

Medical Terminology Quick-Reference

Roots, Prefixes & Suffixes | LPN/LVN Exit Exam | passclex.com

HOW TO DECODE A TERM

- Read the **suffix first**, then prefix, then root
- Prefix = where/when/how much · Root = body part · Suffix = what's happening
- hepat/o + -megaly -> **enlarged liver**
- nephro/o + -ectomy -> **kidney removed**
- brady- + -pnea -> **slow breathing**
- dys- + -uria -> **painful urination**

COMMON ROOTS (COMBINING FORMS)

- cardi/o** heart · **nephro/o** kidney
- hepat/o** liver · **gastr/o** stomach
- pneum/o** lung · **neur/o** nerve
- oste/o** bone · **my/o** muscle
- derm/o** skin · **hem/o** blood
- encephal/o** brain · **cyt/o** cell

HIGH-YIELD PREFIXES

- hyper-** high/above · **hypo-** low/below
- brady-** slow · **tachy-** fast
- a-/an-** without · **dys-** painful/difficult
- anti-** against · **peri-** around
- intra-** within · **poly-** many
- pre-** before · **post-** after

CONDITION & DISEASE SUFFIXES

- itis** inflammation · **-osis** abnormal condition
- pathy** disease · **-oma** tumor/mass
- megaly** enlargement · **-iasis** formation of
- stenosis** narrowing · **-sclerosis** hardening
- cele** hernia/bulge · **-plasia** cell growth

SURGERY & PROCEDURE SUFFIXES

- ectomy** removal · **-otomy** incision
- ostomy** new opening (stoma)
- plasty** repair · **-pexy** fixation
- rrhaphy** suturing · **-tripsy** crushing
- centesis** puncture for fluid · **-scopy** scope exam

SYMPTOM SUFFIXES

- algia / -dynia** pain · **-pnea** breathing
- plegia** paralysis · **-paresis** weakness
- rrhea** flow/discharge · **-rrhage** bleeding
- phagia** swallowing · **-phasia** speech
- ptysis** coughing up · **-emesis** vomiting
- spasm** involuntary contraction

LAB, TEST & IMAGING SUFFIXES

- emia** blood condition · **-penia** low count
- cytosis** high cell count · **-uria** urine condition
- gram** the image/record · **-graphy** imaging process
- opsy** tissue sampling · **-metry** measuring
- scopy** visual exam with a scope

DON'T MIX THESE UP

- otomy** cut into · **-ostomy** opening · **-ectomy** remove
- rrhea** flow · **-rrhage** bleed · **-rrhaphy** suture
- rrhexis** rupture (vs the three above)
- itis** inflamed · **-osis** condition · **-pathy** disease
- plegia** paralysis vs **-paresis** weakness
- phagia** swallow vs **-phasia** speech

DRUG-NAME SUFFIXES

- pril** ACE inhibitors · **-sartan** ARBs
- olol** beta-blockers · **-dipine** calcium channel blockers
- statin** statins · **-prazole** PPIs
- cillin** penicillins · **-mab** monoclonal antibodies
- setron** antiemetics

PLURALS & QUICK TIPS

- is -> -es** (diagnosis -> diagnoses)
- um -> -a** (bacterium -> bacteria)
- us -> -i** (nucleus -> nuclei) · **-a -> -ae** (vertebra -> vertebrae)
- "Pertaining to": -ac, -al, -ar, -ary, -ic, -ous, -tic
- Tip: learn one **anchor word** per ending