

# Latin and Greek Prefixes

Many medical terms are derived from Greek and Latin prefixes. Knowing to recognize these prefixes often helps in understand long and sometimes complicated terms.

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Acro	extremity	Acrophobia is a fear of heights.
Adeno	gland	Adenoid is a lymph gland found in the nasopharynx.
Alba	white	Albinism is the white appearance of skin lacking melanin.
Algia	pain	Neuroalgia is a pain following the course of a nerve.
Angi	vessel	Angioplasty is the repair of a blood vessel.
Arthro	joint	Arthritis is the inflammation of skeletal joints.
Auto	self	Autolysis is the destruction of body cells by bodily enzymes.
Bio	living	Biology is the study of living organisms.
Blast	germ, bud	Osteoblast is the germ of a bone cell.
Blephar	eyelid	A blepharoplasty is eyelid surgery.
Brachi	arm	The brachialis muschel moves the arm.
Broncho	windpipe	Bronchitis is the inflammation fo the respiratory system.
Bucc	cheek	The buccinator muscle is in the cheek.
Capit	head	De-capitate means “Off with the Head!”
Carnin	cancer	A carcinogen is a substance which triggers cancer formation.
Cardia	heart	A cardiologist is a heart specialist.
Cephal	head	Cephalon is another term for brain (see capit).
Cerebro	brain	Cerebrospinal fluid circulates in the brain and spinal cord.
Chole	bile, gall	Cholecystectomy is the removal of the gallbladder.
Chondro	cartilage	A chondrocyte is a cartilage cell.
Chroma	color	Chromosomes are so named because they easily took to colour when dye was added to cells.
Cili	eyelash	Supercilia are eyebrows, the hairs above the eyelashes.
Corpus	body	Corpus albicans are the white bodies inside an ovary.
Corona	crown	Coronary arteries that supply blood to the heart muscle run encircle the heart like a crown.
Cost	rib	Costal cartilages attach ribs to the sternum.
Cut	skin	Cutaneous tissue is skin tissue.
Cysti	sac, bladder	Cystitis is an inflammation of the urinary bladder.
Cyto	cell	Cytoplasm is the substance between the cell membrane and the nucleus.
Dactyl	digits	Polydactylism is the presence of more fingers than is normal.
Derma	skin	Dermatologists are skin specialists.
Entero	intestine	Enteritis is an inflammation of the intestines.
Erythro	red	Erythrocytes are red blood.
Galacto	milk	Galactosemia is the inability to digest sugars in milk.
Gastro	stomach	Gastric juices are produced in the stomach.

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Glosso Glyco	tongue sugar	Hypoglossal means 'below the tongue'. Glycosuria is sugar in the urine.
Hema Hyster	blood uterus	Hemoglobin is the oxygen-carrying pigment in red blood cells. Hysterectomy is the surgical removal of the uterus.
Ileo Ilio	gut hip	The ileum is the third and lowest division of the small intestine. The ilium is the broad upper portion of the hipbone.
Lachry Leuko Lingua Lipo Lumbo	tears white tongue fat lower back	Lacrimal glands secrete tears. Leukocytes are white cells in cells. The lingual nerve supplies sensory innervation to the tongue. Liposuction is the removal of fatty tissue by suction tube. The lumbar vertebrae are located in the lower back.
Macul Mamm Mast	spot, blotch breast breast	The macula lutea is a spot on the retina of the eye. Mammogram is a picture of a breast, usually a female breast. A mastectomy involves the partial or complete removal of a breast.
Meningo Metro Morph	membrane uterus shape	Meninges are the coverings of the brain and spinal cord. Endometrium is the inner lining of the uterus. Morphology is a branch of science that studies the forms and structures of organisms.
Myelo Myo	spinal cord muscle	Poliomyelitis is an inflammation of the grey matter in the spinal cord. Myocardium is the name given to heart muscle tissue.
Necro Nephro	death kidney	Necrotizing fasciitis is known as the flesh-eating disease. Nephrons are the functional units of a kidney.
Oculo Odous	eye tooth	An oculist specializes in treating eye diseases. Orthodontics is a branch of dentistry concerned with the study and treatment of malocclusions (improper bites).
Onco Ophthalm Oro Orchido Osteo Oto	tumour eye mouth testicle bone ear	Oncology is a branch of medicine that deals with tumours. Ophthalmology is a branch of medicine dealing with eye disease. The oral cavity is another name for the mouth. Orchidectomy involves the removal of a testicle. Osteoporosis is a bone disease that results in lower bone density. Otosclerosis is the formation of bone in the ear.
Patho Peps Phago Philo Phleb Phren Pneumo	disease digestion eat affinity vein diaphragm lung	Pathogens are biological agents (germs) that cause disease. Pepsin is an enzyme found in the digestive system. Phagocytes are cells which eat foreign material. Hydrophilic molecules are attracted to water. Phlebitis is an inflammation of the veins. The phrenic nerves provide the motor supply to the diaphragm. Pneumonia is an inflammatory condition of the lung.

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Pulmo Pyo	lung pus	Pulmonary tuberculosis is an infectious disease of the lungs. Pyuria refers urine which contains pus.
Ren Rhin	kidney nose	The renal artery supplies blood to the kidney. Rhinoplasty refers to the reshaping of a nose through surgery.
Scler Stasis	hard stand still	Artherosclerosis is the hardening of the arteries. Homoestasis is the tendency of a system to maintain internal stability.
Thromb Tich	clot, lump hair	Thrombosis is a blood clot in the heart or blood vessel. Trichosis is any abnormal condition or disease of the hair.
Vas Viscer	vessel organ	Vas deferens is the vessel which carries sperm from the epididymus. Visceral refers to an internal organ.
Zoo	animal	Zoology is the science of biology dealing with animals.