

INTRODUCTION

Medical terminology is a concise and practical way of recording and communicating that enables health professionals to be precise in the specifics concerning body, health conditions, treatments and procedures.

It is historically based on Latin (with the occasional assistance of a Greek word), which were the Universal Languages of western medicine and science from early times. This ancient language structure is still used today to name:

- Anatomical and physiological features
- materia medica (drugs)
- Treatment protocols and tests
- Prescription details and instructions



This specialist terminology is:

- the language/communication tool used by doctors and health professionals
- the vocabulary of **technical terms** used in the study and practice of medicine

Using the ancient forms of language ensure that all Western Medicine personnel can understand and communicate in the same technical language, no matter what their personal culture or language may be;

Medical terminology may appear difficult at first glance, however as you work in your chosen health occupation you will become familiar with the terms used and your understanding will improve. The more you can learn about the terminology of the health professions generally, the more seriously you will be regarded when you have to communicate with:

- Doctors and nurses
- Specialist services
- Mental health services
- Allied health services
- Rehabilitation services
- Health funds
- Other health professionals and administrators

You will be surprised at how much medical and specialist terminology you will use in your everyday work to:

- Talk to other professionals
- Deal with client enquiries
- Process forms
- Take and pass on messages
- Process referrals
- Process receipts
- Prepare reports for insurance providers

In order to learn medical terminology, you have to:

- conventions of the language
- memorise the meaning and correct use of many words
- recognise the acronyms and abbreviations commonly used in instructions and on forms and reports

This takes real commitment and if you have never learned another language before, there are a few **'tricks of the trade'** that will help you:

Keep your medical dictionary handy: it is your best friend.

Keep a notebook in which you write unfamiliar terms as soon as you come across them.

Next to the word write the meaning, using your medical dictionary or encyclopaedia.

Write out unfamiliar words at least 20 times each to fix the spelling in your head so that you won't make mistakes when you write or type them.

Learn all the common roots, suffixes and prefixes of medical terms so that you have a 'key' to understanding the more complex words.

Practice using the words by writing them in sentences as though you are writing to another health professional.

Practice translating medical reports into ordinary English as though explaining them to clients/patients.

Check your notes and clinical forms constantly for spelling and comprehension errors and self-correct them. If you use a word processor – USE THE SPELL CHECK!

Write out anything you get wrong at least twenty times to fix the correct usage and spelling in your head.

Writing things down is a very important step in this process because writing is an 'active' form of learning which actually helps fix information in your memory.

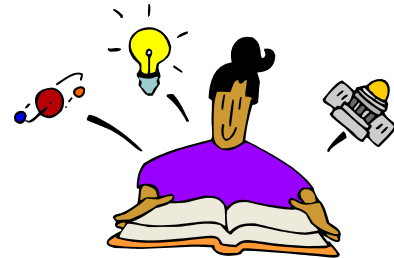
The more you write, the faster you learn, the more you remember.

Never use a word unless you have looked it up and practised writing it. If you are not sure about how it is pronounced, you must ask other people to say it for you and ask them to correct you if you make mistakes.

Accuracy in reading handwritten data or taking verbal instructions is very important.

Misuse, misunderstanding, misspelling or mispronunciation of a medical term can have disastrous effects. For example: Stat (statim) means 'immediately' and Stet (stetim) means 'leave this in place'. You also have to be very careful when recording almost identical words such as 'Hyper' (high) or Hypo (low). A wrong spelling can lead to disaster for the client!

It is very important for you to ask a person to repeat something, particularly if they have a heavily accented everyday language. Always make sure that the word that you are hearing is the word the person is really saying.



There are several types of specialist language you may come across in your work. Some of this is Latin based medical terminology and some is common, but precisely used, everyday English.

Administrative language and general words, such as	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • referral • practice • clinical • specialist • prescription
Medical terminology readily understood by the general public, such as	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • chemotherapy • carcinogenic • symptom • sign • names of medical specialisations
Anatomical and physiological words, such as	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • tissue • organ • names of organs and systems e.g endocrine; respiratory
Words relating to disease or body dysfunction, such as	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • syndrome • iatrogenic • allopathic • prognosis • diagnosis • congenital • neoplastic
Specialist words relating to complementary health disciplines, such as	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ayurvedic: Sanskrit terminology • Oriental medicine: terms such as meridian • Bioenergetic: terms such as chakra, etheric • Psychotherapy: terms such as psychogenic • Tactile therapies: terms such as percussion, cupping ; myofascial
Names and acronyms for specific diseases and disorders, such as	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AAHD • HIV/AIDS • autism • anaemia • gastroenteritis
Names of diagnostic procedures, such as	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • colonoscopy • biopsy • radiology • C-T scan
Names of surgical procedures, such as	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • arthroscopy • appendectomy • tonsillectomy
Names for equipment and instruments, such as	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • autoclave • stethoscope • speculum

EPONYMS

The word means 'giving one's name to something'. Eponyms are words which combine the name of a person (real or mythical) or place as nomenclature (naming convention). Here are some common eponyms you will come across:

Origin	Founders	Terminology
People who pioneered germ research	Louis Pasteur Joseph Lister	pasteurisation listeriosis
Name of pioneer in profession	Sigmund Freud, founder of western psychoanalytical theories	Freudian slip
Name of person first describing a specific disease	Alois Alzheimer	Alzheimer's disease
Place names where outbreaks of specific diseases were first recorded	Ross River Ebola	Ross River fever Ebola haemorrhagic virus
Names of first patient diagnosed with a newly discovered disease or person who first identified disease	Parkinson Down Epstein-Barr	Name of person often followed by the words 'syndrome', 'disease' or 'disorder' or 'virus'
Mythical or real ancient characters	Achilles – the Greek hero who was immortal until wounded at the heel	Achilles tendon –the tendon that runs from the heel to the back of the knee. It is used as a common term for a 'fatal flaw' in a personality trait



Louis Pasteur

ASSESSMENT RECORD

Student Name:

Student Number:

e-mail:

Assessor/Trainer:

Telephone:

e-mail:

Postcode:

<u>Assessment for topic:</u>	Assessments	Date	CA
Medical terminology	1. Short answer assignment		
	2. How words are used		
	3. Using your dictionary		
	4. Identifying and defining prefixes, suffixes and stems		
	5. Selecting the right meaning		
	6. New terminology		
	7. Defining common abbreviations		
	8. Dictation exercise		
	9. Third party report		

Assessor's comments:

Assessor Signature: _____

Student Signature: _____

Sign-off date: _____

TASK 1: SHORT ANSWER ASSIGNMENT

Fill in the gaps in the following statements or questions:

1. Medical terminology is the tool used by doctors and health professionals
2. It is the vocabulary of used in the study and practice of
3. Misunderstanding, misspelling, or mispronunciation of medical terminology has effects
4. The stem or root is the part of the term that provides the meaning and refers to
5. The prefix is placed the stem and or the meaning of the stem
6. Prefixes have various of meaning
7. The Prefix categories are.....
8. The Suffix is the term placed the stem.
9. Suffixes often indicate and
10. When joining different words or components together to make a new word, we make them easier to pronounce by introducing a vowel.

11. When we add a suffix starting with a vowel combining vowel is required because
12. We require a combining vowel for suffixes beginning with a consonant because
13. If two roots are joined and the suffix starts with a vowel, *we do/ do not* require a combining vowel (*circle the correct response*).
14. When we combine a prefix to a word part *we do/ do not* require a combining vowel (*circle the correct response*).
15. How many descriptive classifications are used in describing the organisation of the body?
16. What do the abbreviations RUQ, RLQ, LUQ, LLQ stand for?
.....
.....
17. What part of the body is used as the mid point for the imaginary division of the abdomen?
18. What is the name of the large muscle that separates the abdomen from the chest?
.....
19. What are the two subdivisions of the dorsal cavity called?
.....
20. Where are the Thoracic, Abdominal and Pelvic cavities located?
.....

21. If you are in a prone condition, what does that mean?

.....

22. What would you do to change someone from a prone to a supine position?

.....

23. If you ask someone to take a lateral position, what are you asking them to do?

.....

24. What is the opposite of Inferior?

25. What is another word for ventral and what does it mean?

.....

26. If you straighten your leg you are displaying

27. What is the opposite movement to the answer to number 27?

.....

28. If you point your toes, what movement are you displaying?

.....

29. What can you do with your right leg to display abduction?

.....

30. What is the opposite movement to abduction?