

## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

<b>Abscess</b>	A localised collection of pus and necrotic (dead) tissue, usually due to an infection, which can occur in any part of the body. Its effects will depend on its location. Treatment will often involve incision of the abscess to drain away the pus.
<b>Achondroplasia</b>	A form of arrested development of the long bones leading to short stature.
<b>Acidosis</b>	A condition in which the blood is more acidic than normal, due to a build up of carbon dioxide as a result of respiratory failure, or of acid substances, for example in kidney failure or as a complication of diabetes mellitus (diabetic ketoacidosis). The chemical imbalance caused by acidosis has wide ranging effects on organ function and, if untreated, eventually results in coma.
<b>Acoustic</b>	Relating to sound or the sense of hearing.
<b>Acuity</b>	Clearness or sharpness; usually of vision.
<b>Acute</b>	Having rapid onset, severe symptoms, and a short course; not chronic.
<b>Addisons disease</b>	A disorder caused by deficient secretion of hormones by the adrenal gland, resulting in weight loss, weakness, and low blood pressure. It is treated by replacement steroid therapy.
<b>Adrenal glands</b>	Two glands located above each kidney which secrete hormones, including cortisone (cortico steroids) and adrenalin.
<b>Agoraphobia</b>	Fear of open spaces.
<b>Albinism (Albino)</b>	Abnormal partial or complete absence of pigment in skin, hair and eyes.
<b>Albumin</b>	One of the body's proteins. The most abundant of the proteins in the blood plasma.
<b>Albuminuria</b>	Presence of albumin in the urine usually indicating disease of the kidneys.

<b>Allergen</b>	A substance which, when introduced into the body, causes the production of antibodies and provokes an allergic state in sensitive individuals. Some of these substances are derived from pollens, from animal hair or fur, or are found in the diet.
<b>Allergy (Allergic State)</b>	Sensitivity to a particular foreign substance [Allergen] which acts as a poison producing abnormal reactions. Asthma and hay fever are often allergic conditions.
<b>Ambulatory</b>	Capable of walking.
<b>Amenorrhoea</b>	Absence of menstruation.
<b>Amnesia</b>	Loss of memory.
<b>Anaesthesia</b>	A partial or total loss of feeling or sensation.
<b>Analgesia</b>	Pain relief.
<b>Analgesic</b>	A drug that relieves pain [such as aspirin, paracetamol, morphine].
<b>Anastomosis</b>	An end-to-end union or joining up of blood vessels or nerves.
<b>Aneurysm</b>	A localised ballooning of the walls of an artery, most commonly affecting the aorta. Effects range from no symptoms, to pain due to pressure on nearby nerves, to sudden death if the aneurysm ruptures.
<b>Angina Pectoris</b>	A pain in the chest on exercise related to reduced circulation of blood in the coronary arteries to the heart.
<b>Angiography</b>	X-ray examination of blood vessels after injection of a substance which shows up on the x-rays.
<b>Ankylosis</b>	Severe or complete loss of movement at a joint due to the abnormal joining of bones to each other.
<b>Anomaly</b>	An abnormality.
<b>Anoxia</b>	Deficiency of oxygen.
<b>Anterior</b>	Nearer to, or at the front of the body.
<b>Antibiotic</b>	A drug that inhibits the growth of, or kills micro organisms such as bacteria (germs).
<b>Antibody</b>	A protein produced by the body in response to a foreign substance (antigen). The antibody combines with the antigen to destroy or neutralize it.

<b>Anticoagulant</b>	A substance that is able to delay, suppress or prevent the clotting of blood.
<b>Anti-convulsant drugs</b>	Drugs used to treat epilepsy.
<b>Antigen</b>	A substance that when introduced into the body causes the formation of antibodies.
<b>Anuria</b>	An abnormally low, or absence of urine output.
<b>Anus</b>	The outlet of the rectum.
<b>Aorta</b>	The main trunk of the arterial system of the body which carries away blood from the heart.
<b>Aperture</b>	An opening or orifice.
<b>Apex</b>	The pointed end of a structure.
<b>Aphasia</b>	Loss of ability to express oneself properly through speech.
<b>Appendicitis</b>	Inflammation of the appendix which is a small blind tube in the gut.
<b>Apnoea</b>	A temporary suspension of breathing, for several seconds. It occurs in pre-term (premature) infants in whom the automatic breathing control mechanism is immature; it may require use of an apnoea alarm to alert the carer. <b>Sleep apnoea</b> , which is seen in adults, is seldom of serious significance.
<b>Arachnoiditis</b>	A condition in which there is progressive fibrosis (thickening) of the arachnoid membrane surrounding the spinal cord, causing pain and muscle weakness through involvement of nerve roots. Many cases are thought to be a result of use, until recently, of irritant dyes during myelography [q.v.].
<b>Areflexia</b>	The absence of reflexes.
<b>Arm</b>	The portion of the upper limb from the shoulder to the elbow.
<b>Arrhythmia</b>	Irregular heart rhythm (also called dysrhythmia).
<b>Artery</b>	A blood vessel that carries blood away from the heart.
<b>Arthralgia</b>	Pain in one or more joints.
<b>Arthritis</b>	Inflammation of a joint.
<b>Arthroscopy</b>	A procedure for examining the interior of a joint.

<b>Articulate</b>	To join together.
<b>Articulation</b>	A joint.
<b>Artificial pacemaker</b>	A device that produces and delivers electrical signals to the heart to maintain a regular heart beat.
<b>Ascites</b>	Abnormal accumulation of fluid in the abdomen.
<b>Aseptic</b>	Free from any infectious material.
<b>Asphyxia</b>	Unconsciousness due to interference with the oxygen supply to the body.
<b>Asthenia</b>	Lack or loss of strength; debility.
<b>Astigmatism</b>	An irregularity of the lens or cornea of the eye producing faulty vision.
<b>Ataxia</b>	Unsteadiness; lack of muscular coordination; lack of precision.
<b>Atelectasis</b>	A collapsed or airless state of all or part of a lung.
<b>Atherosclerosis</b>	A disease process in which fatty substances are deposited in the walls of arteries which can lead to obstruction of blood flow.
<b>Atrophy</b>	Wasting away or decrease in size of a part of the body.
<b>Audiometry</b>	Evaluation of an individual's hearing.
<b>Aura</b>	A feeling or sensation that precedes an epileptic seizure.
<b>Auto immunity</b>	The production of antibodies against a person's own tissues.
<b>Automatism; Automatic Behaviour</b>	A condition in which actions are performed without consciousness or purpose; sometimes follows an epileptic fit.
<b>Autonomic Nervous System</b>	A part of the nervous system which is not under voluntary control.
<b>Avascular necrosis</b>	Death of bone tissue due to interruption to its blood supply. The term applies particularly to the head of the femur (the "ball" of the hip joint). It leads to changes which resemble osteoarthritis.
<b>Axilla</b>	The armpit.
<b>Barium Meal or Swallow</b>	X-Ray examination of the upper gastrointestinal tract (ie. gullet, stomach and duodenum) after swallowing a radio-opaque substance to check for ulcers, tumours, and causes of indigestion.

<b>Benign</b>	Not malignant; favourable for recovery; a mild disease.
<b>Bilateral</b>	Relating to both sides of the body.
<b>Blepharospasm</b>	Acute spasm of the muscles around the eye, causing almost complete, involuntary, closure of the eyelids.
<b>Blood pressure</b>	Pressure exerted by blood as it presses against and stretches blood vessels, especially arteries. Hypertension (high blood pressure), if untreated, increases the risk of cerebrovascular disease (stroke). Hypotension (abnormally low blood pressure) causes feelings of lightheadedness and faintness.
<b>Body cavity</b>	A space within the body that contains various organs.
<b>Bone Scan</b>	Procedure in which a radioactive substance is injected and the radiation emitted from bone is measured.
<b>Bronchi</b>	Branches of the respiratory passageway through which air flows in and out of the lungs.
<b>Bronchiectasis</b>	A chronic disorder in which there is loss of the normal tissue and expansion of lung air passages. It causes difficult breathing, coughing, expectoration of pus, and foul breath.
<b>Bronchiolitis</b>	Inflammation of the bronchioles, the smallest airways in the lungs.
<b>Bronchitis</b>	Inflammation of the bronchi.
<b>Bronchodilators</b>	Drugs used in the treatment of asthma which open up the airways in spasm.
<b>Bronchogenic carcinoma</b>	Cancer of the lung.
<b>Bronchopulmonary dysplasia</b>	Insufficient growth of the lungs, seen in some very pre-term (premature) infants, who may as a result require oxygen therapy.
<b>Bursa</b>	A sac or pouch of fluid located near joints or friction points in the body.
<b>Bursitis</b>	Inflammation of a bursa.
<b>Cachexia</b>	A state of ill health, malnutrition, and wasting.
<b>Calculus</b>	A stone formed within the body (as in gallstones, kidney stones or urinary bladder stones).

<b>Calipers (walking)</b>	An apparatus fixed to a boot at one end and fitting in to the groin at the other end to take the weight of a weak or injured lower limb.
<b>Cancer</b>	A malignant tumour.
<b>Capillary</b>	A microscopic blood vessel through which material such as oxygen, carbon dioxide and nutrients or waste products are exchanged between blood and body tissues.
<b>Carcinogen</b>	Any substance that causes cancer.
<b>Carcinoma</b>	A malignant tumour.
<b>Cardiac arrest</b>	Cessation of an effective heart beat in which the heart is completely stopped or ceases to pump normally.
<b>Cardiology</b>	The study of the heart and diseases associated with it.
<b>Cardiomyopathy</b>	Disease of the heart muscle.
<b>Carpal tunnel syndrome</b>	Compression of the median nerve as it crosses the wrist, causing numbness, pain and tingling in the hand and fingers. It occurs much more commonly in women than in men.
<b>Cartilage</b>	Gristle. A transparent elastic substance of the body. It lines the ends of bones which form joints.
<b>Cataract</b>	Loss of transparency of the lens of the eye which can cause partial or complete blindness.
<b>Catheter</b>	A tube that can be inserted into a body cavity through a canal or into a blood vessel; used to remove fluids, such as urine or blood, and to introduce diagnostic materials or medication.
<b>CAT Scan</b>	Computerized Axial Tomography - A special xray technique which gives a picture of a horizontal slice through the body at various levels.
<b>Cell</b>	The basic structural and functional unit of all organisms capable of performing activities vital to life.
<b>Central Nervous System</b>	That portion of the nervous system that consists of the brain and spinal cord.
<b>Cerebellum</b>	A part of the brain concerned with coordination of movement.
<b>Cerebral hypoxia</b>	Reduced amount of oxygen in the brain; often due to an interruption or reduction in the blood supply to the brain or a reduction in oxygen content of the blood.

<b>Chelating drug</b>	Substance which inactivates certain metals (such as iron) and is used in the treatment of metal poisoning or where there is an excess of the metal in the body.
<b>Chemotherapy</b>	Treatment of malignant diseases by anti-cancer drugs.
<b>Chorea</b>	Involuntary uncoordinated movements.
<b>Chromosome</b>	One of the 46 small bodies in the nucleus of cells which carry genes.
<b>Christmas Disease</b>	A rare disease of blood clotting, similar to haemophilia.
<b>Chronic</b>	Long-term or prolonged; applied to a disease that is not acute.
<b>Cirrhosis</b>	A liver disorder in which the liver cells are destroyed and replaced by scar tissue. Its effects are very variable, ranging from few or no symptoms, to liver failure resulting in coma or death.
<b>Claudication</b>	Limping with pain in legs on walking; relieved by rest. Due to insufficient blood supply to the limb.
<b>Claustrophobia</b>	Fear of enclosed places.
<b>Cleft Palate</b>	Failure of fusion of the lip and roof of the mouth (palate) during development before birth.
<b>Clot</b>	The end of a series of reactions that change liquid blood into a jellylike mass.
<b>Coccyx</b>	The bones at the lower end of the vertebral column.
<b>Cognitive</b>	Relating to understanding and reasoning; logical thought processes.
<b>Colitis</b>	Inflammation of the lining of the large bowel (or colon) and rectum.
<b>Colon</b>	The greater part of the large bowel.
<b>Colostomy</b>	The diversion of faeces through an opening in the colon, creating a surgical opening on to the abdomen.
<b>Coma</b>	Final stage of brain failure in which there is total unresponsiveness.
<b>Computed Tomography (CT) Scan</b>	X-Ray technique that provides a cross-sectional image of any area of the body.
<b>Concussion</b>	Traumatic Injury to the brain that may result in abrupt, temporary loss of consciousness.

<b>Congenital</b>	Present at the time of birth.
<b>Conjunctivitis</b>	Inflammation of the delicate covering of the eyeball.
<b>Constipation</b>	Infrequent or difficult defaecation caused by decreased movements of the gut.
<b>Contralateral</b>	On the opposite side of the body.
<b>Convulsion</b>	Violent, involuntary contraction and jerking of muscles.
<b>Coronary Artery Disease</b>	A condition in which the heart muscle receives inadequate blood due to narrowing or obstruction of the coronary arteries causing angina and heart attacks.
<b>Cutaneous</b>	Relating to the skin.
<b>Cyanosis</b>	Blue or dark purple discolouration of the lips and nails, due to reduced amount of oxygen in blood.
<b>Cyst</b>	A fluid filled space lined by body tissue.
<b>Cystitis</b>	Inflammation of the urinary bladder.
<b>Cystoscopy</b>	Direct visual examination of the urinary tract through the urethra by means of a tube and lens system.
<b>Cytology</b>	The study of cells.
<b>Cytotoxic Drug</b>	Used in malignant disease to destroy cancer cells.
<b>Debility</b>	Weakness in functions or organs of the body. Loss of power.
<b>Decubitus Ulcer</b>	Bedsore; pressure sore.
<b>Defaecation</b>	Discharge of faeces from the body.
<b>Degeneration</b>	A breakdown in structure or function.
<b>Dehydration</b>	Excessive loss of water from the body.
<b>Delusion</b>	A false idea, entirely without foundation.
<b>Dermatology</b>	Medical speciality dealing with diseases of the skin.
<b>Diagnosis</b>	Distinguishing one disease from another or determining the nature of a disease from signs and symptoms by clinical examination and laboratory tests, etc.

<b>Digestion</b>	The mechanical and chemical breakdown of food to simple substances that can be absorbed from the gut into the body.
<b>Diplopia</b>	Double vision.
<b>Disc Disease</b>	Degeneration of the discs which separate the bones of the vertebral column and accompanied by arthritic changes in the bones themselves. (It is a cause of pain in the back.)
<b>Dislocation</b>	Displacement of a bone from a joint.
<b>Diuretic</b>	A drug that increases the volume of urine.
<b>Dorsiflexion</b>	Bending the foot in the direction of its upper surface.
<b>Duodenum</b>	The first part of the small intestine into which the stomach drains.
<b>Dupuytren's contracture</b>	Localised thickening of the tissues of the palm of the hand, causing progressive flexion (bending towards the palm) of one or more fingers. Surgery may be needed to release the thickened tissue.
<b>Dysfunction</b>	Absence of normal function.
<b>Dyslexia</b>	Difficulty in reading or learning to read, accompanied by difficulty in writing and spelling correctly.
<b>Dysmenorrhoea</b>	Painful menstruation.
<b>Dyspepsia</b>	Indigestion.
<b>Dysphagia</b>	Difficulty in swallowing.
<b>Dysphasia</b>	Difficulty in understanding or using language due to brain damage.
<b>Dysplasia</b>	Changes in the size, shape and organization of cells in tissues due to chronic irritation or inflammation.
<b>Dyspnoea</b>	Shortness of breath.
<b>Dyspraxia</b>	Partial loss of ability to perform coordinated movements.
<b>Dystonia</b>	A group of conditions in which there is prolonged muscle contraction affecting one or more parts of the body, resulting in repetitive twisting movements or abnormal postures; it includes such conditions as torticollis [q.v.] and writer's cramp.
<b>Dysuria</b>	Painful urination.
<b>E-test</b>	A chart used for testing vision and visual acuity.

<b>Eczema</b>	A skin rash characterized by itching, swelling, blistering, oozing and scaling of the skin.
<b>Electrocardiogram (ECG)</b>	A recording of the electrical changes that accompany the beating of the heart. Often used to diagnose heart disease.
<b>Electroencephalogram (EMG)</b>	A recording of electrical impulses of the brain to diagnose certain diseases (such as epilepsy).
<b>Electromyography (EMG)</b>	Evaluation of the electrical activity of resting and contracting muscle to ascertain causes of muscular weakness, paralysis and involuntary movements of muscles.
<b>Embolism</b>	Obstruction or closure of a blood vessel by an embolus [ie. a blood clot; bubble of air, mass of bacteria or other debris].
<b>Emesis</b>	Vomiting.
<b>Emphysema</b>	Distension or hyperinflation of the air passages due to loss of elasticity. It can accompany chronic respiratory diseases (such as chronic bronchitis), and causes breathlessness.
<b>Endometrium</b>	The lining of the womb.
<b>Endoscope</b>	An illuminated tube with lenses used to look inside hollow organs (ie. the stomach; urinary bladder).
<b>Enuresis</b>	Involuntary passing of urine at night.
<b>Enuretic alarm</b>	An apparatus used in the treatment of bed wetting in children. When it occurs an alarm bell rings to waken the child.
<b>Enzyme</b>	A substance which can change the speed of chemical reactions. Enzymes are involved in all the metabolic activities which take place within body cells; lack of any particular enzyme may have far-reaching effects on health. A number of congenital metabolic disorders are due to lack of, or ineffectiveness of, a particular enzyme.
<b>Epidemic</b>	A disease that occurs above the expected level among individuals in a population.
<b>Epidemiology</b>	Medical science concerned with the occurrence and distribution of disease in human populations.
<b>Erythema</b>	Skin redness.
<b>Erythrocyte</b>	Red blood cell.
<b>Erythropoietin</b>	A hormone that stimulates red blood cell production.

<b>Euphoria</b>	An exaggerated pleasant feeling of well-being marked by overconfidence and self-assurance which is often not justified by the circumstances.
<b>Exacerbation</b>	An increase in the severity of symptoms or of disease.
<b>Exophthalmos</b>	Bulging of the eyeball. It may be a symptom of thyrotoxicosis (an overactive thyroid gland).
<b>External</b>	Located on or near the surface of the body.
<b>Factors VIII &amp; IX</b>	Substances present in blood which are essential for normal blood clotting. Lack of Factor VIII causes haemophilia, and lack of Factor IX, Christmas disease (q.v.).
<b>Febrile</b>	Feverish.
<b>Festinating Gait</b>	Rapid, short shuffling steps seen in Parkinson's disease.
<b>Fibrillation</b>	Involuntary brief twitch of a muscle; also atrial fibrillation - an irregular rhythm of the heart.
<b>Fibrin</b>	A protein which forms the basis of a blood clot.
<b>Fibrosing alveolitis</b>	A condition in which the lung tissue becomes thickened and inelastic, causing progressive breathlessness on exertion.
<b>Fibrositis</b>	Pain and stiffness in muscles which may be due to local inflammation in muscles. It is an example of soft tissue rheumatism.
<b>Finger counting</b>	A rough test of vision by holding up fingers and asking the visually impaired person to say how many fingers can be seen.
<b>Fistula</b>	An abnormal passage between two organs or between an internal body cavity and the outside (eg. arterio-venous fistula: a connecting passage between an artery and vein).
<b>Flaccid</b>	Relaxed, flabby, or soft; lacking muscle tone.
<b>Forearm</b>	The part of the upper limb between the elbow and wrist.
<b>Fracture</b>	Any break in a bone.
<b>Fragile X Syndrome</b>	Inherited disorder characterized by mental retardation, learning difficulties and physical abnormalities.
<b>Frozen Shoulder</b>	Pain and stiffness at the shoulder due to damage and inflammation of the soft tissues around the shoulder joint.

<b>Fulminant</b>	Occurring suddenly with great intensity.
<b>Gallbladder</b>	A small pouch that stores bile, located under the liver.
<b>Gangrene</b>	Death and rotting of tissue.
<b>Gastrectomy</b>	Surgical removal of part or all of the stomach.
<b>Gastroenterology</b>	The medical speciality that deals with the structure, function, diagnosis and treatment of diseases of the stomach and intestines.
<b>Gastrointestinal (GI) tract</b>	A continuous tube running from the mouth to(GI) tract the anus. (Also called: Alimentary Canal.)
<b>Gastroscopy</b>	Examination of the interior of the stomach with an illuminated tube and lenses.
<b>Gene</b>	The basic unit of heredity which is present in the chromosome. It carries information which determines the physical and mental make-up of the individual.
<b>Genetics</b>	The study of heredity.
<b>Genitalia</b>	Reproductive organs.
<b>Geriatrics</b>	Branch of medicine devoted to the medical problems and care of elderly persons.
<b>Gilles de la Tourette Syndrome</b>	A rare condition in which affected people have involuntary repetitive twitching movements, and make repeated sudden explosive noises, including the involuntary uttering of swear words.
<b>Glaucoma</b>	An eye disorder in which there is increased pressure in the eye which can lead to impaired vision and blindness.
<b>Glucagon</b>	A hormone which increases the level of glucose in the blood.
<b>Glucose</b>	A simple sugar; the major source of energy for every cell type in the body.
<b>Glycosuria</b>	The presence of glucose in the urine which is usually an abnormal finding.
<b>Goldenhars syndrome</b>	A congenital syndrome involving multiple malformations of the mouth, eyes and ears. The heart, kidneys, or nervous system may be affected.
<b>Gout</b>	A disease in which there is an excessive amount of uric acid in the blood which gets into joints and causes severe inflammation, pain

and swelling.

<b>Gynaecology</b>	The study and treatment of disorders of the female reproductive system.
<b>Haematology</b>	The study of blood.
<b>Haematoma</b>	A swelling filled with blood.
<b>Haematemesis</b>	The vomiting of blood.
<b>Haematuria</b>	Blood in the urine.
<b>Haemodialysis</b>	Filtering of blood by an artificial kidney apparatus that removes waste material from the blood which is returned to the body in cases of kidney failure.
<b>Haemoglobin</b>	The protein molecule in red blood cells which carries oxygen.
<b>Haemophilia</b>	A familial (inherited) disease characterized by delayed or entire absence of blood clotting.
<b>Haemoptysis</b>	Coughing up blood.
<b>Haemorrhage</b>	An escape of blood from a ruptured blood vessel.
<b>Haemostasis</b>	Arrest of bleeding.
<b>Hallucination</b>	A false perception of something that does not really exist. A sensory experience created from within the brain which may be perceived as a smell, or taste, or vision or feeling that has no basis in the external world.
<b>Heart Attack</b>	Myocardial Infarction; Coronary Thrombosis.
<b>Heartburn</b>	Burning sensation in the gullet due to acid rising up from the stomach.
<b>Heart murmur</b>	An abnormal sound due to the flow of blood across heart valves. It may indicate heart disease.
<b>Hemicolectomy</b>	Removal of half of the large gut by surgery.
<b>Hemiplegia</b>	Paralysis of the upper limb, trunk and lower limb on one side of the body [mild hemiplegia is known as hemiparesis].
<b>Heparin</b>	A substance that prevents blood clotting.
<b>Hepatitis</b>	Inflammation of the liver due to virus, drugs, or chemical poisons. The effects of hepatitis, their duration, and the eventual outcome

are very variable depending on the cause of the condition and on the type of hepatitis.

**Hernia**

A rupture; the protrusion or projection of an organ or part of an organ from its normal position (most commonly a protrusion of a piece of the gut through openings in the groin.)

**Herpes**

An inflammatory disease of the skin with blistering due to infection by a virus (Herpes Simplex causes "cold sore"; Herpes Zoster causes shingles).

**Hiatus Hernia**

A protrusion of part of the stomach through the diaphragm into the chest.

**Histamine**

A naturally occurring substance which causes increased blood flow in blood vessels. It is also involved in allergic reactions and can produce asthma attacks in susceptible people.

**HIV Positive**

A blood test which indicates that the person has been infected by the HIV virus.

**Hodgkin's lymphoma**

One of a group of malignant conditions of lymphoid tissue. The prognosis is usually better than for non-Hodgkin's lymphomas: with modern treatment it is potentially curable.

**Homeopathy**

A system of medicine based upon the principle that "like cures like". Drugs are given which can produce symptoms of the disease to be cured, but they are administered in negligible amounts.

**Homeostasis**

Automatic self-regulation to maintain the normal or standard state of the body.

**Hormone**

A chemical substance produced by a body organ and carried by the blood to another organ/tissue which it provokes into activity (eg. the thyroid gland produces thyroxin; the pancreas secretes insulin; and the ovary produces estrogens).

**Housemaid's knee**

Inflammation of, and fluid formation in a pouch (or bursa) at the front of the knee joint.

**Human Immune Deficiency Virus (HIV)**

The causative organism in AIDS.

**Humerus**

The bone of the arm.

**Humidifier**

An apparatus for maintaining the moisture in the air of a room at any given level.

**Hydrocele (also Hydrocoele)**

A swelling caused by accumulation of fluid, especially around the testicle.

<b>Hydrocephalus</b>	Enlargement of the skull due to an abnormal collection of cerebrospinal fluid in the chambers of the brain. It frequently accompanies Spina Bifida.
<b>Hydrocortisone</b>	A hormone produced by the adrenal gland which affects the handling of sugar and protein by the body. It is also an anti-inflammatory substance which is used in treating diseases such as rheumatoid arthritis and bronchial asthma.
<b>Hyperaesthesia</b>	Excessive sensitiveness to touch.
<b>Hyperalgesia</b>	Excessive sensibility to pain.
<b>Hyperglycaemia</b>	Excess of sugar in the blood.
<b>Hypermetropia</b>	Long sightedness.
<b>Hypermotility</b>	Excessive movement of the gut.
<b>Hyperplasia</b>	Excessive formation of normal tissue which increases in size.
<b>Hypertension</b>	High blood pressure.
<b>Hyperthyroidism</b>	Excessive activity of the thyroid gland.
<b>Hypertrophy</b>	An increase in size of a tissue or organ.
<b>Hyperventilation</b>	Over-breathing which, by affecting the chemical balance of the blood, can cause transient feelings of lightheadedness or faintness.
<b>Hypnotic</b>	A drug producing sleep.
<b>Hypochondria</b>	A morbid preoccupation or anxiety about one's health.
<b>Hypoglycaemia</b>	A condition in which the blood-sugar level is below normal.
<b>Hypoglycaemic drugs</b>	Drugs which lower sugar in the blood. Used in treating some forms of diabetes mellitus.
<b>Hypomania</b>	A degree of elation and excitement greater than normal but less than mania.
<b>Hypoplasia</b>	Imperfect development of an organ or tissue.
<b>Hypotension</b>	An abnormally low blood pressure.
<b>Hypothermia</b>	A severe reduction in body temperature.

<b>Hypotonia</b>	Reduced muscle tone.
<b>Hypoxaemia</b>	An insufficient oxygen content in the blood.
<b>Hypoxia</b>	A diminished amount of oxygen in the tissues.
<b>Hysterectomy</b>	Removal of the womb.
<b>Iatrogenic</b>	Brought about by medical or surgical treatment.
<b>Icterus</b>	Jaundice.
<b>Ictus</b>	A sudden fit (post-ictal: following a fit).
<b>Idiocy</b>	Very severe arrested development causing severe mental subnormality.
<b>Idiopathic</b>	Applied to a condition of which the cause is unknown.
<b>Idiosyncrasy</b>	A peculiarity of constitution or temperament.
<b>Ileostomy</b>	An operation to make an opening through the abdomen into the small gut (ileum); through which the intestinal contents can be evacuated.
<b>Illusion</b>	A mistaken perception; believing something to be what it is not.
<b>IMED pump</b>	An automatic pump for delivering fluids at a steady rate.
<b>Immune</b>	Protected against a particular infection or allergy.
<b>Immunity</b>	The resisting power of the body to invading microorganisms.
<b>Immunoglobulin</b>	An antibody.
<b>Immunosuppressive drug</b>	A drug which suppresses the normal immune mechanisms in the body. Used to permit successful organ grafting (as in kidney or heart transplants). Can also be used in the treatment of some cancers.
<b>Imperforate</b>	Without an opening.
<b>Intermittent Claudication</b>	Pain in the muscles of the legs (usually the calves) and limping on walking due to a decreased blood supply to the lower limbs. It is relieved by rest.
<b>Infarct</b>	An area of death (necrosis) in an organ or tissue produced by the blocking of a blood vessel.

<b>Infarction</b>	The formation of an infarct (ie. myocardial infarction: an infarct of the heart muscle following a coronary thrombosis).
<b>Infection</b>	Invasion of the body by organisms which cause disease.
<b>Inflammation</b>	A series of changes in tissues indicating their reaction to injury, whether mechanical, chemical or bacterial. The cardinal signs are: heat, swelling, pain and redness.
<b>Infusion</b>	A slow injection of a fluid, for instance whole blood, into a vein.
<b>Ingestion</b>	The taking in of food and drugs by mouth.
<b>Inhalation</b>	The breathing into the lungs through the nose and mouth of air, gas or vapour.
<b>Inhaler</b>	An apparatus used for administering an inhalation.
<b>Inheritance</b>	The acquisition of qualities and characteristics from parents and ancestors.
<b>Innervation</b>	Nerve supply to a part.
<b>Innocuous</b>	Harmless.
<b>Insight</b>	Mental awareness.
<b>Insulin</b>	A hormone secreted by the pancreas which regulates the handling of sugars and fats by the body. A deficiency in the secretion of this hormone causes diabetes mellitus, in the treatment of which artificially produced insulin is widely used.
<b>Ipsilateral</b>	Occurring on the same side. Applied particularly to paralysis or other symptoms occurring on the same side of the body.
<b>Iritis</b>	Inflammation of the iris, the coloured part of the eye surrounding the pupil.
<b>Iron chelating drug</b>	A compound that binds with iron to assist its removal from the body.
<b>Ischaemia</b>	A deficiency in the blood supply to a part of the body.
<b>Isometric</b>	Having equal dimensions. Used to describe exercises known as "isometric exercises" which is the contraction and relaxation of muscles without producing movement.
<b>(IVP) Intravenous pyelography</b>	An x-ray examination of the kidneys and renal system following the intravenous injection of a radio-opaque dye.

<b>Jacksonian Epilepsy</b>	A form of epilepsy in which there are localised convulsive movements.
<b>Jaundice</b>	A yellow discolouration of the skin and mucous membranes due to the presence of bile pigment in the blood. Often it is indicative of liver damage.
<b>Jejunostomy</b>	The making of an opening into the jejunum (small gut) through the abdominal wall; through which the contents of the small intestine pass.
<b>Jejunum</b>	The portion of the small intestine (small gut) from the duodenum to the ileum.
<b>Juxta-articular</b>	Near a joint.
<b>Keratitis</b>	Inflammation of the cornea.
<b>Ketone</b>	An organic compound which is produced by the breakdown of fats in the body.
<b>Ketonuria</b>	The presence of ketones in urine. This can be a sign of diabetes mellitus.
<b>Klinefelter's syndrome</b>	A chromosomal abnormality affecting 1:1000 males, who are born with an additional X chromosome. It may cause varying degrees of behavioural problems and/or learning difficulties, as well as absent or delayed sexual development.
<b>Korsakov's psychosis</b>	A confusional state or dementia due to brain damage in chronic alcoholism.
<b>Kyphoscoliosis</b>	An abnormal curvature of the spine in which there is forward and sideways displacement.
<b>Kyphosis</b>	A curvature of the spine causing a hump back.
<b>Labile</b>	Unstable.
<b>Labyrinthitis</b>	A condition, usually the result of a viral infection, of the labyrinth, which is the part of the inner ear concerned with maintaining balance. It results in vertigo (a spinning sensation) and tinnitus (ringing in the ears), seldom lasting for more than a few weeks.
<b>Lacrimal</b>	Relating to tears.
<b>Laparoscopy</b>	Viewing of the abdominal cavity by passing an illuminated tube through the abdominal wall.

<b>Laparotomy</b>	Incision of the abdominal wall for exploratory purposes.
<b>Laryngectomy</b>	Excision of the larynx (voice box) and a section of the trachea (windpipe), usually because of cancer. A permanent stoma (opening) is created at the front of the throat, into which a tube is inserted to enable breathing. Elderly or very debilitated people may require help with cleaning the tube of the sticky mucus which tends to accumulate. Laryngectomy results in total loss of the ability to speak, although in many cases the use of electrically operated vibrator sound can facilitate communication.
<b>Larynx</b>	The organ of the voice, situated at the upper end of the wind pipe. It is also known as the voice box. Across it are spread the vocal cords; the vibrations and contractions of which produce changes in the pitch of the voice.
<b>Laser</b>	Light Amplification by Stimulated Emission of Radiation. An apparatus producing an extremely concentrated beam of light that can be used to cut various materials. Used in the treatment of cancer, of detached retina, diabetic retinopathy and in the treatment of certain skin conditions.
<b>Lateral</b>	Situated at the side of the body.
<b>Leg</b>	The lower limb from knee to ankle.
<b>Lesion</b>	Injury, wound, or change due to disease in an organ. A local disease condition.
<b>Leukaemia</b>	The generic name for a group of malignant diseases of bone marrow and blood forming organs. Individual diseases are classified according to the type of cells involved and the state and maturity of the cells.
<b>Levodopa (L-dopa)</b>	A synthetic drug used in the treatment of Parkinsonism.
<b>Liver</b>	The large gland situated in the right upper area of the abdominal cavity. Its chief functions are: (1) The secretion of bile, (2) The maintenance of the composition of blood, and (3) the regulation of processes which handle nutrients.
<b>Lobectomy</b>	Surgical removal of one lobe (section) of a lung.
<b>Locomotor</b>	Related to movement from one place to another.
<b>Lordosis</b>	A form of spinal curvature.

<b>Lucid</b>	Clear, particularly of the mind.
<b>Lumbago</b>	Pain in the lower part of the back.
<b>Lyme disease</b>	An infection resulting from a tick bite; in the early stages it may affect the heart or nervous system, and subsequently may cause recurrent attacks of arthritis in one or more joints. In 10% of people the arthritis runs a chronic course with recurrent joint and muscle pains and eventual permanent damage to the affected joints.
<b>Lymph</b>	The fluid from the blood which has passed through the small blood vessel wall to supply nutrient to tissue cells.
<b>Lymphocyte</b>	A white blood cell formed in the lymphoid tissue. Lymphocytes produce immune bodies (antibodies) to overcome and protect against infection.
<b>Lymphoma</b>	Used to denote any malignant condition of the lymphoid tissue. Generally these diseases are classified as either Hodgkin's or non-Hodgkin's lymphomas.
<b>Macrocephalic</b>	Possessing an abnormally large head.
<b>Macroscopic</b>	Discernable with a naked eye.
<b>Macula</b>	A flat spot or discoloured area of the skin; the most sensitive region of the retina.
<b>Magnetic resonance Imaging (MRI)</b>	A form of medical imaging which gives computerised pictures of slices through the body at various levels, similar to those obtained by a CAT scan (q.v.).
<b>Malabsorption</b>	Inability of the small intestine to absorb certain nutrient substances.
<b>Malaise</b>	A feeling of general discomfort and illness.
<b>Malignant</b>	A term applied to any disease of a virulent and fatal nature; but often used to describe cancerous tumours or cancer.
<b>Mania</b>	Elevation of the mood accompanied by acceleration of thought and action and often by delusions of grandeur.
<b>Marrow</b>	The substance contained inside certain bones. Blood cells are made in it.
<b>Melaena</b>	The discharge of black faeces stained with blood which has undergone change after bleeding into the gastro intestinal tract.

<b>Melancholia</b>	A state of extreme depression.
<b>Meniere's Disease or Syndrome</b>	A disease of the inner ear causing attacks of vertigo (sensation of rotation) and tinnitus (ringing in the ears) with progressive deafness.
<b>Meninges</b>	The membranes covering the brain and spinal cord.
<b>Meningitis</b>	Inflammation of the meninges due to viral or bacterial infection.
<b>Meningomyelocele</b>	A protrusion of the spinal cord and meninges through a defect in the vertebral back bone. (See also: Spina bifida.)
<b>Meniscectomy</b>	Surgical removal of a cartilage in a knee joint.
<b>Menopause</b>	The normal cessation of menstruation usually occurring between the 45th and 50th year of life. The ovaries no longer release eggs and there is an associated hormonal imbalance which may cause symptoms such as night sweats, hot flushes, irritability and depression. The symptoms may be managed by Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT).
<b>Menorrhagia</b>	Excessive menstrual bleeding.
<b>Menstruation</b>	The monthly discharge of blood and endometrium (womb lining) from the uterus (womb), starting at the age of puberty and lasting until the menopause.
<b>Metabolism</b>	The use of foods by the body following digestion, absorption and circulation to the body cells. Foods are used both as an energy source and, after being broken down chemically during digestion, as basic materials for making complex chemical compounds required by the body.
<b>Metabolite</b>	Any product or substance taking part in metabolism.
<b>Metaplasia</b>	Abnormal change in the structure of a tissue. May be indicative of malignant change.
<b>Metastasis</b>	The transfer of a disease from one part of the body to another through the blood vessels, via the lymph channels or across the body cavity. Most commonly used when referring to secondary deposits of a malignant growth.
<b>Methotrexate</b>	A cytotoxic drug that is used to treat various types of malignant diseases.
<b>Microbe</b>	A minute living organism, especially one causing disease.

<b>Microcephalic</b>	Having an abnormally small head.
<b>Micrognathia</b>	Failure of development of the lower jaw, causing a receding chin.
<b>Micro-organism</b>	A minute animal or vegetable, particularly a virus, bacterium, a fungus, or a protozoan.
<b>Micturition</b>	The act of passing urine.
<b>Migraine</b>	Paroxysmal (recurrent) attacks of severe headache, often with nausea, vomiting and visual disturbance.
<b>Milestone</b>	One of the "norms" against which the motor, social and psychological development of a child is measured.
<b>Monarticular</b>	Referring to one joint only.
<b>Monoplegia</b>	Paralysis of one limb or of a single muscle or a group of muscles.
<b>Morbid</b>	Diseased, or relating to an abnormal or disordered condition.
<b>Morbidity</b>	A figure that shows the susceptibility of a population to certain diseases. Usually shown as the number of cases which occur annually per thousand or other unit of population.
<b>Moribund</b>	In a dying condition.
<b>Morphine</b>	The principal substance obtained from opium and given mainly to relieve severe pain.
<b>Motor</b>	Something that causes movement. (Eg. motor nerve is one of the nerves which conveys an impulse from a nerve centre to a muscle to promote activity.)
<b>MRI Scan</b>	Magnetic Resonance Imaging: a form of medical imaging giving computerised pictures of internal organs.
<b>Mucous</b>	Relating to or secreting mucus. (Eg. mucous membrane: a membrane that secretes mucus and lines many of the body cavities, particularly those of the respiratory and intestinal tracts.)
<b>Mucoviscidosis</b>	Another name for cystic fibrosis or fibocystic disease.
<b>Mucus</b>	The viscous secretion of mucous membranes.
<b>Murmur</b>	A sound heard on listening to the heart, usually originating in the heart itself and is usually due to the turbulence of blood flow through heart valves. It can be an indicator of underlying heart disease.

<b>Myalgia</b>	Pain in the muscles.
<b>Myasthenia</b>	Muscle weakness.
<b>Myelitis</b>	Inflammation of the spinal cord.
<b>Myelography</b>	X-ray examination of the spinal cord following the insertion of a substance which shows up on x-rays into a space which surrounds the spinal cord.
<b>Myeloid</b>	Resembling bone marrow.
<b>Myeloma</b>	A malignant tumour which arises in the marrow cavity of bones.
<b>Myeloproliferative disorders</b>	A collective term for a group of malignant disorders affecting the blood; the most commonly encountered are various types of myeloid leukaemia.
<b>Myocarditis</b>	Inflammation of the heart muscle.
<b>Myocardium</b>	The muscle tissue of the heart.
<b>Myopathy</b>	Any disease of the muscles.
<b>Myopia</b>	Short sightedness.
<b>Myositis</b>	Inflammation of the muscle.
<b>Myotonia</b>	A state of sustained muscle contraction which the person cannot voluntarily relax.
<b>Myringotomy</b>	Incision of the ear drum to drain fluid from an infected middle ear.
<b>Myxoedema</b>	A condition caused by an underactive thyroid gland. There may be swelling of the face, limbs and hands; dry and rough skin; loss of hair; slow pulse; subnormal temperature; slow metabolism and mental dullness.
<b>Naevus</b>	A birthmark: An area of pigmentation of the skin due to dilated blood vessels.
<b>Narcolepsy</b>	A condition in which there is a sudden uncontrollable desire for sleep.
<b>Narcotic</b>	A drug that produces a state of unconsciousness or unnatural sleep. Narcotic drugs are potent pain killers.
<b>Nausea</b>	Any sensation of sickness with an inclination to vomit.

<b>Nebulizer</b>	An apparatus for reducing a liquid to a fine spray.
<b>Necrosis</b>	Death of a portion of tissue.
<b>Neonatal</b>	Referring to the first month of life.
<b>Neoplasm</b>	A new growth; a tumour. It may be malignant or benign.
<b>Nephrectomy</b>	Excision of a kidney.
<b>Nephritis</b>	Inflammation of the kidneys.
<b>Nephrosis</b>	Any disease of the kidney.
<b>Neuralgia</b>	A sharp stabbing pain, usually along the course of a nerve, owing to inflammation of the nerve or some other disturbance.
<b>Neurasthenia</b>	A condition in which there is much mental and physical fatigue, inability to concentrate, loss of appetite and a failure of memory.
<b>Neuritis</b>	Inflammation of a nerve with pain, tenderness and loss of function.
<b>Neurologist</b>	One who is an expert in the treatment of diseases of the nervous system.
<b>Neurology</b>	The scientific study of the nervous system.
<b>Neurone</b>	A nerve cell.
<b>Neuropathy</b>	A disease process of nerve degeneration and loss of function.
<b>Nocturia</b>	The passing of urine at night.
<b>Non compos mentis</b>	(Latin) Applied to a person whose mental state is such that he is unable to manage his own affairs.
<b>Noxious</b>	Harmful.
<b>Nucleus</b>	The essential part of a cell, governing its nutrition and reproduction, its division being essential for formation of new cells.
<b>Nystagmus</b>	An involuntary rapid movement of the eyeball. It may indicate disease of the inner ear or of the central nervous system.
<b>Obese</b>	Very fat.
<b>Obsession</b>	An idea which persistently recurs to an individual, although he resists it and regards it as being senseless. A compulsive thought.
<b>Occipital</b>	Relating to the occiput.

<b>Occiput</b>	The back of the head.
<b>Occlusion</b>	Closure, applied particularly to alignment of the teeth; blockage of arteries.
<b>Occult</b>	Hidden, concealed.
<b>Ocular</b>	Relating to the eye.
<b>Oedema</b>	An excessive amount of fluid in the body tissues causing swelling.
<b>Oesophagus</b>	The canal which extends from the pharynx to the stomach. The gullet.
<b>Olfactory</b>	Relating to the sense of smell.
<b>Oncology</b>	A scientific study of tumours.
<b>Oophorectomy</b>	Removal of an ovary.
<b>Opiate</b>	Any medication containing opium.
<b>Optic</b>	Relating to vision.
<b>Organic</b>	Relating to the organs. (Eg. organic disease: disease of an organ, accompanied by structural changes.)
<b>Organism</b>	An individual living being, animal or vegetable.
<b>Orthopaedics</b>	The branch of medicine dealing with deformities, injuries and diseases of the bones and joints.
<b>Orthotic</b>	Promoting the straightening of a deformed or distorted part.
<b>Os</b>	A bone.
<b>Ossicle</b>	A small bone.
<b>Osteitis</b>	Inflammation of bone.
<b>Osteochondritis</b>	Inflammation of bone and cartilage which may cause pain and deformity.
<b>Osteomalacia</b>	A disease characterised by painful softening of bones. Due to vitamin D deficiency in adults.
<b>Osteomyelitis</b>	Inflammation of a bone due to infection.
<b>Osteosarcoma</b>	A malignant bone tumour.

<b>Otolaryngology</b>	The scientific study of the ear and the larynx and the diseases affecting them.
<b>Pacemaker</b>	An electrical device which stimulates the heart muscle to contract. It consists of an energy source, usually batteries, and electrical circuitry connected to an electrode which is in direct contact with the heart muscle.
<b>Paediatrics</b>	The branch of medicine dealing with the care and development of children and the treatment of children's diseases.
<b>Paget's disease</b>	A chronic disease of bone leading to dense bone formation with areas of bone rarefaction, which produces bone pain, deformity, enlargement of the skull and possibly consequent deafness.
<b>Palliative</b>	Treatment which relieves, but does not cure disease. Often used in reference to treatments for cancer.
<b>Palpation</b>	The examination of the organs by touch or pressure of the hand over the part.
<b>Palpitation</b>	Rapid and forceful contraction of the heart of which the person is conscious.
<b>Palsy</b>	Paralysis.
<b>Pancreas</b>	An organ situated behind the stomach which produces hormones (insulin and glucagon) and digestive fluids which drain into the small intestine.
<b>Papilloedema</b>	Swelling of the optic nerve at the back of the eye which may indicate an increase of pressure within the skull.
<b>Paraesthesia</b>	An abnormal tingling sensation (ie. "pins and needles").
<b>Paralysis</b>	Loss of the power of movement of any part, as a result of an interference with the nerve supply.
<b>Paramedical</b>	Having some association with the science of practice of medicine.
<b>Paranoia</b>	A mental disorder characterised by delusions of persecution.
<b>Paraparesis</b>	An incomplete paralysis affecting the lower limbs.
<b>Paraphrenia</b>	Schizophrenia occurring for the first time in later life.
<b>Paraplegia</b>	Paralysis of the lower extremities and lower trunk. All parts below the point of the injury to the spinal cord are affected. It may be of sudden onset from injury to the cord or may develop slowly as a

result of disease.

<b>Parasite</b>	Any animal or vegetable organism living upon or within another from which it derives its nourishment.
<b>Parasympathetic</b>	One of two types of nerves responsible for controlling functions which take place at the unconscious level, for example regulating blood pressure.
<b>Parenteral</b>	Applied to the introduction to the body of drugs or fluids by routes other than the mouth or rectum, for instance intravenously or subcutaneously.
<b>Paresis</b>	Partial paralysis.
<b>Paroxysm</b>	A sudden attack of recurrence of a symptom or of a disease. It may also mean convulsion.
<b>Pathogen</b>	A parasitic micro-organism such as a virus or a bacterium which can cause disease.
<b>Pathognomonic</b>	Specifically characteristic of a disease.
<b>Pathology</b>	The branch of medicine concerned with the study of disease processes and mechanisms.
<b>Penicillamine</b>	A drug which is used in the treatment of severe rheumatoid arthritis. It is also used in cases of copper and lead poisoning to assist in the elimination of the metals from the body.
<b>Peptic Ulcer</b>	An ulcer usually in the stomach or the duodenum, caused by an excess of acid.
<b>Percutaneous</b>	Through the skin.
<b>Perfusion</b>	The passage of liquid through a tissue or an organ, particularly the passage of blood through the lung tissues.
<b>Peritoneum</b>	The lining membrane of the abdominal cavity which also covers some of the abdominal organs.
<b>Peritonitis</b>	Inflammation of the peritoneum due to infection.
<b>Permeability</b>	The degree to which a fluid can pass from one structure through a wall or membrane into another.
<b>Pernicious</b>	Highly destructive; fatal. (eg pernicious anaemia: an anaemia due to lack of absorption of vitamin B12 for the formation of red blood cells which if untreated is fatal.)

<b>Pertussis</b>	Whooping Cough.
<b>Petit mal</b>	Absence seizures. A form of epilepsy common in children and characterised by sudden and brief absences.
<b>Phalanges</b>	The bones of the fingers or toes.
<b>Pharynx</b>	The muscular tube lined with mucous membrane situated at the back of the mouth. It leads to the gullet, and also communicates with the nose and windpipe.
<b>Phenylketonuria</b>	This is an inherited abnormality leading to severe mental deficiency which, if detected early, can be treated by a diet that is low in the substance (aminoacid) called phenylalanine which is an essential constituent of protein.
<b>Phenytoin</b>	An anticonvulsant drug.
<b>Phlebitis</b>	Inflammation of a vein, usually in the leg.
<b>Phobia</b>	An irrational fear produced by a specific situation which the person attempts to avoid.
<b>Photophobia</b>	Intolerance of light.
<b>Photosensitivity</b>	An abnormal degree of sensitivity of the skin to sunlight.
<b>Pituitary</b>	A hormone-secreting gland situated at the base of the brain. It secretes many different types of hormone.
<b>Placebo</b>	An inactive substance which when administered under the impression that it is a drug causes some improvement which cannot be related to any particular drug effect.
<b>Plantar</b>	Relating to the sole of the foot.
<b>Plantar fasciitis</b>	Inflammation of the tissues of the sole of the foot causing chronic pain on walking.
<b>Plasma</b>	The yellow fluid part of the blood.
<b>Platelet</b>	Disc-shaped structures found in blood concerned in the process of clotting. (Also known as a thrombocyte).
<b>Pleurisy</b>	Inflammation of the lining of the lung which causes a sharp pain in the chest on breathing.
<b>Plexus</b>	A network of veins or nerves.

<b>Pneumonectomy</b>	Partial or total removal of a lung.
<b>Pneumonia</b>	Inflammation of the lung which is usually accompanied by fever, coughing, breathlessness and pains in the chest.
<b>Poliomyelitis</b>	This is the full name for the disease known as "polio", which is due to damage to nerves in the spinal cord resulting in paralysis and wasting of muscle groups. It is caused by the polio virus.
<b>Polyarthritis</b>	Inflammation of several joints at the same time, as seen in rheumatoid arthritis.
<b>Polydipsia</b>	Excessive thirst. It may be a symptom of untreated diabetes mellitus.
<b>Polymyalgia Rheumatica</b>	A condition which causes persistent or recurrent aching pain in the muscles, often involving the shoulder or hip region.
<b>Polyuria</b>	Excessive urination; often in conjunction with polydipsia.
<b>Posterior</b>	Towards the back.
<b>Posthumous</b>	Occurring after death.
<b>Postmortem</b>	After death. (Postmortem examination).
<b>Postnatal</b>	Occurring after birth.
<b>Postpartum</b>	Occurring after labour.
<b>Postprandial</b>	Occurring after a meal.
<b>Pott's Fracture</b>	A fracture dislocation of the ankle.
<b>Precancerous</b>	Applying to conditions or structural changes in tissues that may precede cancer.
<b>Prednisolone, Prednisone</b>	Synthetic corticosteroids used in the treatment, of various allergic and rheumatic conditions.
<b>Premenstrual</b>	The days preceding the onset of a "menstrual" period.
<b>Prenatal</b>	Before birth.
<b>Presbycusis</b>	Progressive deafness in old age.
<b>Proctalgia</b>	Pain in the rectum and/or anus (the lower end of the large bowel).
<b>Proctocolectomy</b>	Surgical removal of the rectum and large bowel.

<b>Prognosis</b>	A forecast of the course and duration of a disease.
<b>Proliferation</b>	Rapid multiplication of cells.
<b>Prone</b>	Lying face downward.
<b>Prophylaxis</b>	Measures taken to prevent a disease.
<b>Prostaglandin</b>	One of several hormone substances produced in many body tissues including the brain, lungs, uterus and stomach. They have many different actions and are involved in the process of inflammation.
<b>Prostate</b>	A gland at the base of the bladder in the male which produces fluid which forms part of the semen. It often becomes enlarged after middle age and may require removal.
<b>Prostatectomy</b>	Surgical removal of whole or of part of the prostate gland.
<b>Prosthesis</b>	The fitting of an artificial part to the body, such as artificial limbs, dentures and pace-makers. It is also used to describe artificial valves placed in the heart.
<b>Prostration</b>	A condition of extreme exhaustion.
<b>Protein</b>	One of a group of complex organic nitrogen containing compounds formed from simpler substances known as aminoacids, and occurring in every living cell of animal and vegetable tissue.
<b>Proteinurina</b>	A condition in which protein is present in the urine. It may be an indicator of damage to the kidneys.
<b>Proximal</b>	In anatomy, that part which is nearest to the centre of a body.
<b>Pruritus</b>	Irritation of the skin with itching.
<b>Psoriasis</b>	A chronic skin disease characterised by reddish spots with silvery scales. It is not infectious and the cause is unknown. Sometimes it is associated with arthritis affecting many joints.
<b>Psychiatry</b>	The branch of medicine which deals with mental disorders and their treatment.
<b>Psychogenic</b>	A disorder of psychological origin.
<b>Psychosis</b>	A severe mental illness affecting the whole personality.
<b>Psychosomatic</b>	Relating to the mind and the body.
<b>Psychosomatic</b>	Those illnesses in which emotional factors have a profound

<b>Disorders</b>	influence, including eczema, asthma and ulcerative colitis.
<b>Ptosis</b>	Drooping of the upper eyelid.
<b>Puberty</b>	The period during which the sexual characteristics develop and the reproductive organs become functional.
<b>Puerperium</b>	A period of about six weeks following child birth.
<b>Pulmonary</b>	Relating to the lungs.
<b>Pulse</b>	The local rhythmic expansion of an artery which can be felt with the finger.
<b>Pyrexia</b>	Fever.
<b>Quadriceps</b>	A group of muscles in the front of the thigh.
<b>Quadriplegia (Tetraplegia)</b>	Paralysis of all four limbs.
<b>Radiograph</b>	An x-ray picture.
<b>Radiographer</b>	A person trained to take x-ray pictures.
<b>Radiologist</b>	A doctor specialising in the interpretation of x-rays (radiology).
<b>Radiotherapy</b>	The treatment of disease (usually cancer) by x-rays.
<b>Radius</b>	One of the two forearm bones.
<b>Raynaud's Phenomenon</b>	Intermittent blanching of the fingers and toes, usually precipitated by cold or vibration.
<b>Rectum</b>	The lower part of the large intestine.
<b>Reflex</b>	An automatic response to an outside stimulus. For example, a tendon reflex is jerking of a muscle produced by striking certain tendons, the intensity of the response indicating the presence or absence of neurological disease and its nature.
<b>Rejection of Transplant</b>	The formation of antibodies in the blood which react with the transplanted organ, eventually leading to its destruction.
<b>Renal</b>	Relating to the kidney.
<b>Repetitive strain injury (RSI)</b>	A variety of musculoskeletal disorders, generally affecting muscles or tendons of the upper limbs, neck or back, resulting from repetitive and forceful motions or from activities carried out in awkward postures.

<b>Resection</b>	The surgical removal of an organ or part of the body.
<b>Respiration</b>	The act of breathing.
<b>Respirator</b>	An artificial device used to aid the act of respiration in those who are unable to do this adequately themselves.
<b>Retina</b>	The lining at the back of the eye where the image is formed.
<b>Retinopathy</b>	Disease of the retina. Most often found in diabetes and high blood pressure, sometimes leading to impairment of vision and blindness.
<b>Rheumatism</b>	A general term to describe disorders affecting the joints, muscles, tendons and ligaments.
<b>Rheumatology</b>	The branch of medicine concerned with disorders of the joints, muscles, tendons and reflexes.
<b>Rickets</b>	A disease of children caused by a lack of vitamin D. Now rarely seen in children, but some elderly people who had the disease in childhood may be left with deformities, particularly of the lower limbs.
<b>Romberg's sign</b>	An inability to stand without swaying if the eyes are closed.
<b>Royal Free Disease</b>	Another name for myalgic encephalomyelitis.or post-viral fatigue.
<b>Rubella</b>	German measles which may cause mental retardation, deafness and other abnormalities in babies whose mothers have contracted the disease in early pregnancy.
<b>Sacroiliac joint</b>	The joint between the sacrum and the adjoining part of the pelvis.
<b>Sacrum</b>	The bone at the lower end of the back bone forming the back of the pelvis.
<b>Sarcoidosis</b>	A disease of unknown cause affecting many parts of the body, but principally the lungs.
<b>Sarcoma</b>	A particular type of malignant tumor arising from bone, cartilage, muscle, fat or other related tissues.
<b>Sciatica</b>	Pain down the back of the leg, usually caused by pressure on the sciatic nerves by a displaced disc in the back bone.
<b>Scleritis</b>	Inflammation of the sclera, the white part of the eyeball.

<b>Scleroderma</b>	A disease characterised by thickening and hardening of the skin with consequent impairment of dexterity. It may also affect many other parts of the body, most notably the kidney with the possible development of renal failure.
<b>Scoliosis</b>	A curvature of the backbone to either the left or right.
<b>Secretion</b>	The production of fluids and hormones by the glands of the body.
<b>Seminoma</b>	A malignant tumour of the testicle.
<b>Senescence</b>	The process of growing old.
<b>Senility</b>	A state of mental and physical deterioration resulting from old age.
<b>Sensory nerves</b>	Those nerves responsible for the appreciation of touch, pain, temperature and position.
<b>Sepsis</b>	Infection.
<b>Septicaemia</b>	Presence of large numbers of bacteria in the blood giving rise to a very severe illness with a high fever.
<b>Shock</b>	A condition where the blood pressure falls so low that the blood supply to vital organs is threatened.
<b>Sigmoid colon</b>	The part of the large bowel just above the rectum.
<b>Silicosis</b>	A lung disease caused by the inhalation of silica particles leading to progressive breathlessness and which occurs in miners, stone masons and quarry workers.
<b>Sjogren's syndrome</b>	A syndrome resulting in a combination of dry eyes, dry mouth, enlarged parotid (salivary) glands, and polyarthritis. It is seen in up to 30% of people with rheumatoid arthritis.
<b>Snellen's chart</b>	A chart consisting of letters of varying sizes used for testing eyesight.
<b>Soft tissue rheumatism</b>	A variety of conditions affecting the tissues such as the muscles, tendons and ligaments which surround joints, but not involving the joints themselves.
<b>Somatic</b>	Relating to the body as opposed to the mind.
<b>Spasmodic torticollis</b>	See torticollis.
<b>Spastic paralysis</b>	A weakness of muscles associated with rigidity and stiffness.

<b>Sphincter</b>	A ring of muscle at the outlet to the bowel or bladder whose contraction prevents incontinence.
<b>Spina bifida</b>	A developmental abnormality of the spinal cord and back bone leading to weakness and sensory loss in the lower limbs and incontinence.
<b>Spina bifida occulta</b>	A very mild form of spinal bifida which does not lead to any disability.
<b>Spirometer</b>	An instrument used for measuring lung function.
<b>Spleen</b>	An organ found in the upper left part of the abdomen involved with the manufacture and destruction of blood cells.
<b>Spondylolisthesis</b>	A sliding forward of one vertebra on another, usually in the lower part of the back bone and possibly causing back pain.
<b>Spondylosis</b>	A condition resulting from degeneration of the discs between vertebrae with the formation of bony outgrowths and arthritis of joints between vertebrae. When occurring in the neck it is referred to as cervical spondylosis whilst when occurring in the lower spine is called lumbar spondylosis. It is associated with pain in the affected part of the spine.
<b>Status Asthmaticus</b>	A very severe and prolonged attack of asthma.
<b>Status epilepticus</b>	A series of epileptic fits during which the person does not regain consciousness between each fit.
<b>Steatorrhea</b>	The presence of excess fat in the stools which causes them to be bulky and offensive. Found when absorption of fats from the bowel is impaired as, for example, in cystic fibrosis.
<b>Stenosis</b>	A narrowing. Usually used in relation to the valves of the heart whose narrowing may lead to heart failure. Also applied to the narrowing of an artery (eg. carotid stenosis).
<b>Steroid</b>	A particular type of hormone. One specific type, the corticosteroids, are used to treat certain allergic and rheumatological conditions.
<b>Still's disease</b>	A form of rheumatoid arthritis affecting children.
<b>Stomach</b>	An organ situated in the upper part of the abdomen joining the oesophagus (gullet) to the small intestine.
<b>Stomatitis</b>	Inflammation of the mouth.

<b>Strabismus</b>	A squint.
<b>Stridor</b>	Harsh, noisy breathing caused by partial obstruction of the upper part of the airway.
<b>Stupor</b>	A state of semi-consciousness.
<b>Subarachnoid Haemorrhage</b>	A bleed into the space surrounding the brain causing a sudden severe headache and sometimes leading to residual effects similar to those of a stroke.
<b>Subdural Haematoma</b>	A blood clot beneath one of the membranes surrounding the brain sometimes occurring as a result of minor injury in the elderly which may lead to progressive mental impairment.
<b>Supine</b>	Lying on the back with the face upwards.
<b>Surgery</b>	The branch of medicine which treats conditions by operative measures.
<b>Sympathetic nerves</b>	One of two types of nerves responsible for controlling functions which take place at the unconscious level, for example regulating blood pressure.
<b>Syncope</b>	A simple faint or temporary and very brief loss of consciousness.
<b>Synovitis</b>	The inflammation of the membrane which lines a joint. Prolonged inflammation will lead to arthritis.
<b>Syringomyelia</b>	A progressive condition of the spinal cord leading to weakness of upper and lower limbs and particularly with loss of pain and temperature sensation in the arms.
<b>Systemic</b>	Relating to the body as a whole.
<b>Systolic blood pressure</b>	The peak of blood pressure caused by pressure contraction of the heart.
<b>T Cell</b>	A particular type of blood cell responsible for certain aspects of immunity and whose function may be impaired in conditions such as AIDS.
<b>Tachycardia</b>	A rapid heart beat.
<b>Tachypnoea</b>	A rapid respiratory rate.
<b>Talipes</b>	A congenital deformity of the foot, commonly known as club foot.
<b>Tarsalgia</b>	Pain in the foot.

<b>Tendon</b>	A small band of fibrous tissue attaching a muscle to a bone.
<b>Tennis elbow</b>	A condition characterised by pain at the outer side of the elbow especially when moving it against a resistance.
<b>Tenosynovitis</b>	Inflammation of the sheath surrounding a tendon.
<b>Tetraplegia</b>	Paralysis of all four limbs (see quadriplegia).
<b>Therapeutics</b>	The science of the healing of diseases with drugs and other measures.
<b>Thigh</b>	The lower limb from hip to knee.
<b>Thorax</b>	The chest.
<b>Thrombocytopenia</b>	A reduction in the number of platelets in the blood leading to bleeding which may occur spontaneously or in response to minor knocks. This may occur into the skin causing bruising or a skin rash (purpura). Other common sites of bleeding are from the bowel or urinary tract.
<b>Thrombosis</b>	The sudden formation of a clot within an artery leading to a stoppage of blood flow. This commonly occurs in the arteries to the heart leading to a heart attack or in those to the brain leading to a stroke.
<b>Thyroid</b>	A gland situated in the front of the neck producing hormones which regulate the body's rate of metabolism.
<b>Thyrotoxicosis</b>	Overactivity of the thyroid gland leading to weight loss, rapid pulse, excessive sweating and intolerance of the heat.
<b>Thyroxine</b>	The hormone produced by the thyroid gland.
<b>Tibia</b>	The shin bone.
<b>Tic</b>	A spasmodic twitching of certain muscles, usually of the face.
<b>Tinnitus</b>	A ringing, buzzing or roaring sound in the ears.
<b>Tone</b>	The degree of tension within a muscle.
<b>Torticollis (Wry-neck)</b>	Contraction of one or more of the neck muscles resulting in the turning of the head to one side.
<b>Toxoplasmosis</b>	An infection which in the vast majority of cases goes unnoticed or at most produces a mild flu-like illness. People with impaired

immunity to infection, such as people with AIDS, may be severely affected with involvement of the heart or nervous system.

**Congenital toxoplasmosis** affects infants whose mothers become infected during pregnancy. It may result in severe neurological damage incompatible with survival; less severely affected infants who do survive may subsequently develop severe neurological and visual impairments.

**Trachea**

The wind pipe.

**Tracheostomy**

An operation to make an opening into the trachea through the neck. May be seen in patients receiving long term artificial respiration. May also be seen in babies with congenital abnormalities of the upper airways to permit normal breathing.

**Transient Ischaemic Attack (TIA)**

A short lived reduction of blood supply to the brain leading to possible dizziness, weakness and other symptoms, but which last for less than 24 hours.

**Transsexual**

A person who believes his or her sex is opposite to his or her physical state.

**Transvestite**

A person who dresses as a member of the opposite sex.

**Trauma**

A wound or injury.

**Tremor**

Involuntary muscular activity leading to rhythmic movements of the particular part of the body affected. Commonly occurs in Parkinson's disease leading to considerable difficulties with dexterity.

**Triceps**

A muscle situated at the back of the arm.

**Trigeminal neuralgia**

Pain in the face confined to the area of skin supplied by the trigeminal nerve.

**Tuberculosis**

An infectious disease which may affect many parts of the body, but which most notably causes a long standing infection of the lungs.

**Tympanic membrane**

The ear drum.

**Ulcer**

An erosion or loss of continuity of the skin or lining of the mouth, oesophagus, stomach or intestine.

**Unilateral**

On one side only.

**Uraemia**

A condition characterised by a high level of urea in the blood, being one of the manifestations of renal failure.

<b>Urea</b>	The main end product of protein metabolism which circulates in the blood and is eliminated from the body by the kidneys.
<b>Ureter</b>	One of the two long tubes which connect the kidney to the bladder.
<b>Urethra</b>	The tube through which urine is discharged from the bladder.
<b>Urticaria</b>	Nettle rash. An allergic reaction, sometimes associated with the more serious condition of angio-neurotic oedema, which may cause swelling of the upper airways and lead to difficulty with breathing.
<b>Uterus</b>	The womb.
<b>Uveitis</b>	Inflammation of the linings of the eyeball.
<b>Vagotomy</b>	Surgical cutting of the vagus nerve, a procedure sometimes used in the treatment of peptic ulcer.
<b>Valgus</b>	A displacement outwards as in Genu valgum where the person has knock knees with deviation of the lower legs outwards, or Hallux valgus where the big toes are displaced outwards.
<b>Varicose</b>	Swollen or dilated, as in varicose veins.
<b>Varus</b>	A displacement inwards as in Genu varum where the patient has bow legs with the lower legs deviated inwards.
<b>Vascular</b>	Relating to the blood vessels.
<b>Vasculitis</b>	Inflammation of a blood vessel. A common pathological feature in a number of rheumatic and multi-system disorders.
<b>Vasovagal attack</b>	Simple faint.
<b>Vein</b>	A blood vessel carrying blood back from the tissues to the heart and where blood is under low pressure.
<b>Vena cava</b>	Either of the two large veins which lead directly into the heart.
<b>Venereal disease</b>	Disease contracted through sexual contact.
<b>Ventilator</b>	See Respirator.
<b>Ventricle</b>	The name given to each of the two large chambers in the heart, the left and right ventricles. In certain cases heart failure may be referred to as left or right ventricular failure. Also the name given to the fluid filled cavities within the brain.
<b>Vertebra</b>	One of the 33 small bones which form the spinal column or

backbone.

**Vertigo**

The feeling that either oneself or one's surroundings is spinning round. Most frequently associated with disease of the inner ear such as Meniere's disease.

**Virology**

The study of viruses and the diseases they cause.

**Wernicke's  
Encephalopathy**

An acute state of confusion due to vitamin B deficiency, commonly seen in alcoholism.

**Whiplash injury**

Injury to the soft tissues and sometimes the spinal cord in the neck due to sudden backward jerking movement of the head, commonly seen in road traffic accidents.

**von Willebrand's  
disease**

A form of bleeding disorder causing symptoms similar to those of haemophilia.

**Wilms' tumour**

A malignant tumour of the kidney occurring in young children.

**Wolff Parkinson White  
Syndrome**

A congenital abnormality of the mechanism regulating heart function, resulting in paroxysmal tachycardia (bursts of very rapid heart rate).

**X Chromosome**

The female sex chromosome, each female cell containing 2 of them.

**Y Chromosome**

The male sex chromosome, each male cell containing one Y and one X chromosome.