

**Abrasion:** A cut or scrape that typically isn't serious.

**2. Abscess:** A tender, fluid-filled pocket that forms in tissue, usually due to infection.

**3. Acute:** Signifies a condition that begins abruptly and is sometimes severe, but the duration is short.

**4. Benign:** Not cancerous.

**5. Biopsy:** A small sample of tissue that's taken for testing.

**6. Chronic:** Signifies a recurring, persistent condition like [heart disease](#).

**7. Contusion:** A bruise.

**8. Defibrillator:** A medical device that uses electric shocks to restore normal heartbeat.

**9. Edema:** Swelling caused by fluid accumulation.

**10. Embolism:** An arterial blockage, often caused by a blood clot.

**11. Epidermis:** The outer layer of the skin.

**12. Fracture:** Broken bone or cartilage.

**13. Gland:** An organ or tissue that produces and secretes fluids that serve a specific function.

**14. Hypertension:** High blood pressure.

**15. Inpatient:** A patient who requires hospitalization.

**16. Intravenous:** Indicates medication or fluid that's delivered by vein.

**17. Malignant:** Indicates the presence of

cancerous cells.

**18. Outpatient:** A patient who receives care without being admitted to a hospital.

**19. Prognosis:** The predicated outcome of disease progression and treatment.

**20. Relapse:** Return of disease or symptoms after a patient has recovered.

**21. Sutures:** Stitches, which are used to join tissues together as they heal.

**22. Transplant:** The removal of an organ or tissue from one body that is implanted into another.

**23. Vaccine:** A substance that stimulates antibody production to provide immunity against disease.

**24. Zoonotic disease:** A disease that is transmissible from animals to humans.

## **Medical prefixes and suffixes**

Medical terminology follows the same structural rules all language does, including use of prefixes and suffixes. You may be familiar with some of these from words outside the realm of medicine.

**25. A-, an-:** Lack of or without.

**26. -ation:** Indicates a process.

**27. Dys-:** Abnormal, difficult, or painful.

**28. -ectomy:** Surgical removal of something.

**29. -ismus:** Indicates a spasm or contraction.

30. **-itis**: Signifies inflammation.
31. **-lysis**: Decomposition, destruction, or breaking down.
32. **Macro-**: Large in size.
33. **Melan/o-**: Black or dark in color.
34. **Micro-**: Small in size.
35. **-ology**: The study of a particular concentration.
36. **-osis**: Indicates something that is abnormal.
37. **-otomy**: To cut into.
38. **-pathy**: Disease or disease process.
39. **-plasty**: Surgical repair.
40. **Poly-**: Many.
41. **Pseudo-**: False or deceptive, usually in regard to appearance.
42. **Retro-**: Behind or backward.

## **Medical root words**

Some medical root words are intuitive simply based on your experiences. If you're an athletic person, for example, you probably know cardiovascular exercise is any activity that gets your heart rate pumping.

43. **Cardi/o**: Related to the heart.
44. **Derm/a/o, dermat/o**: Pertaining to the skin.
45. **Encephal/o**: Related to the brain.
46. **Gastr/o**: Related to the stomach.

- 47. Hemat/o:** Pertaining to blood.
- 48. My/o:** Related to muscle.
- 49. Oste/o:** Related to bone.
- 50. Pulmon/o:** Refers to the lungs.
- 51. Rhin/o:** Related to the nose.
- 52. Sclerosis:** Hard or hardening.
- 53. Stasis:** Slowing or stopping the flow of a bodily fluid.
- 54. Therm/o:** Indicates heat.

## **Medical abbreviations and acronyms**

There are many more medical acronyms and abbreviations than what's listed below. But unless you're [planning to become a doctor](#) or another type of provider, this condensed lineup should get you up to speed.

- 55. ALS:** Advanced life support.
- 56. Bl wk:** Blood work.
- 57. BMI:** Body mass index, a measure of body fat based on height and weight.
- 58. BP:** Blood pressure.
- 59. CPR:** Cardiopulmonary resuscitation, a life-saving technique that's also called mouth-to-mouth resuscitation.
- 60. C-spine:** Cervical spine.
- 62. DNR:** Do not resuscitate, a medical order indicating providers should not perform CPR.

- 63. ED/ER:** Emergency department or emergency room.
- 64. EKG:** Electrocardiogram, a way of monitoring the heart and testing for problems.
- 65. HDL-C:** High-density lipoprotein cholesterol, often called “good” cholesterol.
- 66. HR:** Heart rate, expressed as beats per minute.
- 67. LDL-C:** Low-density lipoprotein cholesterol, often called “bad” cholesterol.
- 68. Lytes:** Electrolytes.
- 69. NICU:** Neonatal intensive care unit, a specialized unit that cares for premature infants.
- 70. OR:** Operating room where surgeries are performed.
- 71. Pre-op:** Preoperative.
- 72. Psych:** Refers to psychiatry or the psychiatric ward.
- 73. PT:** Physical therapy, a type of treatment to help patients move and feel better.
- 74. Rx:** Prescription, usually for medication but can also signify another treatment.
- 75. Stat:** Immediately.