

Introduction to Medical Terminology

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1. Why Learn Medical Terminology?

- **Facilitates communication** among health?care professionals.
 - **Improves accuracy** in charting, prescribing, and interpreting orders.
 - **Enhances patient safety** by reducing misunderstandings.
 - **Supports further study** in anatomy, physiology, pathology, and clinical practice.
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2. Building Blocks of Medical Words

Component	Definition	Example
Root (word stem)	Core meaning, usually denotes a body part or system.	<i>cardi</i> = heart, <i>nephr</i> = kidney
Prefix	Modifies the root; indicates location, number, time, or negation.	<i>hyper?</i> (above, excessive), <i>hypo?</i> (below, deficient)
Suffix	Alters the word's grammatical function; often denotes a condition, disease, procedure, or specialty.	<i>?itis</i> (inflammation), <i>?ectomy</i> (surgical removal)
Combining vowel	Usually ?o? ; links a root to a suffix or another root for easier pronunciation.	<i>oste?o?logy</i> (study of bone)
Combining form	Root?+?combining vowel (e.g., <i>cardi?</i> , <i>gastr?</i>).	Used when two roots are joined: <i>cardi?pulmonary</i>

3. Common Prefixes

Prefix	Meaning	Example
a? / an?	Without, lack of	<i>anemia</i> (lack of blood)
anti?	Against	<i>antibiotic</i> (against life?killing organisms)
brady?	Slow	<i>bradycardia</i> (slow heart rate)

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Prefix	Meaning	Example
dys?	Difficult, painful, abnormal	<i>dysphagia</i> (difficulty swallowing)
hyper?	Excessive, above normal	<i>hyperglycemia</i> (high blood sugar)
hypo?	Below, deficient	<i>hypotension</i> (low blood pressure)
inter?	Between, among	<i>intercostal</i> (between ribs)
peri?	Around, surrounding	<i>pericardium</i> (membrane around the heart)
sub?	Under, below	<i>subcutaneous</i> (under the skin)
tachy?	Fast	<i>tachypnea</i> (rapid breathing)

4. Common Suffixes

Suffix	Meaning	Example
?algia	Pain	<i>neuralgia</i> (nerve pain)
?emia	Blood condition	<i>leukemia</i> (white?blood?cell disease)
?itis	Inflammation	<i>appendicitis</i> (inflammation of the appendix)
?logy	Study of	<i>dermatology</i> (study of skin)
?oma	Tumor, mass	<i>carcinoma</i> (malignant tumor)
?opathy	Disease,	