



Medical terminology Lecture 8

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The Prefixes-Cont. (i)

Term: iatr-: Prefix relating to a **physician or medicine**. From the Greek word "**iatros**" meaning **physician (healer)**. As in **iatrogenic**, generated by physicians, due to the activity of doctors.

The Prefixes-Cont. (K)

Term: kerato-: Kerato- is a confusing since it can refer to the **cornea** (as in **keratitis** and **keratocornea**) or to "**horny**" tissue (as in **keratin** and **keratosis**).

The Prefixes-Cont. (L)

Term: leuko-: meaning **white**. As in **leukocyte**, a white cell (in the blood). **leucemia**, a malignant disease of the white blood cells.

Term: levo-: meaning **on the left side**.

For example, a molecule that shows **levorotation** is turning or twisting to the left. The opposition of **levo-** is **dextro-** (meaning on the right side) so the opposite of **levorotation** is **dextrorotation**.

Term: litho-: Prefix meaning stone. A **lithotomy** is an operation to remove a stone. **Lithotripsy** involves crushing a stone. The stone may be in the gallbladder or in the urinary tract.

The Prefixes-Cont. (M)

Term: macro-: meaning **large or long**. Terms with "macro-" include **macrocyte** (large cell), **macroglossia** (large tongue), **macroscopic** (visible with the naked eye), and **macrosomia** (big body). The opposite of "macro-" is "micro-."

Term: mega-: meaning **great or big** and means **abnormally large**. **Megalocephaly** is too large a head. **Megacardia** is too large a heart. **Megacolon** is too large a colon.

Term: melan-: meaning **dark or black**. Examples of terms containing **melan-** include **melanin** (dark pigment), **melanocytes** (cells that make melanin), and **melanoma** (a tumor arising in melanocytes).

Term: micro-: meaning **small**. Examples of terms involving micro- include **microcephaly** (small head), **microscope**, etc. The opposite of "micro-" is of "macro-."

The Prefixes-Cont. (N)

Term: neo-: meaning **new, young, fresh, recent**. Examples of terms starting with "neo-" include **neonatal** and **neonate** (newborn), **neoplasia** and **neoplasm** (new growth = tumor), etc.

The Prefixes-Cont. (O)

Term: oligo-: Meaning **just a few, scanty**.
Appears in oligodactyly (few fingers), oligohydramnios (too little amniotic fluid) and oligospermia (too few sperm).

Term: onycho-: Having to do with the **nails**. Medical terms involving "onycho-" include onychodystrophy (abnormal growth and development of nails), onychomycosis (fungal infection of the nails), and onychoosteodysplasia (**malformation** of bones and nails).

Term: osteo-: meaning **bone**. Appears in osteoarthritis, osteogenesis (building of bone), osteomyelitis (inflammation of bone and marrow), osteopetrosis (stonelike bone), osteoporosis, osteosarcoma, etc.

Term: oto-: Combining form meaning **ear**.
Appears for example in otitis (inflammation of the ear), otolaryngologist (an **ENT** doctor), otoscope (a device for looking in the ear), etc.

The Prefixes-Cont. (P)

Term: patho-: meaning "**suffering or disease**."
Patho- serves as a prefix for many terms including pathogen (disease agent), pathogenesis (development of disease), pathology (study of disease), etc. The corresponding suffix is **-pathy**.

Term: phlebo-: Means vein. From the Greek "**phleps**", **vein**, which came from the root "**phlein**", to **gush or overflow**. Appears in **phlebitis** (inflammation of the veins), **phlebotomist** (a person who draws blood from veins), and **phlebotomy** (a venipuncture).

Term: pneumo-: Combining form pertaining to **breathing, respiration, the lungs, pneumonia, or air**. "Pneumo-" is derived from the Greek "**pneuma**" meaning **wind, air, or breath**

Term: poly-: From the Greek "**polys**", **many**. The prefix "poly-" appears in many medical terms including **polyarteritis**, **polycystic**, **polyp**, etc. Poly is short for **polymorphonuclear leukocyte** (a type of white blood cell).

Term: pro-: A combining form (from both Greek and Latin) with many meanings including "**before, in front of, preceding, on behalf of, in place of, and the same as**." Used as a word, pro of course means professional and, in medicine, it is short for **prothrombin**.

The Prefixes-Cont. (Q)

Term: quasi-: Prefix meaning **seemingly**. As, for example, in **quasidominant**, seemingly **dominant**.

The Prefixes-Cont. (T)

Term: toc-: From the Greek word "**tokos**" meaning **childbirth**, we have **toc-**, **toco-**, **tok-**, and **toko-** as combining forms, all referring to **labor or childbirth**. A **tocolytic** agent inhibits the uterine contractions.

Term: trans-: From the Latin meaning "**across, over, or beyond**." Medical terms containing "trans- " are many: **transfusion**, **transplant**, **transurethral**, **transvaginal**, etc.

