



"Without," "Against," "Bad" and "Good"

a-, an-	without, absence of	<i>apnea</i>
anti-	against	<i>antiemetic</i>
contra-	against, opposite	<i>contraception</i>
dys-	difficult, painful, abnormal	<i>dysphagia</i>
mal-	bad, poor	<i>malabsorption</i>
eu-	normal, good	<i>eupnea</i>

Amount and Size

hyper-	above normal, excessive	<i>hyperglycemia</i>
hypo-	below normal, deficient	<i>hypothyroidism</i>
macro-	large	<i>macrocephaly</i>
micro-	small	<i>microcephaly</i>
poly-	many, much	<i>polyuria</i>
olig-, oligo-	few, scanty	<i>oliguria</i>
pan-	all	<i>pancytopenia</i>

Position and Direction

ab-	away from	<i>abduction</i>
ad-	toward	<i>adduction</i>
endo-	within, inside	<i>endoscopy</i>
exo-	outside, outward	<i>exocrine</i>
epi-	upon, above	<i>epigastric</i>
sub-	below, under	<i>sublingual</i>
supra-	above	<i>suprapubic</i>
infra-	below	<i>infraorbital</i>
inter-	between	<i>intercostal</i>
intra-	within	<i>intravenous</i>
peri-	around	<i>pericardium</i>
circum-	around	<i>circumoral</i>
para-	beside, near; also beyond or abnormal	<i>paranasal sinuses</i>
retro-	behind, backward	<i>retroperitoneal</i>
trans-	across, through	<i>transdermal</i>

Time and Speed

brady-	slow	<i>bradycardia</i>
tachy-	fast	<i>tachycardia</i>
pre-	before	<i>prenatal</i>
post-	after	<i>postprandial</i>
neo-	new	<i>neonate</i>

Numbers

mono-, uni-	one	<i>unilateral</i>
bi-, di-	two	<i>bilateral</i>
tri-	three	<i>tricuspid valve</i>
quadri-, tetra-	four	<i>quadriplegia</i>
hemi-, semi-	half	<i>hemiplegia</i>
nulli-	none	<i>nullipara</i>
primi-	first	<i>primigravida</i>

Colors

erythr/o	red	<i>erythrocyte</i>
leuk/o	white	<i>leukocyte</i>
melan/o	black, dark	<i>melanocyte</i>
cyan/o	blue	<i>cyanosis</i>
xanth/o	yellow	<i>xanthoma</i>

How to read a medical term

Prefix + root + suffix. Split the word into its parts; the suffix usually tells you what kind of word it is.

peri- around + **card** heart + **-itis** inflammation = **pericarditis**: inflammation of the pericardium, the sac around the heart.

Test yourself with our free 50-question quiz with answers:
medicalcreations.com/blogs/news/medical-terminology-quiz-with-answers



Conditions and Symptoms

-itis	inflammation	<i>appendicitis</i>
-osis	condition, often abnormal	<i>thrombosis</i>
-emia	blood condition	<i>anemia</i>
-algia, -dynia	pain	<i>arthralgia</i>
-megaly	enlargement	<i>hepatomegaly</i>
-oma	tumor, mass (benign or malignant)	<i>lipoma</i>
-pathy	disease	<i>neuropathy</i>
-penia	deficiency	<i>leukopenia</i>
-plegia	paralysis	<i>paraplegia</i>
-ptosis	drooping, sagging	<i>blepharoptosis</i>
-malacia	softening	<i>osteomalacia</i>
-sclerosis	hardening	<i>arteriosclerosis</i>
-stenosis	narrowing	<i>arteriostenosis</i>
-rrhea	flow, discharge	<i>rhinorrhea</i>
-rrhage, -rrhagia	bursting forth, excessive bleeding	<i>hemorrhage</i>
-lith, -lithiasis	stone, presence of stones	<i>nephrolithiasis</i>
-cele	hernia, protrusion	<i>cystocele</i>
-uria	urine condition	<i>hematuria</i>
-lysis	breakdown, destruction	<i>hemolysis</i>
-spasm	sudden involuntary contraction	<i>bronchospasm</i>

Procedures and Tests

-ectomy	surgical removal	<i>appendectomy</i>
-tomy	cutting into, incision	<i>tracheotomy</i>
-stomy	surgically creating an opening	<i>colostomy</i>
-plasty	surgical repair or reshaping	<i>rhinoplasty</i>
-rrhaphy	surgical suturing	<i>herniorrhaphy</i>
-pexy	surgical fixation	<i>nephropexy</i>
-desis	surgical fusion	<i>arthrodesis</i>
-centesis	puncture to remove fluid	<i>amniocentesis</i>
-tripsy	crushing	<i>lithotripsy</i>
-scopy	visual examination with an instrument	<i>colonoscopy</i>
-scope	instrument for viewing	<i>otoscope</i>
-graphy	process of recording an image or tracing	<i>mammography</i>
-gram	the record or image produced	<i>electrocardiogram</i>
-metry, -meter	measurement, measuring instrument	<i>spirometry</i>
-opsy	viewing, examination	<i>biopsy</i>

Specialties and Specialists

-logy	study of	<i>cardiology</i>
-logist	specialist in a field of study	<i>cardiologist</i>
-iatry	medical treatment, field of medicine	<i>psychiatry</i>
-iatrics	field of medicine	<i>pediatrics</i>
-ician, -ist	practitioner	<i>pediatrician</i>

Pertaining to (adjectives)

-ac	pertaining to	<i>cardiac</i>
-al	pertaining to	<i>renal</i>
-ar	pertaining to	<i>muscular</i>
-ary	pertaining to	<i>pulmonary</i>
-eal	pertaining to	<i>esophageal</i>
-ic	pertaining to	<i>gastric</i>
-ous	pertaining to	<i>venous</i>

Small

-ole	small	<i>arteriole</i>
-ule	small	<i>venule</i>
-icle	small	<i>ossicle</i>