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Construction of Medical Terms



Medical Word Elements

Medical terms are built by combining and connecting word parts called elements. Word elements include Prefixes, Word Roots, Combining Vowels and Suffixes.

- **Word Root (WR):** The core of a word. This element provides the term's central meaning. Medical terms may have more than one WR. *Examples: pod = foot; hyster = uterus; febr = fever*
- **Combining Vowel (CV):** Word Roots sometimes need a Combining Vowel to join them to other word elements. The vowel "o" is most commonly used. Vowels "a, e, i, u and y" are also used, but less often. *Examples: pod / o ; hyster / o ; febr / I*
- **Combining Form (CF):** A Word Root and its Combining Vowel together are called a Combining Form. *Examples: pod/o; hyster/o; febr/i*
- **Prefix (P):** Only used at beginning of word. *Examples: anti- = against; intra- = within; brady- = slow*
- **Suffix (S):** Only used at end of the term, to complete the word. The suffix indicates whether the word is a noun or an adjective. The following suffix elements make the term a noun: a, e, ia, is, on, um, us, y. These suffix elements make the term an adjective: ac, ic, al, ar, eal, eous, ous. A suffix ending means pertaining to. *Examples: hysterectomy, (noun); thoracic (adjective).*

Construction of Medical Terms



Rules for Constructing Medical Terms

Element Order: The first part in a medical term's definition is usually the last element in the medical term. The last element of the medical term is usually the first part of the definition. *Example: psychologist = one who (ist), studys (log), mind (psych)*

Combining Elements: In the case of a medical term with multiple Word Roots, when adding another WR, Combining Vowel from the previous WR is usually retained.

Examples: gastr/ o /enter / itis ; leuk / o / cyt / o /penia

Prefix: A Prefix is usually not modified when added to a WR.

Suffix: A Suffix that begins with a consonant is usually preceded by a Combining Vowel. A Suffix that begins with a vowel is usually added directly to the Word Root. Examples: carcin / o / cyte ; crypt / orchid

Analyzing Medical Terms

Slash Marks: Insert between each element of the term.

Identify the Elements: Label each element as a WR, CV, CF, P and S.

Examples: cardi (WR) / o (CV) / log (WR) / ist (S) ; hypo (P) / gloss (WR) / al (s)

Anatomy

Medical Terminology Flashcards

Print 4 slides per page and you will be able to cut and fold the printout to easily make flashcards.

Anatomy: Card 1 - Front

Where?

Head

tympan / o
WR CV
—
CF

Noun: *tympanum*

Adj: *tympanic*

Anatomy: Card 1 - Back

eardrum

Anatomy: Card 2 - Front

Where?

Head

Digestive system

gloss / o

or

lingu / o

WR

CV

CF

Noun: glossa

***Adj: glossal
lingual***

Anatomy: Card 2 - Back

tongue

Anatomy: Card 3 - Front

Where?

Head

Skeletal system

crani / o

WR

CV

CF

Noun: cranium

Adj: cranial

Anatomy: Card 3 - Back

skull

Anatomy: Card 4 - Front

Where?

Cranial cavity

Nervous system

encephal / o
WR CV
—
CF

Noun: encephaly

Adj: encephalic

Anatomy: Card 4 - Back

brain

Anatomy: Card 5 - Front

Where?
Endocrine system

aden / o
WR CV
—————
CF

Adj: adenal

Anatomy: Card 5 - Back

gland

Anatomy: Card 6 (combo) - Front

Where?
Digestive system

1. duoden / o

2. jejun / o

3. ile / o
WR CV

CF

Nouns: jejunum, duodenum

Adj: jejunal

Anatomy: Card 6 (combo) - Back

- 1. first portion of small intestine**
- 2. middle portion of small intestine**
- 3. last part of small intestine**

Anatomy: Card 7 - Front

Where?

Integumentary system

derm / o
or

dermat / o
WR CV
—————
CF

Noun: dermis

Adj: dermic

Anatomy: Card 7 - Back

skin

Anatomy: Card 8 - Front

Where?

Trunk

lapar / o
WR CV
—————
CF

abdominal wall

Anatomy: Card 9 - Front

Where?

Abdominal cavity

Digestive system

hepat / o
WR CV
—
CF

Noun: hepatitis

Adj: hepatic

Anatomy: Card 9 - Back

liver

Anatomy: Card 10 - Front

Where?
Circulatory system

hem/ o
or
hemat / o
WR CV
—
CF

Noun: hematoma

Adj: hematic

Anatomy: Card 10 - Back

blood

Anatomy: Card 11 - Front

Where?

Head

gingiv/ o
WR CV
—
CF

Noun: gingiva

Adj: gingival

Anatomy: Card 11 - Back

gums

Anatomy: Card 12 - Front

Where?

Digestive system

esophag / o
WR CV
—
CF

Noun: esophagus

Adj: esophageal

Anatomy: Card 12 - Back

esophagus

Anatomy: Card 13 - Front

Where?

Trunk

Reproductive system

mast / o

or

mamm / o

WR

CV

CF

Anatomy: Card 13 - Back

breast

Noun: mammary

Anatomy: Card 14 (combo) - Front

Where?

Pelvic cavity

Reproductive system

1. oophor / o

2. salping / o

WR

CV

CF

1. ovary

2. fallopian tube

Anatomy: Card 15 - Front

Where?

Reproductive system

orchid / o

or

orch / o

or

orchi / o

WR

CV

CF

Noun: orchid

Anatomy: Card 15 - Back

testicle

Anatomy: Card 16 - Front

Where?
Nervous system

neur / o
WR CV
—————
CF

Noun: neuron

Adj: neural

Anatomy: Card 16 - Back

nerve

Anatomy: Card 17 - Front

Where?
Pelvis

pyel / o
WR CV
—
CF

Anatomy: Card 17 - Back

renal pelvis

Anatomy: Card 18 - Front

Where?
Muscular system

my / o
WR CV

CF

Anatomy: Card 18 - Back

muscle

Anatomy: Card 19 - Front

Where?
Urinary system

nephr / o
WR CV
—
CF

Noun: *nephron*

Anatomy: Card 19 - Back

kidney

Anatomy: Card 20 - Front

Where?
Body

acr / o
WR CV
—
CF

Anatomy: Card 20 - Back

extremity

Anatomy: Card 21 - Front

Where?

Body

myel / o
WR CV
—
CF

Noun: myelin

**spinal cord,
bone marrow**

Anatomy: Card 22 - Front

Where?
Skeletal system

arthr / o
WR CV
—
CF

Anatomy: Card 22 - Back

joint

Anatomy: Card 23 - Front

Where?
Head

rhin / o
or
nas / o
WR CV
—————
CF

Anatomy: Card 23 - Back

nose

Anatomy: Card 24 - Front

Where?
Head

ot / o
WR CV

CF

Adj: otic

Anatomy: Card 24 - Back

ear

Anatomy: Card 25 - Front

Where?
Body

cyst / o
WR CV
—
CF

Adj: cystic

Anatomy: Card 25 - Back

bladder, sac

Anatomy: Card 26 - Front

Where?
Skeletal system

cost / o
WR CV

CF

Adj: costal

Anatomy: Card 26 - Back

rib

Anatomy: Card 27 - Front

Where?

Tissue - connective

adip / o
WR CV
—
CF

Adj: adipous

Anatomy: Card 27 - Back

fat

Anatomy: Card 28 - Front

Where?
Trunk

abdomin / o
WR CV
CF

Noun: abdomin

Adj: abdominal

Anatomy: Card 28 - Back

abdomen

Anatomy: Card 29 - Front

Where?
Body

axill / o
WR CV
—————
CF

Noun: axillary

Adj: axillar

Anatomy: Card 29 - Back

armpit

Anatomy: Card 30 - Front

Where?
Head

blephar / o
WR CV
—————
CF

Noun: blephar*um*

Adj: blephar*al*

Anatomy: Card 30 - Back

eyelid

Anatomy: Card 31 - Front

Where?
Head

bucc / o
WR CV

CF

Noun: bucca

Adj: buccal

Anatomy: Card 31 - Back

cheek

Anatomy: Card 32 - Front

Where?
Extremity

carp / o
WR CV
—————
CF

Noun: *carpus*

Adj: *carpal*

wrist bones

(carpals)

Anatomy: Card 33 - Front

Where?
Trunk

thorac / o
or
thor / a
WR CV
—————
CF

Noun: thorax

Adj: thoracic

Anatomy: Card 33 - Back

chest

Anatomy: Card 34 - Front

Where?
Pelvic cavity

pub / o
WR CV

CF

Noun: *pubis*

Adj: *pubic*

Anatomy: Card 34 - Back

pubic

Anatomy: Card 35 - Front

Where?
Body region

lumb / o
WR CV
—
CF

Adj: lumbar

lower back

Anatomy: Card 36 - Front

Where?
Skeletal system

dent / o
WR CV
—————
CF

Adj: dental

teeth

Anatomy: Card 37 - Front

Where?

Reproductive system

cervic / o
WR CV
—————
CF

Noun: cervix

Adj: cervical

neck, neck of uterus

Anatomy: Card 38 - Front

Where?
Respiratory system

bronch / o
or
bronch / i
WR CV
—————
CF

Noun: bronch*us*

Adj: bronchial

bronchus

Anatomy: Card 39 - Front

Where?

Abdominal cavity

appendic / o
WR CV
CF

Noun: appendix

appendix

Anatomy: Card 40 - Front

Where?

Connective tissue

chondr / o
WR CV
—
CF

Adj: chondral

Anatomy: Card 40 - Back

cartilage

Anatomy: Card 41 - Front

Where?
Head

lacrim / o
WR CV
—————
CF

Adj: lacrimal

tears, tear ducts

Anatomy: Card 42 - Front

Where?
Head

faci / o
WR CV
—————
CF

Noun: *facia*

Anatomy: Card 42 - Back

face

Anatomy: Card 43 - Front

Where?
Body

somat / o
WR CV
—————
CF

Noun: soma

Adj: somatic

Anatomy: Card 43 - Back

body

Anatomy: Card 44 - Front

Where?
Body

laryng / o
WR CV
—
CF

Adj: laryngeal

vocal cords

Anatomy: Card 45 - Front

Where?
Head

ophthalm / o
WR CV
—
CF

Adj: ophthalmic

Anatomy: Card 45 - Back

eye

Anatomy: Card 46 - Front

Where?
Extremity

pod / o
WR CV
—
CF

Anatomy: Card 46 - Back

feet

Anatomy: Card 47 - Front

Where?
Body

pharyng / o
WR CV
CF

Adj: pharyngeal

Anatomy: Card 47 - Back

throat

Anatomy: Card 48 - Front

Where?
Skeletal System

spondyl / o
WR CV
—
CF

spine

(bony, not spinal cord)

Anatomy: Card 49 - Front

Where?
Skeletal system

stern / o
WR CV
—————
CF

Noun: sternum

Adj: sternal

breast bone
(not sternum)

Anatomy: Card 50 - Front

Where?
Respiratory system

trache / o
WR CV
CF

Noun: trachia

Adj: tracheal

Anatomy: Card 50 - Back

wind pipe
(not trachea)

Anatomy: Card 51 - Front

Where?

Body product

muc / o
WR CV

CF

Noun: *mucus*

Adj: *mucous*

Anatomy: Card 51 - Back

MUCUS

Anatomy: Card 52 - Front

Where?
Body

stomat / o
WR CV
—————
CF

Noun: stomata

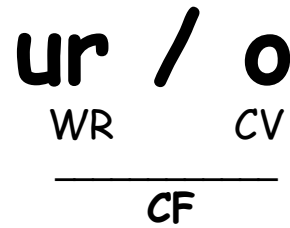
Adj: stomatic

Anatomy: Card 52 - Back

mouth

Anatomy: Card 53 - Front

Where?
Body product



Anatomy: Card 53 - Back

urine

Anatomy: Card 54 - Front

Where?

Urinary system

Reproductive system - male

urethr / o
WR CV
—
CF

Noun: urethra

Adj: urethral

Anatomy: Card 54 - Back

urethra

Anatomy: Card 55 - Front

Where?
Urinary system

ureter / o
WR CV
—
CF

Noun: ureter

Adj: ureteral

Anatomy: Card 55 - Back

ureter

Anatomy: Card 56 - Front

Where?
Lymphatic system

splen / o
WR CV
CF

Adj: splenic

Anatomy: Card 56 - Back

spleen

Anatomy: Card 57 - Front

Where?
Body

cyt / o
WR CV
—
CF

Noun: cyte

Anatomy: Card 57 - Back

cell

Anatomy: Card 58 - Front

Where?
Head

cerebr / o
WR CV
—————
CF

Noun: cerebrum

Adj: cerebral

Anatomy: Card 58 - Back

cerebrum

Anatomy: Card 59 - Front

Where?
Head

cephal / o
WR CV
—————
CF

Noun: *cephalus*

Adj: *cephalic*

Anatomy: Card 59 - Back

head

Anatomy: Card 60 (combo) - Front

Where?

Digestive system

1. **col / o** *or* **colon / o**

2. **enetr / o**

3. **rect / o**

WR CV

CF

Noun: *colon, rectum*

Adj: *colonic, enteric*

Anatomy: Card 60 - Back

- 1. large intestine**
- 2. small intestine**
- 3. rectum**

Anatomy: Card 61 (combo) - Front

Where?
Pelvic cavity

1. nephr / o

2. pyel / o
WR CV
CF

1. kidney

2. renal pelvis

Anatomy: Card 62 (combo) - Front

Where?

Circulatory system

1. angi / o

2. vas / o

2. arteri / o

3. phleb / o

5. ven / o

WR	CV
<hr/>	
CF	

Anatomy: Card 62 (combo)- Back

- 1. vessel**
- 2. vessel**
- 3. artery**
- 4. vein**
- 5. vein**

Anatomy: Card 63 - Front

Where?

Digestive system

gastr / o
WR CV
—————
CF

Adj: gastric

Anatomy: Card 63 - Back

stomach

Anatomy: Card 64 - Front

Where?

Pelvic cavity

Skeletal system

pelv / i
WR CV
—
CF

Noun: pelvis

Adj: pelvic

Anatomy: Card 64 - Back

pelvis

Anatomy: Card 65 - Front

Where?

Body product

chol / e
WR CV
—————
CF

Anatomy: Card 65 - Back

bile

Anatomy: Card 66 - Front

Where?

Abdominal cavity

Digestive system

Endocrine system

pancreat / o
WR CV
—
CF

Adj: pancreatic

Anatomy: Card 66 - Back

pancreas

Anatomy: Card 67 - Front

Where?

Thoracic cavity

Respiratory system

pneumon / o
WR CV
CF

Adj: pneumonic

Anatomy: Card 67 - Back

lung

Anatomy: Card 68 - Front

Where?

Reproductive system

hyster / o

or

uter / o

WR

CV

CF

***noun:* uterus**

***Adj:* uterine**

Anatomy: Card 68 - Back

uterus

Anatomy: Card 69 - Front

Where?

Reproductive system

Body product

men / o
WR CV
CF

menses, menstruation