

MEDICAL TO LAY TERMINOLOGY

Refer to the medical to lay terminology list below when you are preparing any research subject material. Try to avoid complex medical terms and simplify the information as much as possible.

MEDICAL TERM Instead of this Term / Phrase	LAY TERMINOLOGY Use this Term / Phrase
<	Less than
>	Greater than
Abdomen	Belly, stomach
Abdominal	Referring to the body cavity which contains stomach, intestines, liver, and other organs
Ablation	Remove
Absorb	Take up fluids, take in
Abrasion	Area where skin or other tissue is scraped away
Absorption	The way a drug or other substance enters the body
Abstain	Avoid
Acid taste	Sour taste
Accommodate	Meet/agree to
Accrediting agency	Reviewing agency; licensing agency
Acetaminophen	The active ingredient of Tylenol / Panadol
Acidosis	Condition when blood contains more acid than normal
Acknowledged	Accepted; recognized; approved
Acuity	Clearness, keenness, esp. of vision - airways
Acute	New, recent, sudden
Adenopathy	Swollen lymph nodes (glands)
Adhesion	Being stuck together
Adjuvant	Helpful, assisting, aiding
Adjuvant treatment	Added treatment
Adrenal gland	Gland found over each kidney
Adverse effect	Negative side effect

MEDICAL TERM Instead of this Term / Phrase	LAY TERMINOLOGY Use this Term / Phrase
Adverse events	Injuries; bad reactions
After the delivery of treatment	After you've been treated
Agent	Drug, medication
Albumin	Protein found in blood
Allergic reaction	Rash, trouble breathing
Alopecia	Loss of hair
Alternative	Choice
Ambulate-Ambulation-Ambulatory	Walk, able to walk
Amend	Change
Amnesia	Loss of memory; inability to remember
Amniocentesis	Removal of some of the water from around an unborn baby for laboratory testing
Analgesic	Pain relieving medication
Anaphylaxis	Serious, potentially life threatening allergic reaction
Anemia	Decreased red blood cells; low red blood cell count
Anesthesia	Loss of sensation or feeling
Anesthetic (general)	A drug or agent used to decrease the feeling of pain or eliminate the feeling of pain by putting you to sleep
Anesthetic (local)	A drug or agent used to decrease the feeling of pain or by numbing an area of your body, without putting you to sleep
Anesthetize	To numb; put to sleep
Angina (angina pectoris)	Pain resulting from insufficient blood to the heart
Angioplasty	Operation to open up a narrow blood vessel
Anomalies	Physical defects

MEDICAL TERM Instead of this Term / Phrase	LAY TERMINOLOGY Use this Term / Phrase
Anorexia	Condition in which a person will not eat; lack of appetite
Anoxia	No oxygen
Antacid	Drug used to decrease acid in the stomach
Antecubital	Area inside the elbow
Antibiotic	Drug that kills bacteria and other germs
Antibody	Natural chemical made in the body that fights infection
Anticonvulsant	Drug used to prevent seizures
Antiemetic	Medication to prevent nausea/vomiting
Antihistamine	Drug used to treat allergic reactions
Antilipidemic	A drug that decreases the level of fat(s) in the blood
Antimicrobial	A drug that kills bacteria and other germs
Antiretroviral	Drug that inhibits certain viruses
Antiseptic	Substance used to stop or slow down the growth of germs
Antitussive	A drug used to relieve coughing
Aphasia	Not able to speak or write and not able to understand spoken or written words
Aspiration	Inhale into the lungs; or removal of fluid through tube or needle
Arrhythmia	Any change from the normal heartbeat (abnormal heartbeat)
Artery	Type of blood vessel that carries blood and oxygen from the heart to the rest of the body
Arterial catheter	Small tube placed in an artery
Arthritis	Swelling of one or more joints
Asphyxia	Suffocation, unable to get enough oxygen
Aspiration	Fluid entering lungs

MEDICAL TERM Instead of this Term / Phrase	LAY TERMINOLOGY Use this Term / Phrase
Assay	Lab test
Assent	Agreement
Assess	To learn about
Assist	Help
Asthenia	Loss of energy; weakness
Asthma	A lung disease associated with tightening of the air passages
Atrophy	Wasting away or decrease in size
Asymptomatic	Without symptoms
Audiogram	Report of a hearing test
Audiology	The study of hearing
Audiometer	Tool used to measure hearing
Audit	Review; inspect; look at
Authorization	Your written permission; your written approval
Authorizing disclosures	Allowing us to share information
Autonomy	Being able to make one's own decisions
Axilla	Armpit
Bacteria	Germs; Microscopic creatures that live in and around us; they sometimes cause disease
Barrier method (for birth control)	Birth control such as a diaphragm, condom, cervical cap, or sponge
Baseline visit/period	First visit/period or the visit/period of testing before the investigational treatment starts
Benefit	A valued or desired outcome; an advantage
Benign	Something that has no bad effects or does not spread; not cancerous

MEDICAL TERM Instead of this Term / Phrase	LAY TERMINOLOGY Use this Term / Phrase
Beta blocker	Drug used to slow down the heart
BID	Twice a day
Bilateral	Having to do with both sides (of the body)
Binding/bound	Carried by, to make stick together, transported
Bioavailability	The extent to which a drug or other substance becomes available to the body
Biologic	Any therapeutic serum, toxin, anti-toxin, or analogous microbial product applicable to the prevention, treatment, or cure of diseases or injuries
Biopsy	Removal and examination of a small part of tissue
Blood drawing	Amount of blood to be drawn in teaspoons, tablespoons, etc. and frequency/site of the drawing
Blood profile	Series of blood tests
Body fluids	State what body fluids; then they are extracted and given the source and amount
Bolus	An amount given all at once
Bone density	Bone thickness; hardness of bone
Bone marrow	Soft tissue inside bones that makes blood cells
Bone mass	The amount of calcium in a given amount of bone
Bradyarrhythmias	Slow, irregular heart beat
Bradycardia	Slow heartbeat
Bronchitis	Inflammation of the lungs
Bronchospasm	Breathing distress caused by narrowing of the airways
Bronchus	Tube that carries air from the windpipe to the lungs
Bulimia	Eating disorder in which a person cannot stop eating and often vomits to make room for more food

MEDICAL TERM Instead of this Term / Phrase	LAY TERMINOLOGY Use this Term / Phrase
Calcipenia	Low in calcium
Cancer radiotherapy	Treatment of cancer using X rays
Capillary	Tiny blood vessel
Capsule	Pill
Carcinogenic	Capable of causing cancer
Carcinoma	Type of cancer
Cardiac	Heart; Having to do with the heart
Cardiac Catheterization	a procedure in which a small tube (catheter) is inserted through blood vessels in the groin and into the heart that uses highlighting fluid to look at the blood vessels in the heart
Cardiovascular	Heart and blood vessels
Cardioversion	A procedure that uses electricity to simulate the heart and make it return to its normal rhythm
Carpal bones	Wrist bones
Cataract	Clouding of the lens of the eye
Catheter	Small tube for withdrawing or introducing fluids
Catheter (indwelling epidural)	A tube placed near the spinal cord used for anesthesia during an operation
Central nervous system (CNS)	Brain and spinal cord
Cephalalgia	Headache
Cerebellum	The part of the brain that controls the movement of the muscles and helps maintain balance
Cerebral Palsy	Disorder in the movement and posture caused by abnormal development, or damage to, the motor control centers in the brain
Cerebral trauma	Damage to the brain

MEDICAL TERM Instead of this Term / Phrase	LAY TERMINOLOGY Use this Term / Phrase
Certify	Confirm in writing
Cessation	Stopping
Chemotherapy	Treatment of disease, usually cancer, using drugs
Chloasma	Tumor arising from the skin and other organs
Chronic	Continuing for a long time
Cisplatin	A drug used to kill cancer cells
Clavicle	Collarbone
Clinical	Pertaining to medical care
Clinical trial	An experiment with humans
Clinically significant	Of major importance for treating or evaluating patients
Close proximity	Near
Coagulation	Form blood clot
Coerced	Pressured; forced
Cognitively impaired	Having either a psychiatric disorder (e.g., psychosis, neurosis, personality or behavior disorders, or dementia) or a developmental disorder (e.g., mental retardation) that affects cognitive or emotional functions to the extent that capacity for judgment and reasoning is significantly diminished. Others, including persons under the influence of or dependent on drugs or alcohol, those suffering from degenerative diseases affecting the brain, terminally ill patients, and persons with severely disabling physical handicaps, may also be compromised in their ability to make decisions in their best interests.
Cognitive status	Levels of awareness and thinking
Cohort	A group of subjects that have one or more characteristics in common and are followed over time. In social science research, this term may refer to any group of persons who are born at about the same time and share common historical or cultural experiences.

MEDICAL TERM Instead of this Term / Phrase	LAY TERMINOLOGY Use this Term / Phrase
Collaborating with	Working with
Collect and maintain	Get and keep
Colon	Large intestine; bowel
Colonoscopy	Procedure to look at the large intestine that uses a special camera at the end of a long tube that is inserted in the rectum
Coma	Unconscious state
Committed	Promised
Communicates	Tells; let you know
Communication source	Source of information
Compensation	Payment or medical care provided to subjects injured in research; does not refer to payment (remuneration) for taking part in research (Compare: Remuneration)
Competence	Technically, a legal term, used to denote capacity to act on one's own behalf; the ability to understand information presented, to appreciate the consequences of acting (or not acting) on that information, and to make a choice (See also: Incompetence, Incapacity).
Complete response	Total disappearance of disease
Comply with the rule	Obeys the rule; doing what it tells us to do
Confidentiality	Pertains to the treatment of information that an individual has disclosed in a relationship of trust and with the expectation that it will not be divulged to others without permission in ways that are inconsistent with the understanding of the original disclosure.
Congenital	Occurring prior to birth, due to parent's genetic input
Conjunctivitis	Irritation and redness of the thin membrane covering the eye
Consent	Agreement
Consolidation phase	Treatment phase intended to make a remission permanent,

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	follows induction
Contact you at work instead of at home or vice versa	Contact you at work or home
Contraindicated	Disadvantageous, perhaps dangerous; a treatment that should not be used in certain individuals or conditions due to risks (e.g., a drug may be contraindicated for pregnant women and persons with high blood pressure).
Contraindications	Medical reasons that prevent a person from using a certain drug or treatment
Control (subjects) or controls	Subject(s) used for comparison who are not given a treatment under study or who do not have a given condition, background, or risk factor that is the object of study. Control conditions may be concurrent (occurring more or less simultaneously with the condition under study) or historical (preceding the condition under study). When the present condition of subjects is compared with their own condition on a prior regimen or treatment, the study is considered historically controlled. The term “normal” implies that a subject with a given condition is not “normal”. Therefore, the SHIRB prefers the term “control” to the term “normal”.
Contrast material	A fluid that is given into the vein or an area of the body to highlight the blood vessels or body area under x-ray examination
Contusion	Bruise
Convulsions	Seizures, epileptic fit
Cornea	Clear tissue covering the front part of the eye
Coronary	Pertains to the blood vessels that supply the heart
Cross-over design	A type of clinical trial in which each subject experiences, at different times, both the experimental and control therapy. For example, half of the subjects might be randomly assigned first to the control group and then to the experimental intervention, while the other half would have the sequence reversed.

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CT (cat) scan	Computerized (axial) tomography; computerized series of x-rays; special type of x-ray
Culture	Test for the presence of bacteria or viruses that could cause infection
Cumulation	Increased action of a drug when given over a period of time
Cumulative	Total sum (of individual events, experiences, treatments)
Cutaneous	Relating to the skin
CVA	Cerebrovascular accident; stroke
Cytoid	Like a cell
Data and Safety Monitoring Board	A committee of scientists, physicians, statisticians, and others that collect and analyzes data during the course of a clinical trial to monitor for adverse effects and other trends (such as an indication that one treatment is significantly better than another, particularly when one arm of the trial involves a placebo control) that would warrant modification or termination of the trial or notification of subjects about new information that might affect their willingness to continue in the trial.
Debilitation	Weakened condition
Deceased person	Dead person; someone who died
Defecate	Bowel movement; to pass stool
Defibrillation	a procedure that uses electricity to stimulate the heart and make it return to its normal rhythm
Dehydrate	Lose water or body fluids
De-identified information	Information from which key data that identifies you has been removed
Demographic	Personal statistics; person information
Deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA)	Material that makes up the genes
Depressant	Drug that slows down the action of the central nervous system

MEDICAL TERM Instead of this Term / Phrase	LAY TERMINOLOGY Use this Term / Phrase
Dermatologic	Pertaining to the skin
Deteriorate	To get worse; to lose function
Determine (s)	Decide(s)
Diagnostic (Procedure)	Tests used to identify a disorder or disease in a living person
Diastolic blood pressure	Lower number in blood pressure reading; pertaining to resting or relaxation phase of heart beat
Disclosure Information	Share information; give; tell
Disclosures we will make	Information we will share
Diplopia	Double vision
Distal	Toward the end, away from the center of the body
Distension	Bloated; swollen; inflated
Diuretic	“Water pill” or drug that causes increase in urination
Doppler	Sound waves
Double Blind Trial	Study in which neither investigators nor subjects know what drug is given
Duct	Tube that carries a body fluid
Duodenum	Beginning of the small intestine that is attached to the stomach
Duration	Length of time involved
Dysfunction	Not functioning properly
Dyspepsia	Gas; upset stomach
Dysphagia	Difficulty in swallowing
Dysplasia	Abnormal cells
Dyspnea	Hard to breathe; short of breath
ECG, EKG or electrocardiogram	Picture and measurement of the heart rhythm

MEDICAL TERM Instead of this Term / Phrase	LAY TERMINOLOGY Use this Term / Phrase
Echocardiogram	Procedure that uses sound waves for examination of the heart
Edema	Swelling (fluid or water retention)
EEG or Electroencephalogram	Measurement of electrical activity of the brain
Effective date	Takes effect on
Efficacy	Effectiveness
Electrocardiogram (ECG)	Electrical tracing of the heartbeat or heart rhythm (ECG or EKG)
Electrolyte imbalance	Imbalance of salts or chemicals in the blood
Electrophysiology study	Heart rhythm study
Elevation of liver function tests	Evidence of liver or kidney damage
Embolus	Blood clot
Embryo	Unborn baby
Emesis	Vomiting
Empiric	Based on experience
Enable	Allow; make possible
Endorphin	Substance made by the body to stop pain
Endoscopic examination	Examination of the internal part of the body with a lighted tube; looking at a part of the body with a lighted tube
Enema	medication given through the rectum that cleans out the bowel
Ensure	Make sure
Enteral	By way of the intestines
Entities	Facilities; institutions; organizations
Enzyme	A chemical in the blood that causes chemical changes
Enzyme abnormality	blood test result that suggests abnormal organ function or injured cells

MEDICAL TERM Instead of this Term / Phrase	LAY TERMINOLOGY Use this Term / Phrase
Epidermal	Having to do with the outer layer of skin
Epidermis	Outer layer of skin
Epidural	Outside the spinal cord
Eradicating	Getting rid of (such as a disease)
Esophagus	Tube that goes from the throat to the stomach
Established protocols	Has rules
Evaluate	Measure; rate
Evaluated	Assessed; examined for medical condition
Examination	Exam
Exceptions, restrictions, and limits	Limits
Excrete	Discharge, pass
Expanded availability	Policy and procedure that permits individuals who have serious or life-threatening diseases for which there are no alternative therapies to have access to investigational drugs and devices that may be beneficial to them. Examples of expanded availability mechanisms include Treatment Indus, Parallel Track, and open study protocols.
Experienced adverse events	Been injured or hurt
Experimental	Term often used to denote a therapy (drug, device, procedure) that is unproven or not yet scientifically validated with respect to safety and efficacy. A procedure may be considered "experimental" without necessarily being part of a formal study (research) to evaluate its usefulness. (See also: Research.)
External	Outside the body
Extravasate	To leak outside of a blood vessel, spills
Family member or person representative	Family member who is your legal representative for health care

MEDICAL TERM Instead of this Term / Phrase	LAY TERMINOLOGY Use this Term / Phrase
Fast	A required period to go without food; do not eat or drink
Fatigue	Feeling tired
FDA	U.S. Food and Drug Administration, the branch of federal government that approves new drugs
Fetal material	The placenta, amniotic fluid, fetal membranes, and umbilical cord
Fetus	Unborn baby
Flatulence	Gas passed through the anus / rectum
Fibrillation	Irregular beat of the heart or other muscle
Fibrosis	Scars
Fibrous	Having many fibers (such as scar tissue)
File a written complaint	Write or e-mail a letter of complaint
Filing a complaint	Complaining
Fluoroscope	X-ray machine
Fracture	Break
Fungus	Form of infection
Gait	Walk
Gastric	Stomach
Gastrointestinal	Stomach and intestine
Gene therapy	Treatment of genetic disease accomplished by altering the genetic structure of either somatic (nonreproductive) or germline (reproductive) cells
General anesthesia	Pain prevention by induction of drugged sleep, as in surgery
Genetic screening	Tests to identify persons who have an inherited predisposition to a certain phenotype or who are at risk of producing offspring with inherited diseases or disorders

MEDICAL TERM Instead of this Term / Phrase	LAY TERMINOLOGY Use this Term / Phrase
Genotype	The genetic makeup of an individual.
Gestational	Pertaining to pregnancy
Glucose	Type of sugar found in the blood
Graph	Chart, records
Guardian	An individual who is authorized under state or local law to give permission on behalf of a child or an adult who is not able to make decisions.
Gynecologist	Doctor who specializes in treating a woman's organs that are related to pregnancy and childbirth
Gynecology	The study of the reproductive system of women
Healthcare professionals	People who care for you: doctors, nurses; and others who care for you
Health record is physical property	Health record belongs to
Hematocrit	Amount of red blood cells in the blood
Hematologist	Doctor who treats blood disorders
Hematoma	A bruise, a black and blue area, blood clot
Hemodynamic measurement	Test to measure blood flow
Hemolysis	Breakdown in red blood cells
Hemorrhage	Loss of blood (heavy bleeding)
Heparin lock	Needle placed in the arm with blood thinner to keep the blood from clotting inside the needle or tubing
Hepatic	Liver
Hepatitis	Inflammation of the liver
Hepatoma	Cancer or tumor of the liver
Hereby	DO NOT USE

MEDICAL TERM Instead of this Term / Phrase	LAY TERMINOLOGY Use this Term / Phrase
Heritable disease	A disease which can be transmitted to one's offspring resulting in damage to future children
Histopathologic	Pertaining to the disease status of body tissues or cells
Holter monitor	A portable machine for recording heart beats
Hormone	A chemical in the blood
Human subjects	People who take part in a research study by letting an investigator gather information about how they answer questions, respond to certain situations react to an experimental product.
Hypercalcemia	High blood calcium level
Hyperkalemia	High blood potassium level
Hypernatremia	High blood sodium level
Hyperopia	Farsightedness
Hypertension	High blood pressure
Hypocalcemia	Low blood calcium level
Hypodermic	Under the skin
Hypoglycemia	Not enough sugar in the blood
Hypotension	Low blood pressure
Hypokalemia	Low blood potassium level
Hyponatremia	Low blood sodium level
Hypotension	Low blood pressure
Hypothermia	Low body temperature
Hypoxia	Low oxygen level in the blood
Hysterectomy	Removal of the womb
Iatrogenic	Caused by a physician or by treatment

MEDICAL TERM Instead of this Term / Phrase	LAY TERMINOLOGY Use this Term / Phrase
IDE	Investigational device exemption, the license to test an unapproved medical device
Identifiable information	Personal information that can identify you
Idiopathic	Of unknown cause
Idiosyncrasy	Rare side effect of a drug; unusual reaction of a person to a drug
Immobilization	Unable to move
Immunization	Administration of a substance to prevent disease
Immunoglobulin	A combination of antibodies from proteins in the blood
Immunological	Related to the body's ability to fight infection
Immunosuppressive	Drug which suppresses the body's immune response, used in transplantation and diseases caused by disordered immunity
Immunotherapy	Given of drugs to help the body's immune (protective) system; usually used to destroy cancer cells
Impaired function	Not working properly
Implanted	Placed in the body
Incapacity	Refers to a person's mental status and an inability to understand information presented, to appreciate the consequences of acting (or not acting) on that information, and to make a choice. Often used as a synonym for incompetence (See also: Incompetence).
Incision	To cut open
Incompetence	Technically, a legal term meaning inability to manage one's own affairs. Often used as a synonym for incapacity. (See also: Incapacity.)
Incomplete	Lacking; unfinished
Incorrect	Wrong
Incumbent upon	Must

MEDICAL TERM Instead of this Term / Phrase	LAY TERMINOLOGY Use this Term / Phrase
IND	Investigational new drug; the license to test an unapproved new drug
Indian Health Service facility	Indian Health Service/clinic or hospital
Indicate	Tell us
Individual right	A person's right
Individual (s)	Patient(s)
Individually identifiable health information	Information about your healthy care that identifies you
Induction phase	Beginning phase or stage of a treatment
Induration	Hardening
Indwelling	Tube left in a vein
Inert	Not active; substance that doesn't affect you
Infarct	Death of tissue because of lack of blood supply
Infectious disease	Disease which is transmitted from one person to next
Inflammation	Swelling which is generally painful, red, and warm
Inflation	To put air in
Influenza	The flu
Informed consent	A person's voluntary agreement, based upon adequate knowledge and understanding of relevant information, to take part in research or to undergo a diagnostic, therapeutic, or preventive procedure. In giving informed consent, subjects may not waive or appear to waive any of their legal rights, or release or appear to release the investigator, the sponsor, the institution or agents thereof from liability for negligence [Federal Policy §116; 21 CFR 50.20 and 50.25].
Infusion	Introduction of a substance into the body, usually into the blood
Ingestion	Eating; taking by mouth

MEDICAL TERM Instead of this Term / Phrase	LAY TERMINOLOGY Use this Term / Phrase
Inject	To put into by way of a needle of other device
Insomnia	Unable to sleep
Institutional Review Board	A committee that has reviewed this research project to help ensure that the rights and welfare of the participants are protected and that the study is carried out in an ethical manner
Instruments in testing	Specify what instruments are to be used and how they are used
Interferon	Agent which acts against viruses; antiviral agent
Intermittent	Occurring (regularly or irregularly) between two time points; alternately ceasing and beginning
Internal interior	Within the body
Intestine	Stomach (belly)
Intracatheter	Small tube in a vein
Intramuscular	Into the muscle; within the muscle
Intraperitoneal	Into the abdominal cavity
Intracatheter	Small tube in a vein
Intramuscular (IM) injection	Injection of a substance into a muscle (e.g., upper arm or backside)
Intraperitoneal	Into the abdomen cavity
Intrathecal	Into the spinal fluid
Intravenous (IV) injection	Injection of a substance into a vein
Intravenous infusion	To drip into the blood vessel through a plastic tube and needle
Intravesical	In the bladder
Intubate	The placement of a tube into the airway
Invasive procedure	Puncture, opening or cutting of the skin
Investigational method	A treatment method which has not been proven to be beneficial

MEDICAL TERM Instead of this Term / Phrase	LAY TERMINOLOGY Use this Term / Phrase
	or has not been accepted as standard care
Investigational new drug	A new drug which has not yet been approved by the FDA
Investigator	Study doctor
In vitro	Literally, "in glass" or "test tube" used to refer to processes that are done outside the living body, usually in the laboratory, as distinguished from in vivo.
In vivo	Literally, "in the living body" processes, such as the absorption of a drug by the human body, carried out in the living body rather than in a laboratory (in vitro).
I.V. push	Rapid injection into a vein
Irradiation	X-ray
Ischemia procedure	Decreased oxygen in tissue (usually because of decreased blood flow)
Jaundice	Yellowing of the skin
Judicial administrative proceeding	Legal proceeding such as a court case
Lactating	Nursing
Lactation	Period of time during which a woman is providing her breast milk to an infant or child
Laparotomy	A procedure in which an incision is made in the abdominal wall to enable a physician to look at the organs
Lateral	Toward or having to do with one side (of the body)
Legal requirements	The law
Legally authorized representative	A person authorized either by statute or by court appointment to make decisions on behalf of another person. In human subjects research, an individual or judicial or other body authorized under applicable law to consent on behalf of a prospective subject to the subject's participation in the procedure(s) involved in the research

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Lesion	Abnormal area of tissue, such as a wound, sore, rash, or boil
Lethargy	Sleepiness
Leucocyte	Blood cells that fight infection
Leukopenia	Low white blood cell count
Libido	Sexual desire
Licensure	Being licensed
Lipid	Fat
Lipid profile (panel)	Fat and cholesterol levels in the blood
Local anesthesia	Creation of insensitivity to pain in a small local area of the body
Localized	Restricted to one area; limited to one area (of the body)
Lumbar puncture	Spinal tap; a needle inserted between the bones of the spine to put in a drug or take a sample of fluid
Lumbosacral	Lower back
Lumen	Cavity of an organ or tube (e.g. inside of blood vessel)
Lymphangiography	An X-ray of the lymph nodes or tissues after injection of dye in lymph vessels (e.g. in feet)
Lymphocyte	A type of white blood cell important in the body's defense against infection
Lymphoma	A cancer of the lymph nodes (or tissues)
Macro	Large or long
Magnetic Resonance Imaging	Produces multiple images of organs and structures within the body by using a large magnet to attract electrons within the body used as a diagnostic tool (See also MRI).
Maintained	Kept
Malaise	A vague feeling of bodily discomfort, feeling bad

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Malfunction	Condition in which something is not functioning properly
Malignancy	Cancer or other progressively enlarging and spreading tumor, fatal if not successfully treated
Mastectomy	Surgery to remove a breast
Material change	Significant change
May otherwise be at risk for contracting or spreading the disease or condition	Might catch your disease or spread it
Medical device	A product, such as crutches, an x-ray machine, pacemaker, toothbrush, bandage, contact lenses, etc., that is used in treatment, prevention, or diagnosis of a medical condition and does not act on the body through chemical action.
Medications	Drugs; medicines
Medulloblastoma	Type of brain tumor
Meningitis	Infection or irritation around the brain
Metabolism	Chemical changes which provide energy
Metabolize	Process of breaking down substances in the cells
Metastasis	Spread of cancer cells from one part of the body to another
Metronidazole	A drug used to treat infections caused by parasites or other causes of anaerobic infections
MI (myocardial infarction)	Heart attack, death of heart muscle
Minimal	Slight
Minimize	Reduce
Mobility	Ease of movement; ability to move around
Monitor	Check on, keep track of, watch carefully
Morbidity	Undesired result or complication; serious disease

MEDICAL TERM Instead of this Term / Phrase	LAY TERMINOLOGY Use this Term / Phrase
Mortality	Death or death rate
MRI (magnetic resonance imaging)	Magnetic resonance imaging, body pictures created using magnetic rather than x-ray energy
Mucoid	Slimy
Mucosa, mucous membrane	Moist lining of digestive, respiratory, reproductive, and urinary tracts
Myalgia	Muscle aches
Myocardial infarction	Pertaining to the (muscle of the) heart
Myopia	Nearsightedness
Nasal	Nose
Naso-gastric tube	Tube that goes through the nose and into the stomach
Nausea	Feel sick to the stomach
Necrosis	Death of tissue or skin
Negligible	Small or unimportant
Neoplasia	Tumor, may be non-cancerous or cancerous
Neuroblastoma	A cancer of nerve tissue
Neurological	Pertaining to the nervous system
Neurological exam	Test of the brain, spinal cord and reflexes
Neurologist	Doctor who treats disorders of the central nervous system and nerves
Neurosis	Mental and emotional disorder
Neutropenia	Decrease in the main part of the white blood cells
New indication	New use
Next of Kin	Close relatives
Non-invasive	Not breaking, cutting or entering the skin

MEDICAL TERM Instead of this Term / Phrase	LAY TERMINOLOGY Use this Term / Phrase
Nosocomial pneumonia	Pneumonia acquired in the hospital
Not required to agree	Don't have to agree
Notify	Tell you/tell us
Nuremberg Code	A code of research ethics developed during the trials of Nazi war criminals following World War II and widely adopted as a standard during the 1950s and 1960s for Protecting human subjects.
Observations	Reports
Obtain a copy	Get a copy
Obtaining	Getting
Occlusion	Closing; obstruction
Occult blood test	A sample of stool taken and tested for tiny amounts of blood
Oncology	The study of tumors or cancer
Open label	A study in which the drug, device, procedure is known to patient and investigator
Ophthalmic	Pertaining to the eye
Ophthalmologist	Doctor who treats eye disorders
Optimal	Best, most favorable or desirable
Oral administration	Giving a drug by mouth
Origin	Beginning cause
Orthodontist	Dentist who treats teeth and jaw disorders
Orthopedic	Pertaining to the bones
Orthopedist	Doctor who treats bone and joint disorders
Osteopetrosis	Rare bone disorder characterized by dense bone
Osteoporosis	Softening of the bones

MEDICAL TERM Instead of this Term / Phrase	LAY TERMINOLOGY Use this Term / Phrase
Otologist	Doctor who treats disorders of the ear
Otorhinolaryngologist	Doctor who treats disorders of the ear, nose, and throat
Otoscope	Tool used to look into the ear
Ovaries	Female sex glands; female organs which release eggs
Palpitation	Rapid heart beat
Pap test	Microscope test used to detect virus infection of the cervix or cancer of the vagina, cervix, or lining of the uterus (Also called Pap Smear).
Parenteral	Administration by injection
Paresthesia	Tingling in the ()
Partial seizure	seizure
Patency	Condition of being open
Pathogenesis	The initial cause of a disease
Pathogenic	Causing disease
PER OS (PO)	By mouth
Percutaneous	Through the skin
Perforation	Puncture, tear or hole
Peripheral	Not central
Peripheral blood	Vein blood
PET (Positron Emission Tomography)	Special camera that uses radiation to look at the structure and functioning of parts of the body
Phalanx	Finger or toe bone
Pharmacokinetics	Study of the way the body absorbs, distributes and gets rid of a drug
Pharmacological	Effect of the drug

MEDICAL TERM Instead of this Term / Phrase	LAY TERMINOLOGY Use this Term / Phrase
Pharynx	Throat
Phase 1 drug trial	<p>Initial study of a new drug in humans to determine limits of tolerance. The first use of a new drug in humans happens in a Phase 1 study. These studies are usually conducted with healthy volunteers; but if a drug is very poisonous, or is used to treat a deadly disease, sick patients who have that disease might be subjects. Usually, there are about 20 – 80 human subjects in Phase 1 studies.</p> <p>Phase 1 trials are conducted to see how the drug acts in the body, if it is safe to use, and to find out the safe dose range. If the results of the Phase 1 studies are good, testing continues in Phase 2 studies.</p>
Phase 2 drug trial	<p>Second phase of study of a new drug intended to obtain initial information. Phase 2 trials include controlled clinical studies to see if a new drug is effective to treat for a particular disease or condition; therefore, the subjects who are given the drug have the condition that the drug is supposed to treat. The side effects are also studied, and more information is gathered about the best dose. Phase 2 studies are also conducted with a relatively small number of patients, usually involving no more than several hundred subjects.</p> <p>If the evidence from the Phase 2 studies shows that a drug is probably effective and relatively safe, Phase 3 studies are conducted.</p>
Phase 3 drug trial	<p>Large-scale trial to confirm and expand information on safety and usefulness of a new drug. During Phase 3 trials, the new drug is given to a larger number of patients in different clinical settings to gather as much information as possible about the drug's safety and effectiveness, the best dosage, and to gather labeling information.</p> <p>Investigators also want to make sure that the drug has more benefits than risk. For example, a drug meant to treat a deadly disease, like some cancers, may have very bad side effects. But, if it can stop the cancer, the side effects may be considered acceptable. On the other hand, even if a drug is very effective in the treatment of a common headache, for example, but has bad</p>

MEDICAL TERM Instead of this Term / Phrase	LAY TERMINOLOGY Use this Term / Phrase
	<p>side effects, that drug would be considered too toxic (poisonous) to be used to treat that condition.</p> <p>In Phase 3 studies, the drug is used the way it would be administered when marketed. When these studies are completed and the sponsor believes that the drug is safe and effective, the sponsor applies to the FDA for approval to market the drug. Phase 3 trials usually involve several hundred to several thousand patient-subjects.</p>
Phase 4 Drug Trial	As a condition of approval, FDA may want more studies to get additional information about the drug's risks, benefits, and optimal use. These studies, which are Phase 4 trials, could include, but would not be limited to, studying different doses or schedules of administration than were used in Phase 2 studies, studying the drug in other patient populations or other stages of the disease, or studying the drug when given over a longer period of time than recommended on the label.
Phlebitis	Irritation of inflammation of a vein
Physical property	Property of; belongs to
Physician	Doctor
Placebo	An inactive substance which may look like an active medication, but has no medical value (such as a sugar pill)
Placebo effect	Symptom or change of condition seen when a placebo is given
Placenta	Afterbirth
Plan for future care or treatment	Care plan
Plasma	Fluid found in the blood
Platelets	Small particles in the blood that help with blood clotting
Pneumonia	Lung infection
Pneumothorax	Collapsed lung
Podiatrist	Foot doctor

MEDICAL TERM Instead of this Term / Phrase	LAY TERMINOLOGY Use this Term / Phrase
Policies, procedures, practices	Our rules and standards
Polydipsia	Too much thirst
Polyps	Abnormal lumps that can sometimes be cancerous
Postpartum	After childbirth
Potential	Possible
Potentially endangering	Possibly hurting
Potentiate	Increase or multiply the effect of a drug or toxin by administration or another drug or toxin at the same time
Potentiality	Increase in drug action from using two drugs together instead of using each drug alone
Prenatal	Before birth
PRN	As needed
Proctologist	Doctor who treats disorders of the rectum and anus
Prognosis	Outlook; probable outcomes
Prone	Lying on the stomach
Prophylaxis	A drug given to prevent disease or infection
Prorated	(Describe the payment schedule by session)
Prospective studies	Study following patients forward in time
Prosthesis	Artificial body part
Protected health information	Personal medical information that is protected by the rule
Protocol	The plan of study. The protocol includes a description of what the research hopes to prove, how the study will be carried out, etc.
Protocols	Rules
Provide your treatment	Treat you

MEDICAL TERM Instead of this Term / Phrase	LAY TERMINOLOGY Use this Term / Phrase
Provided consent	Given consent/permission
Provider	Doctor, nurse, or other provider of health care
Providing assistance with your health care	Helping you (with your health care)
Provisions	Arranging for
Proximal	Closer to the center of the body, away from the end
Pruritus	Itchiness
Psychologist	Doctor who helps people understand interested in the workings of the mind, thought, and behavior
Psychological test	Test of your behavior
Psychosis	Severe mental disorder; craziness
Psychosomatic	Having a connection between the mind and physical symptoms
Pulmonary	Pertaining to the lungs
Pulmonary neoplasm	Lung tumor
Puncture	To make a hole
Pyelogram	A series of x-rays of the kidneys
QD	Every day; daily
QID	Four times a day
Radiation therapy	X-ray or cobalt treatment
Radioactive isotope	a chemical or substance that gives off radiant energy rays similar to X-rays
Random	By chance, like the flip of a coin
Randomization	Assignment of treatment group by chance, similar to tossing a coin (when there are two treatment choices)
RBC	Red blood cell

MEDICAL TERM Instead of this Term / Phrase	LAY TERMINOLOGY Use this Term / Phrase
Rebuttal	Response; answer; contradict
Recombinant	Formation of new combinations of genes
Reconstitution	Putting back together the original parts or elements
Recur	Happen again
Refractory	Not responding to treatment
Regeneration	Regret of a structure or of lost tissue
Regimen	Pattern of administering treatment
Regulation	Rule
Relapse	The return or reappearance of a disease
Release information	Give out your information
Remission	Disappearance of evidence of cancer or other disease
Renal	Having to do with the kidney
Replicable	Capable of being duplicated
Request a correction/amendment	Ask us to change; ask us to correct
Request a restriction	Ask us not to
Research	A systematic investigation (i.e., the gathering and analysis of information) designed to develop or contribute to general knowledge
Resect	Remove or cut out (surgically)
Respiratory	Breathing
Restrictions	Limits
Retrospective	Looking back over past experience
Retrospective study	Study looking back over past experience
Revised	New; changed

MEDICAL TERM Instead of this Term / Phrase	LAY TERMINOLOGY Use this Term / Phrase
Revoke your written authorization	Withdraw; take back; tell us not to
Risk	The probability of harm or injury (physical, psychological, social, economic) occurring as a result of taking part in a research study
Saline	Salt water solution
Sarcoma	A type of cancer
Scapula	Shoulder blade
Screening	Examination, test
Secretion	Release
Sedative	A drug to calm or make less anxious
Seminoma	A type of testes cancer
Sequentially	In a row
Serum	Clear liquid part of blood
Shunt	Artificial or natural channel running between two other channels
Simultaneous	At the same time
Single-blind	Typically, a study design in which the investigator, but not the subject, knows the identity of the treatment assignment. Occasionally the subject, but not the investigator, knows the assignment.
Sleep apnea	Breathing problems while sleeping
Software	Computer program
Somatic	Having to do with the body
Somnolence	Sleepiness
Spirometer	An instrument to measure the amount of air taken into and exhaled from the lungs

MEDICAL TERM Instead of this Term / Phrase	LAY TERMINOLOGY Use this Term / Phrase
Staging	A determination of the extent of the disease
Standard of care	The usual treatment for the disease
Stenosis	Narrowing of a duct, tube, or one of the heart valves
Stent	A metal (or plastic) tube placed inside a blood vessel that keeps it open to prevent blockage
Sternum	Breastbone
Stimuli	Something which causes a change
Stomatitis	Mouth sores; inflammation of the mouth
Stratify	Arrange in groups of analysis of results (e.g., stratify by age, sex, etc.)
Stupor	Stunned state in which it is difficult to get a response or the attention of the subject
Subclavial	Under the collarbone
Subcutaneous (SC)	Under the skin
Sublingual	Under the tongue
Submandibular gland	Gland responsible for secreting saliva
Submit your request in writing	Write a letter
Substantial communication barrier	Communication problem
Superficial	Near the surface
Supine position	Lying on the back
Supplement	Add
Supportive care	General medical care aimed at symptoms, not intended to improve or cure underlying disease
Suspected violation	Possible violation

MEDICAL TERM Instead of this Term / Phrase	LAY TERMINOLOGY Use this Term / Phrase
Suture	Stitches
Symptom	Signs of disease or illness
Symptomatic	Having symptoms
Syncope	Fainting or lightheadedness
Syndrome	A condition characterized by a set of symptoms
Systemic	Distributed throughout the body
Systolic blood pressure	Top number in blood pressure; pertaining to contraction phase of heartbeat
Tachycardia	Fast heart rate
Teratogenic	Capable of causing malformations in unborn fetuses
Testes	Male sex glands; male organs which produce sperm
Therapeutic dose	The amount of medication needed to treat the condition
Thorax	The chest
Thrombosis	Blood clotting within blood vessels
TID	Three times a day
Tinnitus	ringing in the ears
Titration	Gradual alteration of drug dose to determine desired effect or most beneficial strength of drug
T-lymphocytes	Type of white blood cells involved in immune reactions
Tolerance	Decrease in response to a fixed dosage of drug; over time, higher and higher doses of a drug are needed to get the desired effect
Topical application	Applied to the surface of the skin
Toxicity	Side effects or undesirable effects of a drug
Trachea	Windpipe

MEDICAL TERM Instead of this Term / Phrase	LAY TERMINOLOGY Use this Term / Phrase
Tranquilizer	Drug used to control anxiety
Transdermal	Through the skin
Transiently	Temporarily
Trauma	Injury; wound
Treadmill	Walking machine often used to determine heart function
Treatment alternatives and options	Treatment choices
Tremor	Shakiness
Trial	Study
Triglyceride	Fat in the blood
Unable to agree to a requested restriction	Can't agree with your request
Under the custody of law enforcement	In legal custody
Underpayment exists	We owe you money
Upon your request	If you ask
Uptake	Absorption and incorporation of a substance by living tissue; absorb and incorporate a substance, taking in of a substance by living tissue
Ureter	the tube that carries urine from the kidneys to by bladder
Urethra	the tube that carries urine from the bladder outside the body
Urinalysis	Urine exam, test of the urine
Urologist	Doctor who treats disorders of the urinary tracts of men and women
Use or disclose	Use or give out; share; release
Utilize	Use

MEDICAL TERM Instead of this Term / Phrase	LAY TERMINOLOGY Use this Term / Phrase
Valvuloplasty	Plastic repair of a valve, especially of the heart
Varices	Enlarged veins, usually in legs or lining of tube between mouth and stomach
Vasospasm	Narrowing of blood vessels due to spasm of vessel walls
Vector	A carrier, usually an insect, that carries and transmits disease-causing microorganisms
Vehicle preparation	Lotion that contains the drug
Vein	blood vessel
Venipuncture	Entering vein with a needle, generally through the skin
Verbal	Speak or talk
Verticle transmission	Spread of disease
Voluntary	Free of coercion, duress, or undue inducement. Used in the research context to refer to a subject's decision to take part (or to continue to take part) in a research activity.
Waive	Give up
Washout period	Wait until a particular medication is no longer present in the body
WBC	White blood cell
We are required to abide	We must
We may use and disclose medical information about you for hospital operations	We may share your medical information to run the hospital
Withdraw	Leave the study