulva, causing intense irritation.

vulvovaginitis /ˈvʊlvəvəɡəˈnɪtɪs/ noun inflammation of the vulva and vagina.
noun
She noticed blood streaks in her water.

dehydration from lack of water.

which makes up a large part of the body

water

reduction in size of an organ

disease which causes severe loss of weight or wasting disease

caused by a virus

wart
talline compound used to help prevent the blood

warfarin

in charge of a ward

ward sister

ward manager

ward nurse

ward

walking frame

Wangenstein tube

Wangenstein's operation

water works

water-hammer pulse

Waterhouse-Friderichsen syndrome

water bed

waiting list

waterworks

water hammer pulse

water bed

water bed

weal

wean

weaning

water in the amnion in which a fetus floats (informal) Also called amniotic fluid

water bed

a mattress made of a large heavy plastic bag filled with water, used to prevent bedsores

waterbrash

waterbed

to prevent bedsores

waterbrash

waterworks

waterhammer pulse

White Blood Cell (WBC): a molecular model for DNA in which the organic base pairs are linked by hydrogen bonds which form the rungs of a ladder spiraling in the form of a helix

WBC abbreviation white blood cell

weal

wean

wean
Weber-Christian disease

Weber-Christian disease /ˈwɛbər ˈkrɪstʃən dɪˌzɪz/ noun a disease in which someone has difficulty in speech and learning disabilities, paralysis, seizures, blindness and hearing loss. They are often in people with asthma and is also associated with bronchitis and heart disease.

Wehi's disease /ˈwɛlɪz dɪˌzɪz/ noun same as leptocephalopathy. [Described 1866. After Adolf Weil (1846–1916), physician in Estonia who also practised in Wiesbaden, Germany.]

well /wel/ adjective healthy ○ He’s not a well man. ○ You’re looking very well after your holiday. ○ He’s quite well again after his flu. ○ She’s not very well, and has had to stay in bed.

well-baby clinic /wel ˈbebi ˈklɪnɪk/ noun a clinic where parents can ask a doctor or nurse any questions they have about their child’s growth and development. Their babies can be weighed and measured and their development monitored.

wellbeing /wel ˈbɛlɪŋ/ noun the state of being in good health and having good living conditions ○ She is responsible for the wellbeing of the patients under her care.

well-man clinic /wel ˈmæn ˈklɪnɪk/ noun a clinic just for men where they can get check-ups, advice and health information

well-woman clinic /wel ˈwʊmən ˈklɪnɪk/ noun a clinic which specialises in preventative medicine for women, e.g. breast screening and cervical smear tests, and gives advice on pregnancy, contraception and the menopause

wen /weɪn/ noun a cyst which forms in a sebaceous gland

Werdnig-Hoffmann disease /wɜːdənɪŋ ˈhɒfnɔ̃ diˌzɪz/ noun a disease in which the spinal muscles atrophy, making the muscles of the shoulders, arms and legs weak. In its most severe form, infants are born floppy, have feeding and breathing problems and rarely live more than two or three years.

Werner’s syndrome /ˈwɜːrnərz, ˈsɪndrəm/ noun an inherited disorder involving premature ageing, persistent hardening of the skin, underdevelopment of the sex organs and cataracts

Wernicke’s encephalopathy /ˈwɜːnɪkəz ˌɛn ˈkiːfələpəθi/ noun a condition caused by lack of Vitamin B, which often affects alcoholics and in which the person is delirious, moves the eyes about rapidly, walks unsteadily and is subject to constant vomiting. [Described 1875. After Karl Wernicke (1848–1905), Breslau psychiatrist and neuropathologist.]

Wertheim’s operation /ˈwɜːtəhz əˈpɜːrən/ noun a surgical operation to remove the uterus, the lymph nodes which are next to it and most of the vagina, the ovaries and the Fallopian tubes, as treatment for cancer of the uterus. [Described 1900. After Ernst Wertheim (1864–1920), Austrian gynaecologist.]

wet burn /ˈwɛt bɜrn/ noun same as scald

Wharton’s duct /ˈwɔːtərnz ˈdʌkt/ noun a duct which takes saliva into the mouth from the salivary glands under the lower jaw. [After Thomas Wharton (1614–73), English physician and anatomist at St Thomas’s Hospital, London, UK.]

Wharton’s jelly /ˈwɔːtərnz ˈdʒɛli/ noun a jelly-like tissue in the umbilical cord

whistle /wiʃ/ verb same as weal

wheeze /wiːz/ noun a whistling noise in the bronchi ○ The doctor listened to his wheezes. • verb to make a whistling sound when breathing ○ When she has an attack of asthma, she wheezes and has difficulty in breathing.

whizzing /ˈwiːzɪŋ/ noun whistling noises in the bronchi when breathing. Wheezing is often found in people with asthma and is also associated with bronchitis and heart disease.

whiplash injury /ˈwɪplɑːʃ ɪnˈdʒəri/ noun an injury to the vertebrae in the neck, caused when the head jerks backwards, often occurring in a car that is struck from behind

whiplash shake syndrome /ˈwɪplɑːʃ ˈʃeɪk/ noun in young babies, a series of internal head injuries caused by being shaken violently. They can result in brain damage leading to speech and learning disabilities, paralysis, seizures, blindness and hearing loss. They are often life-threatening.

Whipple’s disease /ˈwɪpəlz dɪˌzɪz/ noun a disease in which someone has difficulty in...
absorbing nutrients and passes fat in the faeces, the
joints are inflamed and the lymph glands
enlarged [Described 1907. After George Hoyt
prize for Pathology and Medicine 1934.]

Whipple’s operation /ˈwɪpləʊ/ noun same as
pancreatectomy

white /waɪt/ adjective of a colour like snow or
milk ○ White patches developed on his skin. ○
Her hair has turned quite white. [NOTE: white –
whitest] n noun the main part of the eye which
is white ○ The whites of his eyes turned yellow
when he developed jaundice.

white blood cell /waɪtˈblʌd sel/ noun a col-
courless blood cell which contains a nucleus but
has no haemoglobin, is formed in bone marrow
and creates antibodies. Abbreviation WBC. Also
called leucocyte

white finger /waɪt ˈfɪŋər/ noun a condition in
which a finger has a mottled discoloured appear-
ance because its blood vessels are damaged. The
thumb is usually not affected. Very severe cases
can result in finger loss. It occurs most commonly
in Raynaud’s disease.

white leg /waɪt ˈleg/ noun a condition which
affects women after childbirth, in which a leg
becomes pale and inflamed as a result of lym-
phatic obstruction. Also called milk leg. phleg-
masia alba dolens

white matter /waɪt ˈmeɪtər/ noun nerve tissue
in the central nervous system which contains
more myelin than grey matter

white noise instrument /waɪt ˈnɔɪz ,ˈɪnstrəmənt/ noun a small electronic device
worn in the ear. It combines sounds of many dif-
f erent frequencies. It is used to mask internal
noise in the ear due to tinnitus.

whites /waɪts/ plural noun same as leucoc-
phoea (informal)

whitlow /ˈwɪtlʌʊ/ noun an inflammation caused by
infection near the nail in the fleshy part of the
tip of a finger. Also called felon

WHO abbreviation World Health Organization

whoop /ˈwʊp, ˈhʊp/ noun a loud noise made
when inhaling by a person who has whooping
cough

whooping cough /ˈhuːpɪŋ kɒf/ noun an
infectious disease caused by Bordetella pertussis
affecting the bronchial tubes, common in chil-
dren, and sometimes very serious. Also called
pertussis

Widal reaction /ˈwɪdəl ˈreɪkʃən/ noun same as
Widal test /ˈwɪdəl ˈtest/ noun a test to detect typhoid fever.
A sample of the person’s blood is put into a solu-
tion containing typhoid bacilli, or anti-typhoid
serum is added to a sample of bacilli from the
person’s faeces. If the bacilli agglutinate, i.e. form
into groups, this indicates that the person has
typhoid fever. [Described 1896. After Georges
Fernand Isidore Widal (1862–1929), French
physician and teacher.]

Wilms’ tumour /ˈwɪlzəm ˌtjuːmər/ noun same as
Wilms’ tumour

Willis’ circle of Willis /ˈwɪlɪs ˈsɜːklə əv ˈwɪlɪs/ noun a
hereditary disease where copper deposits accu-
mulate in the liver and the brain, causing cirrho-
sis. Also called hepatoentral degeneration
described 1912. After Samuel Alexander Kinn-
nier Wilson (1878–1937), British neurologist.

windpipe /ˈwɪndpɪp/ noun same as trache-
wiring /ˈwɜːstrɪŋ/ noun 1. a network of wires 2.
a neurological or physiological structure or proc-
cess which controls a function in the body 3.
the act of fixing a piece of bone in place using wires

wisdom tooth /ˈwɜːdəm tuːθ/ noun one of the
four teeth in the back of the jaw which only
appear at about the age of 20 and sometimes do
not appear at all. Also called third molar

witch hazel /ˈwɪtʃ ˈheɪzel/ noun a lotion made
from the bark of a tree, used to check bleed-
ning and harden inflamed tissue and bruises. Also
called hamamelis

withdrawal /ˈwɜːdəl/ noun 1. a loss of inter-
est in having contact with other people, which
leads to a person becoming isolated 2. a period
during which a person who has been addicted to a
drug stops taking it and experiences unpleasant
symptoms

withdrawal symptom /ˈwɜːdəl ˈsɪmptəm/ noun an unpleasant physical condi-
tion, e.g. vomiting, headaches or fever, which
occurs when someone stops taking an addictive
drug

Wolff-Parkinson-White syndrome /ˈwʊlf,
ˌpɑrkɪnznˌsɪnθ/ noun same as WPW

Wood’s lamp /ˈwʊdz ˈlæmp/ noun an ultravio-
let lamp which allows a doctor to see fluores-
cence, e.g. in the hair of someone who has a fun-
gal infection [After Robert Williams Wood
(1868–1955), US physicist.]

word blindness /ˈwɜːrd ˈblaɪndnəs/ noun
same as alexia

work-related upper limb disorder /ˈwɜːrk,
ˈrɛlətɪd/ noun same as repetitive strain injury. Abbreviation WRULD.

World Health Organization /ˌwɜːld ˈhelθˈɔrgənəˌzeɪʃən/ noun an organisation, part of
the United Nations, which aims to improve health
in the world. Abbreviation WHO
worm /wɔrn/ noun a long thin animal with no legs or backbone, which can infest the human body, especially the intestines

wound /wound/ noun damage to external tissue which allows blood to escape ○ He had a knife wound in his leg. ○ The doctors sutured the wound in his chest. ■ verb to harm someone by making a hole in the tissue of the body ○ She was wounded three times in the head.

wound dehiscence /wound dəhɪs(ə)ns/ noun the splitting open of a surgical incision

wound healing /wound hɛlɪŋ/ noun the replacement of dead tissue with new tissue

wrist /rɪst/ noun a joint between the hand and forearm ○ He sprained his wrist and can’t play tennis tomorrow. See illustration at HAND in Supplement (NOTE: For other terms referring to the wrist, see words beginning with carp-, carpo-)

wrist drop /ˈrɪst drɒp/ noun paralysis of the wrist muscles, caused by damage to the radial nerve in the upper arm, which causes the hand to hang limp

writer’s cramp /ˈraɪtəz kræmp/ noun a painful spasm of the muscles in the forearm and hand which comes from writing too much

WRULD abbreviation work-related upper limb disorder

wry neck /raɪ nek/ /ˈraɪ nek/ noun same as torticollis
xantho- /'zanthəʊ/ prefix same as xantho- (used before vowels)
xanthemia /'zantəmɪə/ noun same as carotenemia
xanthelasma /'zænthə'lezma/ noun the formation of little yellow fatty tumours on the eye lids
xanthine /'zænthən/ noun 1. an intermediate product in the breakdown of nucleic acids to uric acid, found in blood, body tissue and urine 2. a derivative of xanthine, e.g. caffeine or theophylline
xantho- /'zanthəʊ/ prefix yellow
xanthochromia /'zænthəkraʊmɪə/ noun yellow colour of the skin as in jaundice
xanthoma /'zænthəmaʊma/ noun a yellow fatty mass, often on the eyelids and hands, found in people with a high level of cholesterol in the blood (NOTE: The plural is xanthomata.)
xanthomatosis /'zænthəmətəsɪs/ noun a condition in which several small masses of yellow fatty substance appear in the skin or some internal organs, caused by an excess of fat in the body
xanthopsia /'zænthəpsoʊsɪə/ noun a disorder of the eyes, making everything appear yellow
xanthosis /'zænthəsɪs/ noun yellow colouring of the skin, caused by eating too much food containing carotene
X chromosome /'eks kraʊməsɒm/ noun a chromosome that determines sex. Compare Y chromosome. ▶ sex chromosome.
xeno- /'zɛnəʊ/ prefix different
xenotransplantation /ˌzɛnɔtrænˈsplæntəˈneɪʃən/ noun the process of transplanting organs from one species to another, especially from animals to humans
xero- /'zɪəroʊ/ prefix dry
xeroderma /'ziərəˌdɜrmə/ noun a skin disorder where dry scales form on the skin
xerophthalmin /ˌziərəˌθælmɪn/ noun a condition of the eye, in which the cornea and conjunctiva become dry because of a lack of vitamin A
xerosis /'ziərəsɪs/ noun extreme dryness of skin or mucous membrane
xerostomia /ˌziərəstəˈtɒmɪə/ noun dryness of the mouth, caused by lack of a saliva
xiphil- /'zɪfɪl/ prefix relating to the xiphoid process
xiphisternal plane /'zɪfɪstərənl ˈpliːn/ noun an imaginary horizontal line across the middle of the chest at the point where the xiphoid process starts
xiphisternum /'zɪfɪstərn/ noun same as xiphoid process
xiphoid process /'zɪfɪd prəˈrɑʊsəʊ/ noun a projection of bone in the chest cavity, pointing down</xeroxbox>
narrow blood vessels, used in the treatment of colds and sinusitis.

**XY syndrome** /ɛks 'wɔːr ˌsɪndrəm/ noun an extremely rare condition in males in which they have two Y chromosomes instead of one. They grow faster than normal, and their final height is approximately 7cm above average. Many experience severe acne during adolescence.

**yawn** /jaʊn/ noun a reflex action when tired or sleepy, in which the mouth is opened wide and after a deep intake of air, the breath exhaled slowly. His yawns made everyone feel sleepy. verb to open the mouth wide and breathe in deeply, then breathe out slowly

**yawning** /ˈjɔːnɪŋ/ noun the act of opening the mouth wide without conscious control and slowly releasing a deep breath, usually a sign of tiredness or boredom.

**Y chromosome** /ˈwɔːr ˈkreɪnəməs/ noun a chromosome that determines sex, it is carried by males and is shorter than an X chromosome. Compare X chromosome. sex chromosome.

**yeast** /jɛst/ noun a fungus which is used in the fermentation of alcohol and in making bread. It is a good source of Vitamin B.

**yellow** /ˈjɛləʊ/ adjective of a colour like that of the sun or of gold. His skin turned yellow when he had hepatitis. The whites of the eyes become yellow as a symptom of jaundice.

**yellow fever** /ˈjɛləʊ ˈfiːvər/ noun an infectious disease, occurring especially in Africa and South America, caused by an arbovirus carried by the mosquito Aedes aegypti. It affects the liver and causes jaundice. There is no known cure and it can be fatal, but vaccination can prevent it.

**yellow marrow** /ˈjɛləʊ ˈmɔrəʊ/ noun marrow

**yellow spot** /ˈjɛləʊ ˈspɒt/ noun same as macula lutea

**yin and yang** /ˈjɪn ənd ˈjæŋ/ noun the two opposite and complementary principles of Chinese philosophy which are thought to exist in varying proportions in all things. They are sometimes thought of as femininity and masculinity.

**yoga** /ˈjʊdʒəʊ/ noun 1. a Hindu discipline which promotes spiritual unity with a Supreme Being through a system of postures and rituals, any one of dozens of systems and methods derived from or based on Hindu yoga. Many include breathing exercises and postures which are thought to aid health.

**Zadik’s operation** /ˈzeɪdɪks ˈɒpərəʃən/ noun a surgical operation to remove the whole of an ingrowing toenail

**Zantac** /ˈzæntək/ a trade name for ranitidine

**Zidovudine** /ˈzɪdəvjuːdɪn/ noun azidothymidine or AZT, a drug used in the treatment of AIDS, which helps to slow the progress of the disease.

**Zimmer frame** /ˈziːmər ˈfreɪm/ a trademark for a metal frame used by people who have difficulty in walking. She managed to walk some steps with a Zimmer frame.

**Zinc** /ˈzɪŋk/ noun a white metallic trace element (NOTE: The chemical symbol is Zn.)

**Zinc ointment** /ˈzɪŋk ˌɔɪntmənt/ noun a soothing ointment made of zinc oxide and oil

**Zinc oxide** /ˈzɪŋk ˈɔksaɪd/ noun a compound of zinc and oxygen, which forms a soft white soothing powder used in creams and lotions (NOTE: Its chemical formula is ZnO.)

**Zollinger-Ellison syndrome** /ˈzɒlɪndʒər əˈlɪljən/ a condition in which tumours are formed in the islet cells of the pancreas together with peptic ulcers [Described 1955. After Robert Milton Zollinger (1903–92), Professor of Surgery at Ohio State University, USA; Edwin H. Ellison (1918–70), Associate Professor of Surgery at Ohio State University, USA.]

**Zona** /ˈzəʊnə/ noun a zone or area

**Zone** /ˈzəʊn/ noun an area of the body

**Zonule** /ˈzəʊnjuːl/ noun a small area of the body

**Zoo-** /ˈzuːəʊ/ prefix relating to animals

**Zoonosis** /ˈzuːəʊˈnɒsɪs/ noun a disease which a human can catch from an animal (NOTE: The plural is zoonoses.)

**Zoster** /ˈzɔːstər/ a disease which a human can catch from an animal (NOTE: The plural is zosteres.)

**Z-plasty** /ˈziːplɛstɪ/ a technique used in plastic surgery. A deep Z-shaped incision is made to relieve tension in the area of a scar, or to change the direction of a scar.

**Zygoma** /ˈzaɪɡəmə/ noun same as zygomatic arch (NOTE: The plural is zygomata.)

**Zygomatic** /ˈzaɪɡəmətɪk/ adjective referring to the zygomatic arch

**Zygomatic arch** /ˈzaɪɡəmətɪk əˈrɪtʃ/ noun the ridge of bone across the temporal bone, running between the ear and the bottom of the eye socket. Also called cheekbone, malar bone

**Zygomatic bone** /ˈzaɪɡəmətɪk ˈbɔːni/ noun a bone which forms the prominent part of the cheek and the lower part of the eye socket. Also called cheekbone, malar bone

**Zygomatic process** /ˈzaɪɡəmətɪk ˈprəʊses/ noun one of the bony projections which form the zygomatic arch

**Zygoe** /ˈzaɪɡəʊ/ noun a fertilised ovum, the first stage of development of an embryo

**Zym-** /ˈziːm/ prefix (used before vowels) 1. enzymes 2. fermentation
Supplement
Anatomical Terms

The body is always described as if standing upright with the palms of the hands facing forward. There is only one central vertical plane, termed the median or sagittal plane, and this passes through the body from front to back. Planes parallel to this on either side are parasagittal or paramedian planes. Vertical planes at right angles to the median are called coronal planes. The term horizontal (or transverse) plane speaks for itself. Two specific horizontal planes are (a) the transpyloric, midway between the suprasternal notch and the symphysis pubis, and (b) the transtubercular or intertubercular plane, which passes through the tubercles of the iliac crests. Many other planes are named from the structures they pass through.

Views of the body from some different points are shown on the diagram; a view of the body from above is called the superior aspect, and that from below is the inferior aspect.

Cephalic means toward the head; caudal refers to positions (or in a direction) towards the tail. Proximal and distal refer to positions respectively closer to and further from the centre of the body in any direction, while lateral and medial relate more specifically to relative sideways positions, and also refer to movements. Ventral refers to the abdomen, front or anterior, while dorsal relates to the back of a part or organ. The hand has a dorsal and a palmar surface, and the foot a dorsal and a plantar surface.

Note that flexion of the thigh moves it forward while flexion of the leg moves it backwards; the movements of extension are similarly reversed. Movement and rotation of limbs can be medial, which is with the front moving towards the centre line, or lateral, which is in the opposite direction. Specific terms for limb movements are adduction, towards the centre line, and abduction, which is away from the centre line. Other specific terms are supination and pronation for the hand, and inversion and eversion for the foot.
SAGITTAL OR MEDIAN PLANE
PARASAGITTAL OR PARAMEDIAN PLANES
CORONAL PLANES
POSTERIOR ASPECT
RIGHT LATERAL ASPECT
TRANVERSE OR HORIZONTAL PLANES
SUPINATION PRONATION
ANTERIOR ASPECT
TRANSFYLORIC PLANE
TRANSTUBERCULAR PLANE
LATERAL MEDIAL ROTATION
ADDUCTION AND ABDUCTION
LEFT LATERAL ASPECT
LATERALLY MEDIANLY
PROXIMALLY DISTALLY
INVERSION EVERSION
DIGESTIVE SYSTEM

1. liver
2. pancreas
3. spleen
4. gall bladder
5. stomach
6. duodenum
7. jejunum
8. ileum
9. ascending colon
10. transverse colon
11. descending colon
12. sigmoid colon
13. caecum
14. appendix
15. rectum
16. anus

KIDNEY

1. kidney
2. calyx
3. pyramid
4. cortex
5. medulla
6. renal pelvis
7. adrenal gland
8. abdominal aorta
9. inferior vena cava
10. ureter
11. urinary bladder
BRAIN
1. corpus callosum
2. thalamus
3. hypothalamus
4. pineal body
5. pituitary gland
6. superior colliculi
7. inferior colliculi
8. caudate nucleus
9. cerebral peduncle
10. fornix
11. pons

NEURONE
(a) multipolar
(b) bipolar
(c) unipolar
1. nucleus
2. Nissi granules
3. neurofibrilla
4. dendrite
5. axon
6. myelin sheath
7. Schwann cell nucleus
8. node of Ranvier
9. neurilemma
10. terminal branch
UROGENITAL SYSTEM (male)

1. penis
2. scrotum
3. testis
4. epididymis
5. ductus deferens
6. seminal vesicle
7. ejaculatory duct
8. prostate gland
9. glans
10. urinary bladder
11. urethra
12. rectum
13. anus
14. corpus cavernosum
15. corpus spongiosum
16. pubic bone

UROGENITAL SYSTEM (female)

1. pubic bone
2. labia majora
3. labia minora
4. urethra
5. urinary bladder
6. vagina
7. uterus
8. Fallopian tube
9. ovary
10. clitoris
11. rectum
12. anus
CARTILAGINOUS JOINT
1. intervertebral disc  
2. vertebra  
3. hyaline cartridge

SYNOVIAL JOINT
1. bone  
2. articular membrane  
3. synovial membrane  
4. synovial cavity and fluid  
5. joint capsule

TEETH
1. incisors  
2. canines  
3. premolars  
4. molars

BONE STRUCTURE
1. periontaum  
2. compact bone  
3. cancellous (spongy) bone  
4. medullary cavity (red marrow)  
5. articular cartilage  
6. epiphysis  
7. diaphysis  
8. epiphysis (red marrow)