

MEDICAL TERMINOLOGY

Medical terminology is the science that studies the words – or terms – which make up the language of medicine. Most medical terms come from the *Greek* and *Latin* languages. A medical word consists of some or all of the following elements:

WORD ROOT, COMBINING FORM, SUFFIX, AND PREFIX

A ***WORD ROOT*** is the foundation of a medical term and contains its primary meaning. All medical terms have at least one word root. As a general rule, Greek roots are used to build words that describe a disease, condition, treatment, or diagnosis. Latin roots are used to build words that describe anatomical structures. Examples of Greek word roots are:

1. Term: ***Dermatos*** (Greek) = ***Skin*** (English) = الجلد

So, the root is: ***Dermat***

Medical term: ***Dermatitis*** = Skin inflammation = إلتهاب الجلد

2. Term: ***Nephros*** (Greek) = ***Kidney*** (English) = الكلية

So, the root is: ***Nephr***

Medical term: ***Nephritis*** = Kidney inflammation = إلتهاب الكلى

3. Term: ***Stomatos*** (Greek) = ***Mouth*** (English) = الفم

So, the root is: ***Stomat***

Medical term: ***Stomatitis*** = Mouth inflammation = إلتهاب الفم

Terms of the same meanings might be taken from Latin language. Examples:

1. Term: **Cutis** (Latin) = **Skin** (English) = الجلد

So, the root is: **Cutane**

Medical term: **Cutaneous** = pertaining to the skin = جلدي (أو يعزى للجلد)

2. Term: **Renes** (Latin) = **Kidney** (English) = الكلية

So, the root is: **Ren**

Medical term: **Renal** = pertaining to the kidney = كلوي (أو يعزى للكلى)

3. Term: **Oris** (Latin) = Mouth (English) = الفم

So, the root is: **Or**

Medical term: **Oral** = pertaining to the mouth = فموي (أو يعزى للفم)

A **COMBINING FORM** is created when a word root is combined with a vowel. The vowel, known as a *combining vowel*, is usually an **o**, but sometimes it is an **i** or occasionally an **e**. Example of combining forms:

1. Dermat**o**logy = the study of skin
2. Pelv**i**metry = the measurement of pelvis
3. Cholec**e**stitis = inflammation of gall bladder

A **SUFFIX** is a word element placed at the end of a word that changes the meaning of the word. In medical terminology, a suffix usually describes a pathology (disease or abnormality), symptom, surgical or diagnostic procedure, or part of speech. Examples of suffixes are:

1. **itis** = inflammation. Examples: **Gastritis** = inflammation of the stomach and **Hepatitis** = inflammation of the liver.

2. **oma** = tumor. Example: **Gastroma** = tumor of the stomach and **Hepatoma** = tumor of the liver.

3. **ectomy** = cutting out or removal. Example **Gastrectomy** = cutting out the stomach and **Hepatectomy** = removal of the liver.

4. **ia** = a condition. Examples: **Insomnia** = inability to sleep.

5. **al** = pertaining to. Example: **Labial** = pertaining to the lip.

A **PREFIX** is a word element attached to the beginning of a word or word root. However, not all medical terms have a prefix. Adding or changing a prefix changes the meaning of the word. The prefix usually indicates a number, time, position, direction, condition, color, or negation. Examples of prefixes are:

1. Example of number is: **Tri** = *three*. Example: **Triceps** brachii muscle.

2. Example of time is: **Ante** = *before*. Example: **Antemeridian** = before noon.

3. Example of position is: ***Intra*** = *in* or *within*. Example: ***Intracellular***.

4. Example of direction is: ***Peri*** = *around*. Example: ***Periodontal*** = around the teeth.

5. Example of condition is: ***Hyper*** = *excessive, high* or *above normal*. Example:
Hypertension = High pressure.

6. Example of color is: ***Erythr*** = *red*. Example: ***Erythrocyte*** = red cell.

7. Example of negation is: ***An*** = *without* or *not*. Example: ***Anesthesia*** = not to feel.