**Prefixes**

[Prefixes](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1000)are located at the beginning of a medical term. The prefix alters the meaning of the medical term. It is important to spell and pronounce prefixes correctly.

Many prefixes that you find in medical terms are common to English language prefixes. A good technique to help with memorization is the following:

* Start by reviewing the most common prefixes.
* Consider common English language words that begin with the same prefixes.
* Compare them to the examples of use in medical terms.

Common Prefixes

| **PREFIX** | **MEANING** | **EXAMPLE OF USE IN MEDICAL TERMS** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| A-, An- | Without; Lacking | [Anemia](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_307) |
| Andr/o- | Male | [Androgen](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_802) |
| Anti- | Against | [Anticholinergic drugs](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1053) |
| Auto- | Self | [Autocrine](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_736) |
| Bio- | Life | [Biology](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_807) |
| Chem/o- | Chemistry | [Chemotherapy](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1071) |
| Contra- | Against | [Contraception](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1235) |
| Cyt/o- | Cell | [Cytokine](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_808) |
| Dis- | Separation; Taking apart | [Dissection](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1073) |
| Dys- | Difficult; Abnormal | [Dyspnea](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_360) |
| Eu- | Good; Well | [Eupnea](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_225) |
| Fibr/o- | Fiber | [Fibrosis](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1065) |
| Gluco-, Glyco- | Glucose; Sugar | [Glycogen](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_810) |
| Gyn/o-, Gynec- | Female | [Gynecology](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_752) |
| Hydr/o- | Water | [Hydrocephalus](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_812) |
| Idio- | Self; One’s own | [Idiopathic](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1066) |
| Lyso-, Lys- | Break down; Destruction; Dissolving | [Lysosome](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1067) |
| Mal- | Bad; Abnormal | [Malignant](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_760) |
| Myc/o- | Fungus | [Mycetoma](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1068) |
| Necr/o- | Death | [Necrosis](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_438) |
| Neo- | New | [Neonate](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_235) |
| Oxy- | Sharp; Acute; Oxygen | [Oxytocin](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1070) |
| Pan-, Pant/o- | All or everywhere | [Pancytopenia](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_238) |
| Pharmaco- | Drug; Medicine | [Pharmacist](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1236) |
| Re- | Again; Backward | [Rejuvenation](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_815) |
| Somat/o-, Somatico- | Body; Bodily | [Somatic cell](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1076) |

Body Part Prefixes

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **PREFIX** | **MEANING** | **EXAMPLE OF USE IN MEDICAL TERMS** |
| Acous/o- | Hearing | [Acoustic meatus](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1077) |
| Aden/o- | Gland | [Adenoid](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1078) |
| Adip/o- | Fat | [Adipocyte](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_817) |
| Adren/o- | Gland | [Adrenal cortex](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_818) |
| Angi/o- | Blood vessel | [Angioplasty](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_566) |
| Arteri/o- | Artery | [Arteriole](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_820) |
| Arthr/o- | Joint | [Arthroplasty](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_821) |
| Bucc/o- | Cheek | [Buccal cavity](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1084) |
| Bronch/i- | [Bronchus](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1036) | [Bronchioles](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_822) |
| Burs/o- | [Bursa](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_823) | [Bursa](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_823) |
| Carcin/o- | Cancer | [Basal cell carcinoma](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1087) |
| Cardi/o- | Heart | [Cardiology](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_322) |
| Cephal/o- | Head | [Cephalic flexure](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1089) |
| Chol- | Bile | [Cholesterol](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1090) |
| Chondri- | Cartilage | [Chondrosarcoma](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_827) |
| Coron- | Heart | [Coronary arteries](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1091) |
| Cost- | Rib | [Costal cartilage](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_828) |
| Crani/o- | Brain | [Cranium](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1093) |
| Cutane- | Skin | [Cutaneous](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_830) |
| Cyst/o-, Cysti- | Bladder or sac | [Cystoscopy](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_831) |
| Derm-, Dermat/o- | Skin | [Dermatologist](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1095) |
| Duoden/o- | [Duodenum](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1038) | [Duodenitis](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_833) |
| Gastr- | Stomach | [Gastrectomy](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_305) |
| Gloss- | Tongue | [Glossectomy](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1239) |
| Hem-, Hema-, Hemat-, Hemo-, Hemat/o- | Blood | [Hematopoiesis](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_672) |
| Hepat/o-, Hepatico- | Liver | [Hepatic portal system](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1098) |
| Hist/o-, Histio- | Tissue | [Histology](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_838) |
| Hyster/o- | Uterus | [Hysterectomy](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_724) |
| Ileo- | [Ileum](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1045) | [Ileostomy](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1100) |
| Ischi/o- | [Ischium](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1046) | [Ischial tuberosity](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_3990) |
| Kerat/o- | Cornea (eye or skin) | [Keratin](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1102) |
| Lacrim/o- | Tear (from your eyes) | [Lacrimal fluid](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1104) |
| Lact/o-, Lacti- | Milk | [Lactose](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1103) |
| Laryng/o- | [Larynx](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_386) | [Laryngitis](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1105) |
| Lingu/o- | Tongue | [Lingual tonsil](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_842) |
| Lip/o- | Fat | [Lipolysis](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1107) |
| Lymph/o- | Lymph | [Lymphocyte](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_947) |
| Mamm-, Mast/o- | Breast | [Mammary glands](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1111) |
| Mening/o- | [Meninges](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1039) | [Meningitis](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_847) |
| Muscul/o- | Muscle | [Musculoskeletal](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_848) |
| My/o- | Muscle | [Myocardium](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_849) |
| Myel/o- | Spinal cord or bone marrow | [Myelin](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1116) |
| Nephr/o- | Kidney | [Nephron](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1117) |
| Neur/i-, Neur/o- | Nerve | [Neuron](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1118) |
| Oculo- | Eye | [Oculomotor nerve](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1119) |
| Onco- | Tumor; Bulk; Volume | [Oncogene](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1109) |
| Onych/o- | Fingernail; Toenail | [Onychodystrophy](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1241) |
| Oo- | Egg; Ovary | [Oocyte](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_686) |
| Oophor/o- | Ovary | [Oophorectomy](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_725) |
| Op-, Opt- | Vision | [Optic nerve](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1121) |
| Ophthalm/o- | Eye | [Ophthalmic artery](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1122) |
| Orchid/o-, Orchio- | Testis | [Orchidectomy](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1243) |
| Orth/o- | Straight; Normal; Correct | [Orthostatic](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1123) |
| Osseo- | Bony | [Osseous tissue](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1124) |
| Ossi- | Bone | [Ossicles](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1126) |
| Ost-, Oste/o- | Bone | [Osteoporosis](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_254) |
| Ot/o- | Ear | [Otolaryngologist](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1244) |
| Ovar/i-, Ovario-, Ovi-, Ovo- | Ovary | [Ovarian follicle](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1127) |
| Phalang- | [Phalanx](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1047) | [Phalanges](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1187) |
| Pharyng/o- | Pharynx; Throat | [Pharyngeal tonsil](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_382) |
| Phleb/o- | Vein | [Phlebotomist](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1189) |
| Phren/i-, Phreno-, Phrenico- | Diaphragm | [Phrenic nerve](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1190) |
| Pleur-, Pleur/a-, Pleur/o- | Rib, [pleura](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1040) | [Pleural cavity](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1192) |
| Pneum/a- Pneumat/o- | Air; Lung | [Pneumonia](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_864) |
| Proct/o- | Anus; Rectum | [Proctoscopy](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1194) |
| Prostat- | Prostate | [Prostatectomy](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1195) |
| Pseudo- | False | [Pseudostratified](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_605) |
| Psych/o-, Psyche- | Mind | [Psychiatrist](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_316) |
| Radio- | Radiation; Radius | [Radioisotopes](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1198) |
| Ren/o- | Kidney | [Renal cortex](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_866) |
| Retin- | Retina (of the eye) | [Retinitis pigmentosa](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1200) |
| Rhin/o- | Nose | [Rhinoscope](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1201) |
| Salping/o- | Tube | [Salpingo-oophorectomy](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_868) |
| Sarco- | Muscular; Flesh-like | [Sarcomere](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1203) |
| Schiz/o- | Split; Cleft | [Schizophrenia](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1204) |
| Sclera-, Sclero- | Hardness | [Sclerosis](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1205) |
| Sigmoid/o- | Sigmoid colon | [Sigmoidoscopy](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1206) |
| Sperma-, Spermo-, Spermato- | Sperm | [Spermatocyte](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_869) |
| Splen/o- | Spleen | [Splenomegaly](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_870) |
| Sten/o- | Narrowed; Blocked | [Stenosis](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1211) |
| Stern- | [Sternum](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1049) | [Sternoclavicular joint](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1213) |
| Stom/a-, Stomat/o- | Mouth | [Stomatitis](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_872) |
| Thorac/o-, Thoracico- | Chest | [Thoracic cavity](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_873) |
| Thromb/o- | Blood clot | [Thrombolytic](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_959) |
| Thyr/o- | Thyroid gland | [Thyroiditis](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_874) |
| Trache/o- | [Trachea](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_393) | [Trachealis](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_875) |
| Tympan/o- | Eardrum | [Tympanic membrane](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_451) |
| Ur/o- | Urine | [Urologist](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1222) |
| Vagin- | Vagina | [Vaginal](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1223) |
| Varic/o- | Duct; Blood vessel | [Varicose veins](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1224) |
| Vasculo- | Blood vessel | [Vasculitis](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1225) |
| Ven/o- | Vein | [Venae cavae](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1226) |
| Vertbr- | Vertebra; Spine | [Vertebral column](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1227) |

Color Prefixes

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **PREFIX** | **MEANING** | **EXAMPLE OF USE IN MEDICAL TERMS** |
| Chlor/o- | Green | [Chlorophyll](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_882) |
| Chrom-, Chromato- | Color | [Chromosome](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1230) |
| Cyano- | Blue | [Cyanosis](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_264) |
| Erythr/o- | Red | [Erythrocyte](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_884) |
| Leuk/o- | White | [Leukocyte](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_300) |
| Melan/o- | Black | [Melanin](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_887) |

Physical Property and Shape Prefixes

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **PREFIX** | **MEANING** | **EXAMPLE OF USE IN MEDICAL TERMS** |
| Cry/o- | Cold | [Cryotherapy](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1250) |
| Elect- | Electrical activity | [Electrocardiogram](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_311) |
| Kin/o-, Kine-, Kinesi/o- | Movement | [Kinetic energy](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1246) |
| Kyphy/o- | Humped | [Kyphosis](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1247) |
| Rhabd/o- | Rod-shaped; Striated | [Rhabdomyosarcoma](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_351) |
| Phot/o- | Light | [Photoreceptor](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1251) |
| Reticul/o- | Net | [Reticulocytes](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1252) |
| Scoli/o- | Twisted | [Scoliosis](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1249) |
| Therm/o- | Heat | [Thermotherapy](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1253) |

Direction and Position Prefixes

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **PREFIX** | **MEANING** | **EXAMPLE OF USE IN MEDICAL TERMS** |
| Ab-, Abs- | Away from | [Abductor](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1254) |
| Ad- | Towards | [Adductor](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1255) |
| Ante- | Before; Forward | [Antenatal](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1256) |
| Circum- | Around | [Circumcision](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_895) |
| Cycl- | Circle; Cycle | [Cyclic neutropenia](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1258) |
| De- | Away from; Ending | [Dehydration](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_432) |
| Dia- | Across; Through | [Diagnosis](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1261) |
| Ect/o-, Exo- | Outer; Outside | [Exocrine gland](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_903) |
| End/o-, Ent-, Enter/o- | Within; Inner | [Endocrine gland](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1263) |
| Epi- | Upon; Outside of | [Epidermis](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_224) |
| Ex-, Extra- | Beyond | [Expiration](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_425) |
| Infra- | Beneath; Below | [Infratemporal fossa](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1266) |
| Inter- | Between | [Interstitial fluid](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_655) |
| Intra- | Within | [Intracellular fluid](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1268) |
| Meso- | Middle | [Mesoderm](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1269) |
| Meta- | Beyond; Change | [Metabolism](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_909) |
| Para- | Alongside; Abnormal | [Parathyroid glands](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_910) |
| Path/o- | Disease | [Pathologist](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1272) |
| Peri- | Around | [Pericardium](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1273) |
| Post- | Behind; After | [Postpartum](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_243) |
| Pre- | Before; In front | [Precancerous](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1275) |
| Retro- | Backward; Behind | [Retroperitoneum](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_915) |
| Sub- | Under | [Subcutaneous layer](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1277) |
| Super- | Above | [Superior](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_717) |
| Supra- | Above; Upon | [Supraglottis](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1279) |
| Sy-, Syl-, Sym-, Syn-, Sys- | Together | [Syndrome](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_302) |
| Trans- | Across; Through | [Transdermal](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_250) |

Quantity Prefixes

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| **PREFIX** | **MEANING** | **EXAMPLE OF USE IN MEDICAL TERMS** |
| Bi- | Two | [Biceps](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1282) |
| Brady- | Slow | [Bradycardia](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_219) |
| Diplo- | Double | [Diploid](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1284) |
| Hemi- | Half | [Hemihypertrophy](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1285) |
| Hetero- | Other; Different | [Heterogeneous](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_926) |
| Homo- | Same | [Homozygous genotype](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1287) |
| Hyper- | Above; Beyond; Excessive | [Hypertension](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_268) |
| Hypo- | Under; Deficient | [Hypotension](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1289) |
| Iso- | Equal; Like | [Isointense](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1290) |
| Macro- | Large; Long; Big | [Macrophage](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_411) |
| Mic-, Micro- | Small | [Microglia](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1292) |
| Mon-, Mono- | One | [Monocyte](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1293) |
| Olig/o- | Few; Little | [Oliguria](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1295) |
| Poly- | Many; Excessive | [Polyuria](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_707) |
| Quadri- | Four | [Quadriceps](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1298) |
| Semi- | Half | [Semilunar valves](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1299) |
| Tachy- | Fast | [Tachycardia](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_246) |
| Tetra- | Four | [Tetralogy of Fallot](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1302) |
| Tri- | Three | [Triceps](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_251) |
| Uni- | One | [Unicellular](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_942) |

**Suffixes**

[Suffixes](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1001)are word parts that are located at the end of words. Suffixes can alter the meaning of medical terms. It is important to spell and pronounce suffixes correctly.

Suffixes in medical terms are common to English language suffixes. Suffixes are not always explicitly stated in the definition of a word. It is common that suffixes will not be explicitly stated when defining a medical term in the workplace. However, when transcribing or reading medical reports the suffix is always clearly written. In order to properly spell and pronounce medical terms, it is helpful to learn the suffixes.

Common Suffixes

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| **SUFFIX** | **MEANING** | **EXAMPLE OF USE IN MEDICAL TERMS** |
| -ac | Pertaining to | [Cardiac](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_288) |
| -blast, -blasto, -blastic | Bud; Germ | [Myeloblast](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_851) |
| -cyte, -cytic | Cell | [Thrombocyte](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1307) |
| -dynia | Pain; Swelling | [Thoracodynia](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1308) |
| -eal, -ial | Pertaining to | [Esophageal](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_303) |
| -ectasis | Expansion; Dilation | [Atelectasis](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1309) |
| -emia | Blood condition | [Anemia](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_307) |
| -ia | Condition | [Hemophilia](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1311) |
| -iasis | Condition; Formation of | [Psoriasis](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_974) |
| -ism | Condition | [Hypothyroidism](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_585) |
| -ites, -itis | Inflammation | [Arthritis](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_253) |
| -ity | Pertaining to | [Immunity](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_642) |
| -ium | Structure or tissue | [Epithelium](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1316) |
| -lysis, -lytic | Break down; Destruction; Dissolving | [Osteolytic](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1358) |
| -malacia | Softening | [Osteomalacia](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_419) |
| -megaly | Enlargement | [Acromegaly](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1319) |
| -oid | Resembling | [Arachnoid trabeculae](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1320) |
| -oma | Tumor | [Angiosarcoma](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1321) |
| -osis | Condition; Usually abnormal | [Endometriosis](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_964) |
| -ous | Pertaining to | [Aqueous](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1324) |
| -pathy | Disease | [Lymphadenopathy](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1325) |
| -penia | Deficiency; Lack of | [Thrombocytopenia](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1326) |
| -phagia, -phagy | Eating; Swallowing | [Dysphagia](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_222) |
| -phasia | Speech | [Aphasia](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1328) |
| -plasia, -plastic | Growth | [Hyperplasia](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_369) |
| -plegia | Paralysis | [Hemiplegia](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_925) |
| -pnea | Breathing | [Sleep apnea](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1331) |
| -poiesis | Production | [Hemopoiesis](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_527) |
| -ptosis | Falling; Drooping | [Apoptosis](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_657) |
| -rrhage, -rrhagic | Bleeding | [Hemorrhage](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_357) |
| -rrhea | Flow or discharge | [Diarrhea](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1337) |
| -sclerosis | Hardening | [Arteriosclerosis](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_349) |
| -sis | Condition | [Agranulocytosis](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1340) |
| -stasis | Level; Unchanging | [Homeostasis](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_431) |
| -trophy | Growth | [Hypertrophy](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_337) |
| -uria | In the urine | [Anuria](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1343) |

Procedure Suffixes

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| **SUFFIX** | **MEANING** | **EXAMPLE OF USE IN MEDICAL TERMS** |
| -centesis | Surgical puncture to remove fluid | [Thoracentesis](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1344) |
| -desis | Surgical binding | [Pleurodesis](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1345) |
| -ectomy | Cut out; Removal | [Mastectomy](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_740) |
| -gram | Record; Picture | [Electrocardiogram](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_311) |
| -graph | Instrument used to create a record or picture | [Electrocardiograph](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_312) |
| -graphy | To record or take a picture | [Echocardiography](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_265) |
| -meter | Device used for measuring | [Sphygmomanometer](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_510) |
| -opsy | Visual examination | [Biopsy](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_331) |
| -ostomy | Opening | [Colostomy](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1352) |
| -otomy | Incision | [Laparotomy](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_339) |
| -pexy | Surgical fixation | [Oophoropexy](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1354) |
| -plasty | Surgical reconstruction | [Vertebroplasty](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1355) |
| -scope | For examining | [Endoscope](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_1356) |
| -scopy | Examine | [Endoscopy](https://pressbooks.uwf.edu/medicalterminology/chapter/prefixes-and-suffixes/#term_24_749) |