

GLOSSARY OF MEDICAL TERMS

Abdomen	The cavity of the body which extends from the diaphragm at the base of the thorax to the floor of the pelvis.
Abducent nerve	The 6th cranial nerve which serves muscles of the eye.
Abduction	Moving a limb outwards from the trunk.
Abductor	A muscle which tends to pull a limb away from the middle line.
Ablation	Cutting away tissue or abnormal growth.
Abortion	Premature or untimely expulsion of the fetus.
Abrasion	A portion of a surface from which the skin has been removed by rubbing.
Abscess	A collection of pus.
Accessory nerve	The 11th cranial nerve which serves the neck muscles.
Accommodation	Adjustments of the eye to provide clear and distinct pictures of objects at various distances.
Acetabulum	A socket on the lower part of the pelvic bone in which the head of the hipbone is situated.
Achilles tendon	The tendon which connects the calf muscles to the heelbone.
Acidosis	A condition in which the acidity of body fluids and tissues is abnormally high
Acrocyanosis	Slow blood circulation causing bluish discolouration of hands and feet.
Acromioclavicular joint	The joint between the clavicle and the acromion.
Acromion	The outer end of the shoulder blade.
Acroparaesthesia	A tingling sensation in hands and feet.
Acuity	Sharpness or clearness of vision.
Acute	Severe symptoms which are relatively brief in duration.
Acute-on-chronic	A flare up of a pre-existing condition which settles after treatment although the chronic condition remains.
Addison's disease	Caused by underactivity of the adrenal glands resulting in extreme weakness.
Adduction	The bringing of a limb towards the trunk.
Adductors	Any muscle which draws a part towards the medial line.
Adenitis	Inflammation of a gland.
Adenocarcinoma	A malignant tumour originating in a gland.
Adenoidectomy	An operation to remove adenoids.
Adenoids	A mass of tissue located at the back of the mouth.
Adenoma	A benign tumour or swelling of the glandular tissue.
Adenopathy	A diseased gland.
Adhesion	The union of normally separate parts of new tissue produced as a result of inflammation.
Adnerval	Near a nerve.
Adrenal glands	The glands of the endocrine system which are located above the kidneys.
Adventitia	Loose tissue on the outer surface of a blood vessel.
Aerobic	Any organism which requires oxygen in order to live.
Aids	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome.
Akinesia	Loss of muscular response.



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Alexia	Difficulty in reading.
Alimentary	Canal The tubular passage extending from the mouth to the anus through which food is passed and digested.
Allergen	A substance that causes an allergy.
Allergy	Extreme sensitivity to a substance that causes the body to react to any contact with that substance.
Alopecia	Loss of hair.
Alveolar process	One of the four projections which make up each jaw bone.
Alveolus	The part of the upper or lower jawbone that holds the roots of the teeth.
Amblyopia	A condition of reduced or dimmed vision not caused by disease.
Amine	A type of chemical compound derived from ammonia which is present in the human body.
Amnesia	Lack of ability to recall events.
Amniocentesis	The puncture of the amniotic sac to drain or sample amniotic fluid.
Amniotic fluid	The fluid contained within the amniotic sac.
Amniotic sac	The pouch containing the embryonic fetus.
Anaemia	A deficiency of red blood cells.
Anaerobic	An organism which does not require oxygen in order to live.
Anaesthetic	A substance which causes a loss of bodily feeling.
Analgesic	Any medication intended to relieve pain.
Anastomosis	Joining up two ends of a hollow organ.
Aneurysm	A localised dilation of the walls of a blood vessel, (usually an artery).
Angina	A disease causing sudden intense pain in the chest as a result of a lack of adequate blood supply to the heart muscles.
Angina pectoris	Angina.
Angiocardiogram	A series of X-ray films of the heart after the intravenous injection of a radio-opaque substance.
Angiogram	A series of X-ray films taken after a radio-opaque substance is introduced into the blood vessels.
Angioma	A tumour consisting of a mass of blood vessels.
Ankylosing spondylitis	A disease of the spine causing gradual loss of mobility in the joints between the vertebrae.
Ankylosis	Immobility or stiffness of a joint.
Anodyne	Treatment to ease pain.
Anosmia	Loss of sense of smell.
Anoxia	Without oxygen
Anterior	The front part.
Anteroposterior	Extending from the front to the back.
Antibiotic	A chemical substance capable of destroying micro-organisms (including bacteria).



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Antibody	A protein produced in the blood by the presence of antigen.
Anti-D	An antibody which must be given to a mother with a rhesus negative blood group who delivers or aborts a rhesus positive baby or fetus in order to prevent the mother developing antibodies which will damage a subsequent baby.
Antigen	A substance that stimulates the production of antibodies.
Antipyretic	Fever reducing drug.
Antrectomy	An operation to remove part of the stomach.
Anuria	Failure of secretion of urine (a symptom of kidney failure).
Anus	The excretory opening at the end of the alimentary canal situated in the perineum.
Aorta	The largest blood vessel in the body which conveys oxygen rich blood from the heart to all parts of the body except the lungs.
Apgar score	A system for rating an infant's physical condition immediately after birth by assessing heart rate, colour, respiration and muscle tone. 10 = Excellent. 0 = Dead.
Aphasia	Absence of ability to speak.
Apoplexy	A stroke.
Appendectomy	An operation to remove the appendix.
Appendicitis	An inflamed condition of the appendix.
Appendix	A small worm like structure which is attached to the caecum and which has no apparent function.
Apraxia	A failure of the brain resulting in loss of memory of how to make certain movements.
Arachnoid	The middle of the three membranes that cover the spinal cord and brain.
Arachnoiditis	Inflammation of the arachnoid.
Arrhythmia	Any variation from the normal rhythms of the heart beat.
Arteriography	The visualisation of arteries by means of X-rays after injection of radio-opaque material.
Arteriosclerosis	Hardening of the arteries.
Artery	A vessel carrying blood from the heart to different parts of the body.
Arthritis	Inflammation of a joint.
Arthrodesis	An operation to fuse joints.
Arthropathy	Disease of a joint.
Babinski's reflex	A movement of the great toe towards the sole of the foot upon stimulation of the sole of the foot.
Bacteria	A parasitic micro organism which causes disease.
Barium meal	A preparation of barium sulphate which is radio-opaque and which is swallowed by a patient prior to x-ray examination of the alimentary canal
Barotitis	Earache caused by eg climbing or descending in an aeroplane.
Barotrauma	Injury to the middle ear caused by Barotitis.
Basal	Relating to a base.



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Basal metabolic rate	A test of thyroid function.
Bells palsy	Paralysis of the face.
Biceps	A muscle that has two heads.
Bicuspid	A premolar tooth.
Bilateral	Occurring on both sides.
Bilateral carotid bruits	Noises which suggest narrowing of the carotid arteries by atheroma.
Bile	An alkaline fluid which is secreted by the liver and stored in the gall bladder.
Bile duct	A duct conveying bile from the liver via the gall bladder to the intestine.
Binocular	Involving both eyes.
Biopsy	The removal and examination of living tissue for diagnostic purposes.
Bladder	The pouch situated in the anterior part of the pelvis which serves as a storage tank for urine before it is discharged.
Blepharitis	Inflammation of the eyelids.
Blood pressure	The pressure of blood circulating within the vascular system.
Bowel	The intestine
Brachial	Relating to the arm.
Brachioradialis muscle	A muscle on the side of the forearm.
Bradycardia	Slowing of the heart rate.
Bright's disease	Nephritis.
Bronchitis	An inflammation of the bronchus.
Bronchus	The air passages between the trachea and the lungs.
Bruise	The visible sign of a haematoma.
Bunion	An inflammatory swelling of the bursa of the joint of the big toe.
Bursa	A small fluid filled sac which reduces friction in a joint.
Bursitis	Inflammation of a bursa (eg. housemaid's knee).
Byssinosis	A form of lung disease, resulting from inhalation of cotton flax or hemp dust.
Cacosmia	Irregularity in the sense of smell caused by brain damage.
Caecum	Cecum
Caesarean section	An incision in the abdominal wall in order to deliver a baby.
Calcification	The hardening of organic tissue caused by the accumulation of calcium.
Calcium	A metallic substance present in bones and teeth.
Callus	Bony material which grows around and between two ends of a fractured bone whilst healing.
Cancer	A malignant tumour arising from epithelial cells.
Canine teeth	The four teeth (two in each jaw) situated between the incisors and the premolars.



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Canthus	The corner (e.g. of the eye).
Capitate bone	The largest of the carpal bones.
Capsulitis	Inflammation around a joint.
Carcinogen	Any substance which causes cancer.
Carcinoma	A malignant cancerous tumour.
Cardiac	Relating to the heart.
Caries	Tooth or bone decay.
Carotid	Relating to or situated near one of the carotid arteries.
Carotid arteries	The two main arteries that carry blood to the head and neck.
Carpal	Relating to the wrist.
Carpal bones	The eight bones which form the wrist.
Carpus	Bones of the wrist.
Cartilage	Tissue situated at the ends of bones which is firm, flexible and slightly elastic (gristle).
Cataract	Opacity in the lens of the eye which may be partial or complete.
Catharsis	Cleansing the bowels.
Catheter	A flexible tube which is inserted into the body to extract or introduce fluid.
Cat scan	Computerized axial tomography.
Cauda equina	A sheaf of nerve roots which runs down through the lower parts of the spinal canal.
Causalgia	A burning pain or intense hypersensitivity in a peripheral nerve.
Cauterization	The process of burning a part with an instrument or other agent.
Cecum	The pouch which forms the beginning of the large intestine.
Cell	The smallest unit of an organism that is able to function independently.
Cellulitis	An inflammation of tissue.
Cephalalgia	Pain in the head.
Cephalic	Relating to the head
Cerebellum	The part of the brain whose function is co-ordination of voluntary movement and maintenance of body equilibrium.
Cerebral	Relating to the cerebrum.
Cerebrospinal	Relating to the brain and the spine.
Cerebrovascular accident	Stroke
Cerebrum	The dominant part of the brain associated with intellectual function, emotion and personality.
Cervical	Relating to the cervix.
Cervical spondylosis	Degeneration of the bones of the neck.
Cervix	The lower part of the uterus that extends into the vagina.



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Chest	The front part of the trunk from the head to the abdomen.
Cholecystectomy	An operation to remove the gall bladder.
Chondritis	Inflammation in a cartilage.
Chondromalacia	A condition of abnormal softness of cartilage.
Choroid	The main part of the vascular coat of the eye which is composed of two main layers, the suprachoroid lamina and the choroid proper.
Chromosome	A part of a cell which contains the genes.
Chronic	Slowly developing and long lasting.
Cicatrix	The scar of a healed wound.
Cirrhosis	Chronic disease of the liver.
Claudication	Pain which develops after a certain amount of exertion.
Clavicle	The bones connecting the shoulder blade with the breastbone.
Clawfoot	A deformity of the foot caused by paralysis of the muscles.
Clawhand	A deformity of the hand characterized by a bending forward of the fingers.
Cleft	A fissure, notch, gap or depression.
Clitoris	A small erectile organ in the female at the front of the vulva.
Closed fracture	One that does not produce an open wound.
Clostridium	A type of bacteria.
Coccydynia	Pain in the coccyx and surrounding area.
Coccygeal	Relating to the coccyx.
Coccygectomy	An operation to remove the coccyx.
Coccyx	A small triangular bone attached to the lower part of the sacrum.
Cochlea	The inner part of the ear.
Cognitive function	The ability to understand and perceive.
Colitis	Inflammation of the colon.
Collapsed lung	A condition existing when the lung contains no air.
Collar bone	The clavicle.
Colles' fracture	A fracture across the lower end of the radius.
Colon	The part of the large intestine between the caecum and the rectum.
Colostomy	A temporary or permanent artificial opening made through the abdominal wall into the colon.
Colour blindness	The inability to perceive one or more colours.
Colposcopy	Examination of the cervix through a microscope
Coma	A state of unconsciousness from which the person cannot be roused by external stimuli.
Comminuted fracture	Bone fractured into several pieces.



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Compound fracture	Where there is more than one break.
Compression fracture	A fracture associated with vertical crushing.
Computerized axial	A computerised analysis of X-rays focused at different levels tomography which produce detailed images of a particular structure.
Concussion	An injury resulting from a blow or impact.
Condyle	A rounded bulge at the end of some bones.
Congenital	Present at birth.
Conjunctivitis	Inflammation of the mucous membranes lining the eyelids.
Connective tissue	A jelly like substance which supports organs, fills the spaces around them and supports ligaments and tendons.
Contraceptive	Any agent or measure used to prevent conception.
Contusion	A bruise.
Convulsion	A violent and involuntary contraction of a muscle.
Cordectomy	An operation to remove a vocal cord.
Cornea	The transparent membrane covering the anterior part of the eyeball.
Coronary arteries	Arteries supplying blood to the walls of the heart.
Coronoid process	The swelling towards the top of the ulna.
Corpuscle	A cell which is suspended in fluid.
Cortex	The outer part of an organ.
Costal	Relating to the ribs.
Costavertebral	Relating to a rib and a vertebra.
Coxa	Hip.
Cranial	Relating to the cranium.
Cranial nerves	The nerves arising from the brain.
Craniectomy	An operation to cut away a portion of the skull.
Cranioplasty	The surgical correction or restoration of defects of the skull.
Craniosacral	Relating to the skull and the sacrum.
Craniotomy	An operation on the skull.
Creatine	A substance mainly comprised of nitrogen which is present in muscle.
Creatinine	A waste produce of creatine which is excreted by urine.
Cranium	The skull.
Crepitations	Crackling noises caused by congestion or inflammation of the lungs.
Crepitus	Grating caused by bone running against bone or roughened cartilage (usually associated with the movement of an arthritic joint).
Cruciate	Shaped like a cross.



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Crural	Relating to the leg or thigh.
Crystalline	Having the characteristic of crystal.
Cubitus	Elbow.
Cuboid bone	A bone on the side of the foot and in front of the heel bone.
Cuneiform bone	One of the bones of the ankle.
Curette	An instrument for removing dead tissue from the wall of a cavity.
Curettage	The process of using a curette.
Cushing's syndrome	Caused by malfunctioning adrenal glands resulting in obesity, high blood pressure and osteoporosis.
Cutaneous	Affecting or associated with the skin.
Cyanosis	Blueness of skin owing to circulation of imperfectly oxygenated blood.
Cyclitis	A form of inflammation of the eye.
Cycloplegia	A form of paralysis of the eye muscle.
Cyst	A blister like pouch containing fluid from degenerating, inflamed or neoplastic tissue.
Cystic duct	The normal drainage channel for the gall bladder.
Cystic fibrosis	A genetic disease affecting the lungs.
Cystitis	Inflammation of the bladder.
D & C	A surgical procedure intended to achieve dilation of the cervix and curettage of the uterus
Dactylitis	Inflammation of a digit (e.g. toe, finger).
Daltonism	Inability to distinguish between red and green.
Debridement	The excision of dead tissue from a wound in order to remove food on which organisms can grow.
Debriding	The removal of alien matter in a wound (such as dirt, dead tissue, etc) in order to clean the wound to facilitate healing.
Decubitus ulcer	Bedsore.
Defibrillation	Restoration of heart rhythm by means of an electric shock.
Dehydration	The loss or restriction of water.
Deltoid muscle	The muscle covering the shoulder region and running from the scapula and clavicle to the middle of the humerus.
Dermal	Relating to the skin.
Dermatitis	Inflammation of the skin.
Dermatoplasty	Skin grafting.
Dermis	The skin.
Detached retina	A condition where the retina becomes separated from the choroid.
Devitalize	To remove the nerve of a tooth or an organ.
Diabetes	Any of a group of diseases in which there is polyuria and/or an error of metabolism.



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Diaclasia	The deliberate surgical fracture of a bone in order to reset a deformity.
Dialysis	The removal of harmful chemicals from the blood by the use of an artificial kidney.
Diaphoresis	Increased perspiration.
Diaphragm	A thin layer of tissue stretched across an opening.
Diaphysis	The central shaft of a large bone.
Diastasis	The forcible separation of parts that are normally joined.
Digit	A finger or toe.
Dilation	The action (whether by surgery or occurring naturally) of making something wider.
Diplegia	Paralysis of both sides of the body.
Diplopia	Double vision
Diphtheria	An infectious disease which causes breathing difficulties.
Disarticulation	To separate the joints by injury or surgery.
Disc	A flat, circular, coin shaped structure.
Discography	Demonstration of a disc of a joint by the injection of a radio-opaque medium.
Dislocation	The abnormal displacement of a bone from a joint.
Distal	The extremity of a limb or organ furthest from the centre of the body.
Diverticulitis	A condition of inflammation of a diverticulum.
Diverticulosis	A condition of the colon on which the muscular wall gives way in places forming pouches which became filled with faecal material
Diverticulum	A pouch formed by diverticulosis.
Dorsal	Relating to the back part of the body.
Dorsal spine	Part of the spine where ribs join.
Dorsiflexion	The backward movement of joints.
Dorsum	The back or outer surface.
Down's syndrome	A genetic disorder resulting in a flat facial look and some mental handicap.
Duodenal	Relating to the duodenum.
Duodenitis	Inflammation of the duodenum.
Duodenum	The first 20 to 25 cm of the small intestine.
Dura mater	The outermost membrane covering the brain.
Dysarthria	Slurred speech.
Dysphasia	Partial inability to speak.
Dyspnoea	Difficulty in breathing.
Dystocia	Difficult childbirth.
Dystrophy	The deterioration or degeneration of an organ or body tissues.



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Dysuria	Pain during urination.
Eburnation	The final result of osteoarthritis, when the cartilage at the articulating surface of a bone is totally worn down.
Ecchymosis	An extravasation of blood.
Eclampsia	A toxic condition (to which pregnant women are particularly susceptible) characterised by high blood pressure and convulsions.
Ecdysis	The shedding of skin.
Eczma	A type of inflammation of the skin.
Edentulous	No teeth.
Effusion	The escape of fluid (eg. pus, blood, etc) into a body cavity.
Electrocardiogram	A tracing of the electric currents that initiate the heart beat and which is used to diagnose possible heart disorders.
Electro-encephalogram	A graph derived from a recording of brain activity and used in the diagnosis of epilepsy.
Embolism	The obstruction of a blood vessel by an embolus.
Embolus	Material (such as a blood clot or an air bubble) which is carried by the blood stream.
Embrasure	The gaps existing between neighbouring teeth.
Embryo	The human product of conception up to the first eight weeks of intrauterine life. The term fetus is used after that.
Eminence	A projection (usually describing that on a bone).
Emphysema	(1) The collection of air in certain parts of the body where it is not usually present. (2) A condition in which the lungs become grossly enlarged due to retention of air.
Enarthrosis	A joint (such as the hip or shoulder) which operates by way of a ball and socket.
Endocrine	An internal secretion.
Endometrium	The lining of the womb.
Endoscope	An instrument for examining the interior of a hollow organ.
Enema	An injection of fluid into the rectum for cleaning, healing, sedative, diagnostic or nutritive purposes.
Enophthalmos	The recession of the eyeball into the cavity of the orbit.
Enteritis	Inflammation of the mucous membrane of the intestine.
Enterocentesis	The removal of an undue quantity of fluid from the stomach (or intestine) by use of a hollow needle.
Enucleate	To remove an eye.
Enuresis	Bed wetting.
Enzyme	A protein which will catalyse a biochemical reaction.
Epicondyle	A proturbance above a condyle at the end of a bone which articulates with another bone.
Epicondylitis	Inflammation of the epicondyle of the humerus or of the area immediately surrounding it.
Epicranius	The scalp muscle.



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Epidermis	The outer protective layer of the skin.
Epidural	Relating to the outermost membrane covering the spinal cord.
Epigastric	Relating to the epigastrium.
Epigastrium	The upper part of the abdomen between the navel and the breast.
Epilepsy	An affliction of the nervous system characterised by fits.
Epiphysis	The growing part of a bone.
Epistaxis	Nose bleed.
Epithelial	Relating to or composed of epithelium.
Epithelium	A closely packed sheet of cells arranged in one or more layers, the component cells of which usually adhere to each other along their edges and surfaces.
Erb's Palsy	Birth injury to the brachial plexus.
Erythema	Superficial redness of skin in patches.
Erythrocyte	Red blood cell.
Eschar	A dry scab.
Esophagos	Oesophagos.
Ethmoid bone	A sievelike bone lying in front of the sphenoid bone which forms part of the orbit and the nasal cavity.
Eutocia	Normal labour and childbirth without complications.
Eversion	The bending outwards of a joint.
Exacerbation	Increase in severity of a disease or in the violence of symptoms.
Excise	To cut tissue away surgically.
Exploratory operation	An operation to investigate and decide upon the cause of symptoms.
Exsanguinated	Partial blood loss to a dangerous degree.
Extension	The straightening out of a joint.
Extensor	To stretch out.
Extradural	Situated on the outside of the dura mater.
Extra-ocular	Situated on the outside of the eyeball.
Extravasation	The act of forcing a fluid out of, or allowing it to escape from, its proper duct or vessel.
Exudate	Any substance which has oozed through pores (eg sweat).
Facet	The surface on a bone which is small and flat.
Faecal	Relating to faeces.
Faeces	Bodily waste derived from ingested food and discharged through the anus.
Fallopian tubes	A pair of slender tubes through which ova pass from the ovaries to the uterus.
Fauces	Structures at the back of the throat.
Femur	Thighbone.



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Femoral	Relating to the thigh.
Fetus	A human embryo from the second month of pregnancy until birth.
Fibrosis	Thickening of tissue.
Fibula	The outer and thinner of the two bones between the knee and the ankle.
Fistula	An abnormal opening between two hollow organs or a hollow organ and skin.
Flexion	The bending of a joint.
Flexor	The bending movement of a joint.
Foramen Magnor	A large opening at the base of the skull through which the spinal cord passes.
Fossa	A hollow area.
Fracture	A broken bone.
Frigidity	Lack of warmth of feeling.
Frontal	Relating or belonging to the forehead.
Frontal bone	An unimpaird cranial bone forming the forehead and the greater part of the orbital roof, and lying in front of the parietals.
Fusion	The joining together of two bones.
Gall-bladder	A pear shaped sac on the inferior surface of the right lobe of the liver in which bile is stored.
Gall-stone	A solid mass which may form in the gall-bladder.
Ganglion	A group of nerve cells with a common function, especially applied to a collection outside the central nervous system.
Gangrene	Necrosis of tissue due to cutting off the blood supply.
Gastrectomy	The surgical removal of the whole or part of the stomach.
Gastric	Relating or belonging to the stomach.
Gastritis	Inflammation of the gastric mucous membrane.
Gastro-enteritis	Inflammation of the mucous coat of the stomach and intestines as a result of Salmonella infection.
Gastro-intestinal	Relating or belonging to the stomach and the intestine.
Gastrotomy	The surgical opening of the stomach.
Gene	The part of a chromosome which is inherited and in turn passes on characteristics or traits.
Genetic	Inherited through genes.
Genioplasty	Plastic surgery to build up the cheek bone.
Genital	Relating or belonging to the reproduction organs.
Genu	The knee.
Gibbus	An angular and sharp backward curvature of the spine usually the result of a disease or tumour.
Gingivitis	Inflammation of the gum
Ginglymus	A hinge joint.
Gland	An organ which produces chemical substances.



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Glandular fever	A viral infection.
Glaucoma	A disease of the eye in which increased pressure in the eyeballs causes damage.
Glenoid cavity	A socket located on the upper outer portion of the shoulder blade.
Glossopharyngeal nerve	The 9th cranial nerve which controls the muscles of the back portion of the roof of the mouth.
Glucose	A type of sugar which circulates naturally in the blood stream.
Gluteal	Relating to the buttock.
Gluteus maximus	A large muscle arising from the ileum and the sacrum.
Gonad	The organ in which reproductive cells are formed.
Granulation	The formation of small rounded masses of tissue.
Greenstick fracture	Partial splintering of a bone.
Groin	The depression that marks the junction of the lower part of the anterior abdominal wall and the thigh.
Guarding	A reflex muscle spasm caused by application of pressure
Guillain-barré syndrome	Acute infective polyneuritis.
Gullet	Oesophagus
Gum	Fleshy tissue covering the jaw bones around the base of the teeth
Gustatory	Relating to taste organs.
Gut	Alimentary Canal.
Gynaecological	Relating or belonging to gynaecology.
Gynaecologist	A doctor who specialises in the diagnosis and treatment of diseases peculiar to women.
Gynaecology	The study of disease in women.
Haemarthrosis	The swelling and pain resulting from bleeding into a joint.
Haematoma	A collection of blood forming a swelling.
Haemoglobin	A protein which is present in the red blood cells and which carries oxygen
Haemopneumothorax	An accumulation of blood and gas in the pleural cavity.
Haemoptysis	Coughing blood
Haemorrhage	The escape of blood from any part of the vascular system (ie bleeding).
Haemothorax	The escape of blood into the pleural cavity.
Halitosis	Bad breath.
Hallux	Great (big) toe.
Hamate bone	The medial bone in the distal row of carpal bones.
Hamstring	A tendon at the back of the knee.
Hemiparesis	Partial paralysis of one side of the body.
Hemiplegia	Paralysis of one side of the body.



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Hepaticostomy	The making of a surgical opening in the bile duct.
Hereditary	Transmitted from one generation to another.
Hepatitis	Inflammation of the liver. The most common causes are alcohol abuse or infection by one of 5 different viruses (A, B, C, D & E).
Hernia	The protrusion of an internal organ through a defect in the wall of the anatomical cavity in which it normally lies.
Herniation	The process of formation of a hernia.
Hernioplasty	The surgical repair of a hernia.
Herpes	A type of inflammatory disease of the skin or mucous membrane.
Hiatus	An opening.
Histamine	A type of amine
Histogenesis	Tissue formation.
Histology	The study of the structure of tissues by means of microscopy.
Hodgkins's disease	A malignant disease characterised by enlargement of the lymph glands.
Homeostasis	The system whereby body functions (temperature, blood pressure, etc) remain in equilibrium whatever the outside environment.
Homoplasty	The repair of damaged tissue by grafting on similar tissues from another of the same species.
Hormone	A chemical substance which is produced in a gland and transported to a certain tissue upon which it has some specific effect.
Humerus	The longest and largest bone of the arm.
Hyalitis	A form of inflammation of the eye.
Hypercarbia	Excess carbon dioxide.
Hydramnios	Excessive amniotic fluid.
Hydrocephalus	Swelling of the brain due to the accumulation of excess fluid.
Hydrogen	The lightest of the chemical elements, gaseous, colourless, odour-less and tasteless.
Hyoid bone	A V-shaped bone situated at the base of the tongue.
Hyperacusis	Excessive sensitivity to sight, sound, taste and smell.
Hyperaemia	Excess blood in a particular part of the body.
Hyperaesthesia	Excessive sensitivity to sound, taste, smell and feeling.
Hypercarbia	Excess carbon dioxide
Hyperextension	Abnormal movement of a limb beyond its limit.
Hypertension	High blood pressure.
Hypertrophy	Enlargement of cells generating an increase in the size of an organ or tissue.
Hyperventilation	Abnormally fast or deep breathing.
Hypoglossal nerve	The 12th and last cranial nerve which supplies the muscles of the tongue.



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Hypoplasia	The failure of tissue to develop fully.
Hypothalamus	The neural control centre at the base of the brain concerned with hunger, thirst, sobriety and other autonomic functions.
Hypothyroidism	An under active thyroid.
Hypotropia	Squint.
Hypoxaemia	Lack of oxygen in the blood.
Hypoxia	A supply of oxygen to the tissues which is inadequate to maintain normal tissue respiration.
Hysterectomy	An operation to remove the uterus.
Ileotomy	Surgical incision of the ileum.
Ileum	The part of the alimentary canal between the jejunum and the caecum.
Iliac	Relating to the ilium.
Iliac fossa	The hollow area which can be felt on the surface of the body at each of the two lower corners of the abdomen.
Ilium	The hip bone.
Immune system	The body's defence against foreign substances, eg bacteria, viruses and parasites.
Immunoglobulin	A particular type of protein.
Incisors	The four front teeth in each jaw.
Incontinence	The lack of voluntary control over the discharge of faeces or urine.
Incus	A bone situated in the middle ear.
Induration	Excessive toughening of an organ or tissue.
Infarction	Death of the whole or part of organ caused by the obstruction of blood supply.
Inferior	Lower.
Infertility	Inability to produce children.
Inflammation	The reaction of living tissue in response to injury or infection characterised by heat, redness, swelling and pain.
Infra-orbital	Situated below the level of the floor of the orbit.
Inguinal	Of the groin.
Innominate bone	The hip bone.
Inoculate	To introduce into the body the bacteria which causes a disease in order to induce immunity from it.
Insomnia	Inability to sleep.
Insulin	A protein hormone secreted by the pancreas.
Intercostal	Situated between ribs.
Internal rotation	Rotating a limb inwards.
Interstitial	Occurring in the space between organs.
Intervertebral	Between two adjacent vertebrae.



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Intestine	The part of the alimentary canal that extends from the stomach to the anus.
Intracranial	Inside the skull.
Intramuscular	Occurring within the substance of a muscle.
Intraocular	Within the eye.
Intrauterine	Inside the womb.
Intravenous	Within or introduced into a vein.
Intravenous injection	An injection into the vein.
Introitus	An aperture.
Iridoplegia	Paralysis of the iris in the eye.
Iris	A thin muscular diaphragm that controls the size of the pupil of the eye.
Iritis	Inflammation of the iris.
Iritomy	Surgical incision of the iris.
Iron	A metal which is a necessary ingredient of blood.
Ischaemia	Deficiency of blood in a part of the body.
Ischium	One of the three sections of the hip bone.
Isometric	Having equal dimension.
Jaundice	A yellowing of the skin through the accumulation of bile products in the blood.
Jejunum	The part of the small intestine extending from the end of the duodenum to the ileum.
Jugular vein	The chief vein of the head and neck which carries blood from the head to the heart.
Juxta-articular	In close proximity to a joint.
Keloid	An overgrowth of fibrous tissue usually on the site of a scar.
Keratotomy	An operation to remove a superficial layer of the cornea.
Keratitis	Inflammation of the cornea.
Keratoplasty	Corneal graft.
Ketoacidosis	Acidosis caused by fat breaking down.
Kidney	One of two organs to the right and left of the lumbar region which filter waste products from the blood which are then excreted as urine.
Kirschner wire	Wire used in traction of the skeleton.
Knuckle	A prominence produced by the head of any of the metacarpal bones.
Kyphosis	Hunch-back .
Labial	Relating to the lips (either of the mouth or the vulva).
Labioplasty	Surgical repair to the lips (either of the mouth or the vulva).
Labyrinth	An interconnecting system of cavities in the inner ear.
Labyrinthitis	Inflammation of the ear.



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Laceration	A tear or cut.
Lachrymal	Relating to the production of tears.
Lacrimal bone	A small bone forming the anterior part of the medial wall of the orbit and part of the side wall of the nose.
Laminectomy	An operation to relieve the symptoms of a ruptured intervertebral disc (a slipped disc)
Laparoscope	A type of trocar provided with an illuminating mechanism with which the abdomen can be examined.
Laparoscopy	A technique to inspect the pelvic organs by expanding the abdominal cavity with gas, and then inserting a laparoscope.
Laparotomy	Incision into the abdomen to explore for the possibility of some disease.
Large intestine	The part of the alimentary canal consisting of the cecum, colon and rectum.
Laryngeal	Relating to the larynx.
Laryngectomy	An operation to remove part of the larynx.
Larynx	The organ situated at the upper end of the trachea and concerned with the production of the voice.
Lateral	To the side.
Laxative	An agent which stimulates the evacuation of the bowel.
Lesion	A localised area of tissue damage.
Ligament	Flexible fibrous tissue that holds together, supports and protects two bones at a joint thereby preventing abnormal movement.
Lipoma	A swelling mainly comprised of fat.
Liver	A gland situated on the right side of the upper abdomen which secretes bile and detoxifies certain poisons.
Lordosis	Forward curvature of the spine (the opposite of Kyphosis).
Lumbago	Pain in the lower part of the back.
Lumbar	Relating to the lower back.
Lumen	A cavity in a tubular organ.
Lunate bone	A bone of the wrist .
Lungs	The two organs enclosed by the ribs which oxygenate blood and remove carbon dioxide.
Lymph	Fluid that flows in the lymphatic channels.
Lymphatic channels	An extensive network of vessels that carry interstitial fluid to the blood.
Lymphodermia	Any morbid condition affecting the lymph glands.
Lymphoid	Resembling a lymph.
McMurray's test	A test to diagnose tearing of the knee cartilage.
Macrocytosis	Abnormally large red blood cells.
Macula	A circumscribed spot in any tissue.
Malacia	The softening of an organ or tissue caused by disease.



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Malar	Relating to the cheek or cheek bone
Malignant	Threatening life or tending to cause death (the opposite of benign).
Malingerer	An individual who feigns disease or illness.
Malleolus	A rounded bony prominence on either side of the ankle joint.
Malocclusion	The lack of occlusion between the teeth of opposite jaws when the jaws are at rest.
Malunion	The failure of bones properly to align after fracture.
Mammary	Relating to the mammary gland.
Mammary gland	The breast.
Mammoplasty	An operation to reduce the size of the female breasts.
Mandible	The lower jaw.
Marrow	The fatty substance that fills the cavities of bones.
Mastectomy	An operation to remove a breast.
Mastication	Chewing food.
Maxilla	Either of the pair of bones constituting the upper jaw.
Medial	Middle.
Median	Placed in the middle.
Median nerve	One of the nerves of the forearm and hand.
Medulla	The innermost part of an organ.
Medulla oblongata	The lower portion of the brain containing the control centres of the heart and lungs.
Melaena	The presence of blood in faeces.
Melanoma	A tumour consisting of darkly pigmented cells.
Membrane	A thin layer of tissue which covers a surface.
Meningitis	Inflammation of the membranes of the brain or spinal cord.
Menisectomy	Removal of cartilage in the knee.
Meniscus	A crescent shaped cartilage in the wrist and knee joints.
Mesothelioma	A tumour of the lining of the lung usually the result of exposure to asbestos.
Metabolic acidosis	Low pH due to the presence of lactic acid.
Metabolism	The chemical processes that occur in living organisms
Metacarpal bones	Any of the bones of the palm of the hand.
Metaphysis	That part of the bone which is growing between the ends and the shaft.
Metastasis	The transfer of disease from its primary site to other parts of the body.
Metatarsal bones	Five long bones forming the skeleton of the anterior part of the foot.
Metatarsalgia	Aching pain in the region of the metatarsal bones.
Metrorrhexis	Rupture of the womb.



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Micro-organism	An organism of microscopic size.
Molar teeth	The broad topped teeth used for grinding which are situated at the back of the mouth.
Monoplegia	Paralysis of one limb.
Morbid	Relating to disease.
Morton's neuralgia	A condition associated with falling of the metatarsal arch.
Motile	Capable of moving independently and spontaneously.
Motor neurones	The nerves which stimulate movement.
Mucous membrane	A membrane that lines a body cavity, which is open to the external environment and which releases mucus.
Mucus	A slimy protective substance released by a membrane.
Muscle	A bundle of bony slender cells that are able to contract and hence produce movement.
Myasthenia	Weakness of muscles.
Myasthenia gravis	An autoimmune disease which causes weakness in muscles.
Myectomy	An operation to remove part of a muscle.
Myelitis	Inflammation of bone marrow.
Myelogram	An x-ray of the spinal canal after the injection of a radio-opaque contrast medium into the subarachnoid space.
Myocardial	Relating to the myocardium.
Myocardial infarction	Heart attack.
Myocardium	The middle of the three layers which form the walls of the heart.
Myoclonus	A brief twitching muscular spasm.
Myodynia	Muscle pain.
Myoglobin	A protein which is present in blood and gives it its red colour.
Myositis	Inflammation of muscles.
Myotaxis	Muscular extension (stretching).
Myotomy	An operation to divide a muscle.
Narcotic	A drug that induces sleep.
Nares	Nostrils.
Nasal	Relating to the nose.
Nasal cavity	The area behind the nostrils
Nasal septum	The dividing partition that separates the nostrils.
Nausea	A feeling of sickness with a desire to vomit.
Navel	The scar in the centre of the abdomen where the umbilical cord was attached.
Navicular bone	A bone situated on the side of the foot.



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Necrophilism	Unnatural pleasure in corpses and in being in their presence.
Necrosis	Death of tissue.
Neoplasm	Tumour.
Nephritis	Inflammation of the kidneys.
Nephrotomy	An operation into the kidney.
Nerve	Fibres along which impulses pass from one part of the body to another.
Nervous system	The sensory and control mechanism of the body consisting of a network of nerve cells.
Neural	Relating to nerves or the nervous system.
Neuralgia	Pain along the course of one or more nerves.
Neurasthenia	Irritability, headache, dizziness, anxiety, impatience.
Neuritis	Inflammation of a nerve, with pain, tenderness and loss of function.
Neurectomy	An operation to remove a nerve.
Neuro-anastomosis	The surgical formation of an anastomosis between nerves.
Neurocranium	The part of the skull containing the brain.
Neurology	The section of medicine that deals with the study and treatment of diseases of the nervous system.
Neuroma	Abenign tumour.
Neuropathy	Any disorder of peripheral nerves (usually causing numbness and weakness).
Neuropraxia	The temporary failure or impairment of functions due to a disorder of the nervous system.
Neuroretinitis	Inflammation of the optic nerve and retina.
Neurosis	A pathological abnormal emotional state characterised by an inability to deal efficiently with anxiety.
Neurosurgery	Surgery to treat disease and disorders of the brain and spinal cord.
Nocturia	The need to arise from sleep in order to urinate
Node	A small knot of tissue.
Nucleus pulposus	The soft pulpy centre of an intervertebral disc.
Nutation	Nodding the head.
Nystagmus	Involuntary fluttering of the eyes.
Obesity	An excessive accumulation of fat in the body.
Obstetrics	The branch of medicine dealing with the care of women during pregnancy and childbirth.
Occipital bone	The bone at the posterior and inferior part of the skull and containing the foramen magnum.
Occiput	The back of skull.
Occupational therapy	A procedure whereby a person is given something practical to do to facilitate recovery from illness.
Ocular	Relating to the eye



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Oedema	Swelling due to accumulation of fluid in tissue.
Oesophagitis	Inflammation of the gullet.
Oesophagus	The part of the alimentary canal between the pharynx and the stomach (gullet).
Olfaction	The sense of smell.
Olfactory nerves	The nerves of smell.
Omphalic	Relating to the umbilicus.
Onych	Relating to the nails.
Onychalgia	A painful condition affecting the nails.
Oophorectomy	An operation to remove an ovary.
Open fracture	When a broken bone pierces the skin.
Ophthamectomy	The surgical removal of the eye.
Ophthalmic nerve	The nerve supplying the eyeball and eyelids.
Ophthalmitis	Inflammation of the eye.
Ophthalmologist	A specialist in the investigation and treatment of eye diseases and defects.
Ophthalmorrhaxis	The bursting open of the eye ball.
Optic nerve	The nerve of sight.
Optometrist	A person who practises optometry.
Optometry	The assessment of visual acuity and the correction of visual defects by the fitting of spectacles.
Orbit	The large bony cavity which contains the eyeball.
Orchidectomy	The surgical removal of the testis.
Orchitis	Inflammation affecting the testis.
Organ	A separate and distinct functional unit of the body.
Organic	Relating to a body organ.
Organism	Anything resembling a living creature in structure and behaviour.
Orthodontist	A dentist who specialises in correcting the mis-alignment of teeth.
Orthopaedics	Relating to the diseases and disorders that cause damage to bones and joints.
Orthopnoea	Shortness of breath on lying flat.
Os calcis	Heel bone.
Ossification	The process by which bone is formed.
Ostectomy	The surgical removal of a bone.
Osteitis	Bone inflammation.
Osteitis Deformans	A chronic disease of the bones causing inflammation and deformity
Osteoarthritis	A degenerative disease of a joint caused by wear and tear
Osteoarthrotomy	An operation to excise the bone adjoining a joint.



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Osteochondritis	Inflammation of a bone and its adjacent cartilage.
Osteomyelitis	Inflammation of the interior of a bone.
Osteopath	A person who practices osteopathy.
Osteopathy	A method of treating disease by manipulation.
Osteoporosis	Loss of bony tissue causing bones to become softer and liable to bend or fracture.
Osteorrhaphy	An operation to suture or wire together the fragments of a fractured bone.
Osteotomy	An operation to cut through a bone.
Otology	The branch of medicine which deals with the ear.
Otitis	Inflammation of the ear.
Otosclerosis	A thickening of the bone of the middle and internal ear producing deafness.
Otoplasty	Surgical repair of the ear.
Ova	The plural of ovum.
Ovary	The female gonad.
Ovulation	The development and discharge of an ovum.
Ovum	A female egg.
Paget's disease	Osteitis deformans.
Palate	The roof of the mouth.
Palmar	The palm of the hand.
Palmarflexion	The bending of the wrist towards the arm.
Palpable	Enlarged.
Palpate	To examine or explore by touch.
Palpitation	Rapid heart action.
Palsy	Paralysis.
Pancreas	A large gland lying on the abdominal wall which secretes insulin.
Pancreatitis	Inflammation of the pancreas.
Papanicolaou's stain	A method of staining smears of various body secretions to detect the presence of a or smear malignant process.
Paraesthesia	Pins and needles.
Paralysis	Inability to move parts of the body.
Paranoia	A mental disorder characterized by delusions of persecution.
Paraparesis	Paralysis affecting the lower extremities.
Parathesis	Heightened sensitivity of sensation.
Paraplegia	Paralysis of both legs.



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Parasympathetic	The part of the nervous system which acts in opposition to the sympathetic nervous system and which slows the heartbeat.
Paravertebral	Situated alongside of the spinal column.
Paresis	Partial paralysis.
Parietal	Relating to the walls of a bodily cavity .
Parietal bone	One of the bones forming the top of the skull.
Parkinson's disease	A progressive chronic disorder of the nervous system characterised by impaired muscular co-ordination.
Parosmia	Experience of a smell which is not there.
Paroxysm	A sudden attack of a disease .
Patch testing	The application of a number of substances to the body to establish which are responsible for an allergy.
Patella	Knee cap.
Patellectomy	An operation to remove the patella.
Patellofemoral	Relating to the patella and the femur.
Pathogenic	Disease producing.
Pathological	Caused by disease
Pathology	The study of disease.
Pelvic floor	The partition, consisting of muscles, between the pelvis and the perineum.
Pelvimetry	The measurement of the shape and dimensions of the pelvis.
Pelvis	The basin-shaped ring of bone at the lower end of the trunk.
Pemphigus	An autoimmune disorder of the skin.
Penis	The male organ of copulation.
Percussion	The art of striking the chest or abdominal wall in order to produce sound vibrations from which the nature of the underlying structures can be deduced.
Periarthritis	Inflammation of tissue around a joint.
Pericarditis	Inflammation of the pericardium.
Pericardium	The membrane which encloses the heart.
Peridentitis	Periodontitis.
Perineum	The area between the anus and the genital organs.
Periodontal	Situated around a tooth
Periodontitis	Inflammation of the periodontal membrane.
Periostitis	Inflammation of the membrane on the surface of a bone.
Peripheral	Near the surface of an organ.
Peritoneoscope	A surgical instrument for inspection of the contents of the abdomen through an incision in the abdominal wall.



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Peritoneum	The membrane which lines the abdominal cavity.
Peritonitis	Inflammation of the peritoneum caused by bacterial infection.
Pertussis	Whooping cough.
Petechia	A small spot (usually red or purple) caused by extravasation of blood.
Petit mal	A form of epileptic fit characterized by abrupt loss of consciousness without convulsion and with rapid recovery.
Phagocytes	Cells which have the ability to destroy bacteria.
Phalanges	The main bones of the digits of both the hand and foot.
Pharynx	The part of the alimentary canal between the mouth and the oesophagus
Phenylketonuria	An hereditary disorder that produces brain damage resulting in severe mental retardation.
Phlebitis	Inflammation of a vein.
Phlebotomy	Venesection.
Phobia	Fear.
Photosensitivity	Abnormal or excessive sensitivity to light.
Phrenic arteries	Branches of the abdominal aorta.
Phrenic nerve	A paired nerve which supplies the diaphragm, pericardium and pleura.
Physiology	The study of how the normal body works.
Physiotherapy	Treatment to restore full movement of a limb by massage, manipulation and exercise.
Pia mater	The innermost membrane covering the brain.
Pisiform	A bone in the wrist.
Pituitary	A gland situated at the base of the brain which secretes hormones affecting skeletal growth.
Placenta	A vascular organ formed in the uterus during pregnancy and which provides oxygen and nutrients to the fetus.
Plantar	Relating to the sole of the foot.
Plantar flexion	Flexing the foot.
Plantaris	The muscle in the sole of the foot.
Plaques	Raised patches of skin.
Plasma	The fluid portion of the blood in which the blood corpuscles are suspended.
Platelet	A very small cell in the blood.
Pleura	The membrane enveloping the lungs.
Pleural cavity	The space between the covering of the lungs and the inner surface of the chest wall.
Pleurisy	Inflammation of the pleura.
Plexus	A network of nerves or blood vessels.
Pneumocardial	Relating to the lungs and the heart.



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Pneumocentesis	Lung puncture in order to aspirate the contents.
Pneumoconiosis	Lung disease caused by inhalation of dust.
Pneumonia	Inflammation of the spongy tissue of the lung in which the air sacs become filled with fluid making breathing difficult.
Pneumonitis	Inflammation of the lung.
Pneumopericarditis	Pericarditis associated with the presence of air or gas in the pericardium
Pneumothorax	Collection of air in the pleural cavity.
Podiatrist	Achiropodist.
Poliomyelitis	An acute inflammation of the spinal cord due to a virus infection.
Pollux	Thumb.
Polycystic	Composed of or containing many cysts.
Polycythaemia	An excess of red cells in the blood.
Polyneuritis	Inflammation of several nerves at the same time.
Polypus	Tumour attached by a stalk to a surface.
Polyuria	The need to urinate frequently.
Pons	Abridge.
Popliteal	Relating to or near to the part of the leg behind the knee.
Posterior	The back part.
Postero-anterior	From the back to the front.
Postnatal	Relating or belonging to the period immediately following birth.
Postpartum	Following childbirth.
Potassium	A soft white metal related to sodium.
Pott's disease	Tuberculosis of the spine.
Pott's fracture	Fracture of the lower end of the fibula, with outward displacement of the ankle and foot.
Pre-eclampsia	A condition arising in pregnancy and characterised by the presence of hypertension, oedema, and/or proteinuria.
Premolar teeth	The teeth which are situated between the molar and canine teeth. There are two on each side of both jaws.
Prenatal	Preceding birth.
Pressure sore	Decubitus ulcer.
Priapism	Persistent erection of the penis.
Proctitis	Inflammation of the rectum.
Proctologist	A doctor who makes a special study of diseases of the anus and rectum.
Prognosis	A doctor's assessment of how long it will take for a patient to recover.
Progressive	Advancing in severity.



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Prolapse	A slipping down or displacement of an organ.
Pronation	The rotational movement of the forearm so that the palm faces downwards.
Proprietary	A drug made and labelled by a particular drug company.
Prostate	A gland (confined to the male) which surrounds the neck of the bladder.
Prostatectomy	An operation to remove the prostate by surgery.
Prostatitis	An inflammatory condition of the prostate.
Prosthesis	An artificial part.
Protein	A type of chemical compound which is present in all living organisms.
Proteinuria	The presence of protein in the urine.
Prothrombin	A constituent of plasma that clots the blood.
Proximal	Nearer to the centre of the body.
Psychiatrist	A doctor who specialises in the diagnosis and treatment of mental disorders.
Psycho-analysis	A procedure developed by Freud for the investigation of unconscious mental processes.
Psycho-analyst	A person who practises psycho-analysis.
Psychologist	A person who practices psychology
Psychology	The study of human behaviour by objective testing.
Psychosis	A term applied generally to any kind of mental disorder.
Ptosis	The prolapse or dropping of an organ.
Pubis	The anterior portion of the hip bone.
Pulmonary	Of the lung.
Pulse	A regular contraction and expansion of an artery at each beat of the heart.
Pupil	The dark circular aperture at the centre of the iris of the eye through which light passes.
Purgative	Laxative.
Purpura	A blood disease which causes a red rash.
Pus	A fluid produced by inflammation of tissue consisting of liquified cells.
Pyelonephritis	Inflammation of the kidneys.
Pyorrhoea	A discharge of pus.
Pyrexia	Fever.
Pyrophobia	Morbid fear of fire.
Pyrosis	Heartburn.
Quadrant	One quarter of a circle.
Quadriceps femoris	The mass of muscles on the front of the thigh.
Quadriplegia	Weakness (or paralysis) of the upper limbs.



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Rabies	A disease of warm-blooded animals particularly foxes, wolves, bats and dogs which causes fear of water.
Rachialgia	Any painful infection of the spinal column.
Radial nerve	The largest branch of the posterior cord of the brachial plexus.
Radiculitis	Inflammation affecting the root of a spinal nerve.
Radiculopathy	Any diseased condition of the roots of nerves.
Radio-opaque	Not permitting x-rays to pass through.
Radius	The bone to the side of the forearm.
Raynaud's Disease	Vibration white finger.
Rebound	Pain on removal of pressure
Rectal	Relating or belonging to the rectum.
Rectocele	Protrusion of the wall of the rectum into the perineum or vagina.
Rectum	The lower part of the alimentary canal between the colon and the anus.
Reduction	Bringing back to the normal position.
Reimplantation	The reinsertion in its original situation of an organ or part which has been removed.
Renal	Relating to the kidneys.
Resection	Any surgical removal of a portion of the body.
Respiration	The process by which a living organism takes in oxygen and gives out carbon dioxide.
Respiratory	Acidosis Low pH due to the presence of carbon dioxide.
Retardation	Backwardness.
Retina	The innermost coat of the eyeball.
Retinal	Relating to the retina.
Retinitis	Inflammation of the retina.
Retinopathy	Any diseased condition of the retina.
Retrenchment	A surgical procedure for the removal of redundant tissue.
Rheumatoid arthritis	A progressive inflammatory disease of joints.
Rheumatism	Any ache in joints
Rhinitis	Inflammation of the nasal mucous membrane.
Rhinoplasty	The correction by surgery of a deformity of the nose.
Rhizotomy	The cutting of a nerve root for the relief of pain.
Rickets	A disease in children caused by a deficiency of vitamins which results in the softening of bones.
Right homonymous hemianopia	Visual loss of the right field of vision.
Rigor mortis	Stiffening ensuing soon after death.



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Rubella	German measles.
Rubeosis	Redness of the skin.
Rupture	Hernia
Sac	A pouch like part.
Sacral	Relating or belonging to the sacrum.
Sacrolumbar	Relating or belonging to the sacrum and the lumbar region.
Sacrum	A curved triangular bone in the lower part of the back.
Saline	Salt.
Salmonella	A type of bacteria.
Salpingectomy	The surgical removal of a fallopian tube.
Salpingitis	Inflammation of the fallopian tubes.
Saphenous vein	Superficial veins of the foot and leg.
Sarcoidosis	A disease which causes inflammation of organs eg skin, eyes, lungs.
Sarcoma	A malignant tumour of connective tissue.
Sartorius muscle	A long strap like muscle that aids flexion of the knee.
Scaphoid bone	A bone in the wrist.
Scapula	The shoulder blade.
Sciatica	Pain in the sciatic nerve down the back of the leg.
Sciatic nerve	The largest nerve in the body, running from the lower spine to the pelvis and down the back of each thigh.
Sclera	The outer, opaque fibrous coat of the eyeball.
Sclerosis	Hardening of a tissue due to inflammation.
Scoliosis	Abnormal lateral curvature of the spine.
Scrotum	A pouch of skin and subcutaneous tissue containing the testes, situated below the root of the penis.
Section	To cut or divide an organ by surgery.
Semen	Aseed.
Sepsis	Infection with pus forming micro-organisms.
Septicaemia	A type of infection in which the blood stream is invaded by bacteria.
Septum	A dividing partition between two tissues or cavities.
Sequestrectomy	An operation to remove dead bone.
Sequestrum	A portion of dead bone which has become detached from the healthy bone tissue.
Serology	A branch of medical science which is concerned with the study of blood serum.
Serum	A yellowish fluid that remains after whole blood or plasma has been allowed to clot.



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Sign	What a doctor can see.
Silicosis	A form of lung disease, caused by inhalation of silicon dust.
Simple fracture	When a bone breaks cleanly in two.
Sinus	Any bodily cavity or hollow space.
Sinusitis	Inflammation of a sinus.
Small intestine	The part of the alimentary canal consisting of the duodenum, jejunum and ileum.
Sodium	A metallic element used in medicine.
Soleus muscle	A muscle of the calf.
Spasm	A sudden, powerful, involuntary contraction of a muscle.
Sperm	Semen.
Sphenoid bone	A bone forming the central part of the base of the skull.
Sphincter	Any muscle closing an orifice.
Spina bifida	A defect in the development of the spine in which the spinal cord protrudes through a gap in the backbone.
Spinal canal	A passage through the middle of the spinal column that contains the spinal cord.
Spinal column	The backbone.
Spinal cord	A cord of nerve tissue within the spinal canal which together with the brain forms the nervous system.
Spirometer	Apparatus used to determine the capacity of the lungs.
Spleen	A gland situated near the stomach which filters bacteria from the blood.
Splenectomy	The surgical removal of the spleen.
Spondylitis	Inflammation of the joints of the back bone.
Spondylo-listhesis	The slipping forward of one vertebra onto another.
Spondylolysis	The breaking down of vertebrae.
Spondylosis	Osteoarthritis of the spine.
Sprain	Injury by sudden traction to the muscles or ligaments although not sufficient to cause a fracture.
Spur	A projecting portion of bone.
Stapes	One of the bones in the cavity of the ear which has a resemblance to a stirrup.
Staphylococcus	A type of bacteria.
Stenosis	The abnormal narrowing of an opening or passage.
Sternum	The breast bone.
Stethoscope	An instrument for listening to sounds within the body.
Stillbirth	The birth of a dead baby.
Stomach	The sac like part of the alimentary canal in which food is stored until it is digested.



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Strain	To injure by overtaxing.
Streptococcus	A type of bacteria.
Stress incontinence	Incontinence caused by coughing, sneezing or laughing.
Stroke	A sudden seizure caused by the rupture of a blood vessel in the brain.
Subarachnoid space	The space between the arachnoid and the pia mater.
Subcutaneous	Beneath the skin.
Subdural haematoma	Bleeding under the skull which compresses the brain.
Subluxation	Partial dislocation of a joint, so that the bone ends are mis-aligned but still in contact.
Superficial	Near to the surface.
Supination	The outward rotation of the forearms, so that the palm lies upwards.
Supracondylar	Above a condyle.
Supraorbital	Situated above the orbit.
Suprapubic	Situated above the pubic arch.
Sural nerve	A branch of the popliteal nerve in the calf of the leg.
Suture	A surgical stitch.
Sympathetic	A part of the nervous system which acts in opposition to the parasympathetic nervous system and which accelerates the heartbeat.
Symphysis	The growing together of separate bones in a joint.
Symptoms	What the patient describes.
Syncope	A faint flow.
Syndesmosis	A fibrous joint in which the opposing surfaces are held together by a ligament.
Syndrome	A distinct group of symptoms or signs which, associated together, form a characteristic clinical picture.
Synostosis	Synostosis.
Synostosis	The joining of bones by the ossification of the connecting tissues.
Synovectomy	The cutting away of part or all of a synovial membrane.
Synovia	A fluid secreted by the membrane lining a joint.
Synovial effusion	Extra fluid generated by a synovial membrane.
Synovitis	Inflammation of the membrane lining a joint.
Tachycardia	Abnormally rapid heart rate.
Talus	The ankle bone.
Tarsalgia	Aching pain in the sole of the foot.
Tarsus	Bones of the foot.
Tay-sachs disease	A disease of childhood in which there is a progressive degeneration of nerve cells throughout the whole nervous system and in the retina.



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Temporal	Located in the region of the temple.
Temporal bone	One of a pair of bones lying at the base of the skull and housing the middle and inner ear.
Temporomandibular	Connecting the temporal bone and the mandible.
Tendinitis	Inflammation of a tendon.
Tendon	A band of fibrous tissue which attaches a muscle to a bone.
Tenoplasty	An operation to repair a damaged tendon.
Tenorrhaphy	An operation to unite the ends of a severed tendon.
Tenosynovitis	Inflammation of a tendon producing pain and swelling.
Tenotomy	The cutting of a tendon by surgery.
Tensor	A muscle that stretches or tightens some part of the body.
Testicle	The male gonad.
Testis	Testicle.
Tetanus	An infectious disease caused by organisms entering through an abrasion or wound of the skin.
Tetraplegia	Quadriplegia.
Thenar	Relating to the ball of the thumb.
Thoracic	Relating to the chest
Thoracotomy	An operation to incise the wall of the thorax.
Thorax	The chest.
Thrombophlebitis	Phlebitis following the formation of a blood clot.
Thrombosis	The presence of a thrombus which impedes blood flow.
Thrombus	A clot of co-agulated blood that forms within a blood vessel and remains at the site of the formation.
Thyroid	A gland at the base of the neck which releases hormones which control metabolism and body growth.
Tibia	The shin bone.
Tibial nerves	Nerves that constitute the main nerve supply of the leg and foot.
Tinnitus	Noise heard in the ear without external cause.
Tonsil	A mass of lymphoid tissue at the back of the throat.
Tonsillectomy	The surgical removal of a tonsil.
Torso	The body excluding the head, neck and limbs.
Torticollis	Spasm of the neck muscles, drawing the head to one side and twisting the neck.
Trabeculae	Bands of tissue which pass from the outer covering of an organ to the interior.
Trachea	The tube which carries air from the larynx to the bronchus (the windpipe).
Tracheostomy	An operation to open the windpipe so that air may obtain direct entrance into lower air passages.



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Tracheotomy	A surgical incision into the wind pipe.
Traction	The drawing or pulling of a limb or the spine.
Transurethral	Passing through the urethra.
Trapezium	A bone in the wrist near the thumb.
Trapezius muscle	A large flat muscle located in the upper portion of the back.
Trauma	A bodily injury or wound.
Trendelenburg test	A test for function of the hip muscle.
Trephination	The surgical removal of a circular disc of bone or other tissue with a cylindrical saw.
Triceps	Three-headed.
Trigeminal nerve	The 5th cranial nerve which supplies the muscles of the mandibular and maxilla.
Triquetrum	A bone in the wrist.
Trismus	Inability to open the mouth due to chronic contractions of the muscles of the jaw.
Trocar	A surgical instrument used to puncture bodily cavities.
Trochanter	Either of the two bony prominences at the upper end of the femur.
Trochlear nerve	The 4th cranial nerve which supplies the muscles of the eye.
Trunk	Torso.
Tuberculosis	A bacterial disease which affects the lungs.
Tuberosity	A rounded protuberance on the surface or side of a bone.
Tumour	An abnormal swelling formed by a new growth of cells.
Turbinate	Shaped like an inverted cone.
Tympanic cavity	The middle ear.
Typhoid	A bacterial disease which causes a fever.
Ulcer	The disintegration of the surface of the skin resulting in an open sore.
Ulna	The inner bone of the forearm.
Ulnar nerve	One of the primary nerves in the arm.
Umbilical cord	A long flexible tube like structure which connects the fetus to the placenta.
Umbilicus	Navel.
Ungual	Relating to the nails.
Urea	A colourless crystalline substance which exists in blood and tissue fluids and which is produced by protein metabolism and excreted in urine.
Ureter	Tubes which take urine from the kidney to the bladder
Urethra	The canal through which the urine passes on its way from the bladder to the exterior.
Urethritis	Inflammation of the urethra.
Urinary tract	The vessels which pass urine from the kidney to the urethra via the bladder.



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Urine	The fluid which is secreted by the kidneys and which is stored in the bladder and excreted through the urethra.
Urticaria	A skin rash caused by the sudden release of histamine
Uterus	A hollow, thick-walled, muscular organ lying within the pelvic cavity of the female and which houses the developing fetus.
Vaccination	The process or act of inoculating a person.
Vagina	The female genital canal.
Vaginitis	Inflammation of the vagina.
Vagus nerve	The 10th of the cranial nerves which supplies the heart, lungs and viscera.
Valgus	Turned away from the midline of the body.
Valgus deformity	Bow-legged.
Valvotomy	The surgical severing of a valve.
Varus	Turned inwards towards the midline of the body.
Vascular	Concerned with vessels that circulate fluids.
Vein	A vessel carrying oxygen depleted blood to the heart.
Venesection	A surgical incision into a vein.
Venography	Visualisation of veins by x-ray after injecting a radio-opaque contrast medium.
Venous	Relating to the blood circulating in the veins.
Ventral	Relating to the front part of the body.
Ventricle	A small cavity, chamber, or compartment.
Vertebra	A bony segment of the spinal column.
Viscera	Intestines.
Vertigo	Giddiness.
Virus	An organism smaller than a bacteria which is surrounded by a protein coat which causes disease.
Visceral	Concerned with the internal organs, including the heart, lungs, liver and stomach.
Visual acuity	Sharpness of vision.
Volar	The palm of the hand.
Volkman's contracture	Fixed deformity of the hand due to fibrosis of muscle following injury to blood supply.
Vomen	The thin bony part of the septum of the nose.
Vulva	The external genitals of human females.
Watershed infarction	A stroke effecting the boundary between the parietal and occipital lobes of the brain.
Whiplash	A violent forward and backward movement of the head upon the neck.
Whitlow	Inflammation around a finger nail.
Windpipe	The trachea.



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Womb	Uterus.
Wrist drop	Paralysis of the extensor muscles of the hand and digits.
Xeroderma	Dryness of the skin.
Xerophthalmia	Dryness of the cornea.
Xerosis	Abnormal dryness of the eyes.
Zygoma	The cheek bone.
Zygote	A fertilised ovum.