

THE VOCABULARY FOR CMI - AN EXPLANATORY NOTE

The first edition of *Writing about Medicines for People: Usability Guidelines for Writing Consumer Product Information* was published in 1994 by the Communications Research Institute of Australia and contained a Glossary of switch terms which was intended to assist CPI (now **CMI** - Consumer **Medicine** Information) writers to interpret the complex medical terms used in Product Information.

With the revision of the *Usability Guidelines* and to coincide with the launch of the second edition, the *Glossary* was broadened in concept and comprehensively reviewed in the light of almost four years experience of writing, testing and using CMI. To reflect the changes to the scope of the *Glossary*, it was renamed *Vocabulary for Consumer Medicine Information (CMI)*.

The *Vocabulary* has been developed with input from medical physicians, industry representatives, CMI writers and consumers. It is not intended to be a dictionary, since it does not provide the CMI writer with a set of definitions for medical terminology. Rather, it contains words and phrases which translate complex medical terms into words suitable for use in CMIs. Many of the terms in the *Vocabulary* have been taken from the 'core' CMIs developed by the consistency working groups and have been subject to consumer testing. Many of the disease explanations have also been reviewed by a specialist in that field.

A number of alternative explanations or descriptions are provided throughout the *Vocabulary*. These alternatives are interchangeable and you can select whichever you feel is most appropriate for a particular CMI.

The *Vocabulary* aims to provide guidance and assistance to CMI writers, and its use is entirely voluntary. There are other approaches and explanatory terms which may be useful and more appropriate in a particular CMI. You are encouraged to use the *Vocabulary* to further consistency between CMIs, however, careful thought and consideration of the best way to express ideas in consumer-friendly language is still required.

Although many of the terms in the *Vocabulary* have been tested with consumers, you will still need to test individual CMIs to ensure the document in its entirety is easy to use and understand.

VOCABULARY FOR CONSUMER MEDICINE INFORMATION (CMI)

Medical Term	Consumer Meaning
abdominal pain	stomach pain or discomfort
ablate	1. remove 2. take away
abortion, non-surgical	miscarriage
abscess	abscess
absorption	1. absorbed into the body or bloodstream 2. entering the body through the skin or bloodstream
accommodation	focussing the eye
accommodation disorders	blurred vision
accommodation disturbances	blurred vision
ACE inhibitors	medicines used to treat high blood pressure and some other heart conditions
achlorhydria	lack of acid in the stomach
acidosis	too much acid in the blood, which may cause an increased rate of breathing
acne	acne
acneform eruption	spots that look like acne
acromegaly	enlargement of the face, hands and feet because of too much growth hormone
addiction	addiction
Addison's Disease	adrenal glands not working properly <i>symptoms:</i> may cause weakness, tiredness, weight loss, low blood pressure
Addisonian crisis	severe illness where the adrenal glands do not work properly <i>symptoms:</i> confusion, extreme muscle weakness, dehydration, low blood pressure which may lead to coma
adenine arabinoside	medicine used to treat some cancers
adenocarcinoma	type of cancer
adipose tissue	fat
adjuvant	1. a substance added to or used with another substance to assist its action 2. something that makes medical treatment more effective
adrenal function, inhibition	adrenal glands not working properly <i>symptoms:</i> may cause weakness, tiredness, weight loss, low blood pressure
adrenal gland	a small gland above the kidney
adrenal glucocorticoid	hormone produced by the adrenal glands
adrenalectomy	removal of the adrenal glands
adrenaline	hormone produced by the body which stimulates the body, getting it ready for action
adrenergic	relating to adrenaline
adrenergic neurone blocking agent	medicine which prevents adrenaline working
adrenocortical hormone	hormone produced by the adrenal glands
adrenocortical hypofunction	adrenal glands not working properly
adrenocortical insufficiency	adrenal glands not working properly
aerosol	1. aerosol 2. puffer
affective	relating to mood

Medical Term	Consumer Meaning
agammaglobulinaemia	lowered immunity due to diseases such as some blood disorders, malaria, kidney disease requiring dialysis
agitation	agitation
agoraphobia	fear of public places or open spaces
agranulocytosis	lack of white blood cells <i>symptoms:</i> frequent infections such as fever, severe chills, sore throat or mouth ulcers
akathisia	restlessness or difficulty sitting still
akinesia	lack of normal movement
alkylating agent	medicine used to treat some cancers
allergic	allergic
allergy	allergy <i>symptoms:</i> shortness of breath, wheezing or difficulty breathing; swelling of the face, lips, tongue or other parts of the body; rash, itching or hives on the skin
alopecia	unusual hair loss or thinning
Alzheimer's Disease	form of dementia with loss of memory and other mental abilities
amenorrhoea	no menstrual periods
amiodarone	a medicine used to treat irregular heart beats
amnesia	loss of memory
ampoule	Ampoule
anabolic	relating to body building hormones
anaemia	1. a condition in which the amount of oxygen-carrying pigment (haemoglobin) in the blood is below normal 2. a condition in which there is a decreased number of red blood cells <i>symptoms:</i> tiredness, headaches, being short of breath when exercising, dizziness and looking pale
anaemia, aplastic	a rare type of anaemia in which the red blood cells, white blood cells and platelets are all reduced in number <i>symptoms:</i> tiredness, headaches, being short of breath when exercising, dizziness and looking pale; frequent infections such as fever, severe chills, sore throat or mouth ulcers; bleeding or bruising more easily than normal, nosebleeds
anaemia, haemolytic	illness resulting from the destruction of red blood cells <i>symptoms:</i> tiredness, headaches, being short of breath when exercising, dizziness, looking pale and yellowing of the skin and/or eyes
anaemia, megaloblastic	type of anaemia caused by a deficiency of vitamin B ₁₂ or another vitamin, folic acid <i>symptoms:</i> tiredness, headaches, a sore mouth and tongue, weight loss and yellowing of the skin and/or eyes
anaesthesia, general	1. being put to sleep during an operation or procedure 2. loss of consciousness to prevent pain and discomfort during surgery

Medical Term	Consumer Meaning
anaesthesia, local	loss of feeling, especially pain, during a medical procedure
anaesthesia, spinal	local anaesthetic around the spinal cord
anaesthetic, epidural	local anaesthetic around the spinal cord
anaesthetic, general	medicine used to put you to sleep during an operation or procedure
anaesthetic, inhalation	gas anaesthetic
anaesthetic, local	medicine causing loss of feeling, especially pain
analgesia	pain relief
analgesic	medicine used to treat or prevent pain
anaphylaxis	sudden life-threatening allergic reaction <i>symptoms:</i> sudden signs of allergy such as rash, itching or hives on the skin, swelling of the face, lips, tongue or other parts of the body, shortness of breath, wheezing or trouble breathing
androgen	male hormone
aneurysm	swelling and weakening of part of a blood vessel
angina pectoris	1. a pain or uncomfortable feeling in the chest, often spreading to the arms or neck and sometimes to the shoulders and back. This may be caused by too little blood and oxygen getting to the heart. The pain of angina is usually brought on by exercise or stress 2. chest pain 3. a feeling of tightness, pressure or heaviness in the chest
angioedema	swelling of the face, lips, mouth, tongue or throat which may cause difficulty in swallowing or breathing
angiography	x-ray test when dye is put into your blood
angioneurotic oedema	swelling of the face, lips, mouth, tongue or throat which may cause difficulty in swallowing or breathing
anisocoria	different sized pupils
ankylosing spondylitis	disease of the joints of the spine and the joints between the spine and pelvis
anorexia	loss of appetite
antacids	medicines used to treat heartburn and indigestion
anti-androgen	1. medicine used to reduce the effect of male sex hormones 2. Androgens are natural male sex hormones. In some types of prostate cancer, androgens may help the cancer cells to grow. By blocking these hormones, this medicine may slow or stop the growth of cancer.
antiarrhythmics	medicines to treat irregular heart beats
antibiotic	medicine used to treat infections
antibodies	1. disease-fighting substances in the blood 2. proteins made by a type of white blood cell to fight a foreign protein in the body
anticholinergic	medicine used to relieve stomach cramps or spasms, to prevent travel sickness and to treat Parkinson's disease
anticoagulant	medicine used to prevent blood clots
anticonvulsant	medicine used to treat epilepsy or fits. These medicines are thought to work by controlling brain chemicals which send signals to nerves so that seizures do not happen.
antidepressant	medicine used to treat depression
antiemetic	medicine used to stop or prevent vomiting
antigen	1. a substance that can trigger an immune response as part of the body's defence against infection and disease 2. protein not found naturally in the body

Medical Term	Consumer Meaning
antihistamine	1. medicine used to prevent or relieve the symptoms of allergy (such as hay fever) 2. medicine used to relieve or prevent runny nose, sneezing and watering, itchy or red eyes caused by allergies, such as to pollen (hay fever) or house dust mites. It is also used to treat itchy rashes, hives, dermatitis, eczema and mild reactions to insect bites. It works by blocking the action of histamine and other substances produced by the body which are causing your allergies and itchiness.
antihypertensive	1. medicine used to help lower high blood pressure 2. medicine used to lower blood pressure. It works by widening your blood vessels, which reduces pressure in the vessels, making it easier for your heart to pump blood around your body
anti-inflammatory	medicine used to treat swelling, redness or pain
antimetabolite	medicine used to treat some cancers
antimicrobial agent	medicine used to treat infections
antineoplastic	medicine used to treat some cancers
anti-oestrogen	1. medicine used to reduce the effects of female sex hormones 2. Oestrogen is a natural female sex hormone. In some types of breast cancer, oestrogen can help the cancer cells to grow. By blocking oestrogen, this medicine may slow or stop the growth of cancer.
antiparasitic	medicine used to treat infections caused by parasites such as worms
antiplatelet	medicine used to prevent blood clots
antipsychotic	medicine used to treat certain mental and emotional conditions. It helps to correct chemical imbalances in the brain which cause mental illness.
anuria	no production or passing of urine
anxiety	1. an emotional state 2. nervousness 3. feeling anxious <i>symptoms:</i> sweating, trembling, feeling nervous or anxious, fast heart beat
anxiety disorder	an emotional state <i>symptoms:</i> sweating, trembling, feeling nervous or anxious, fast heart beat
anxiolytic	medicine used to help relieve anxiety symptoms
apnoea	temporarily stopping breathing
arrhythmia	1. changes in the way the heart beats 2. changes in heart rate (fast, slow or irregular) 3. changes in the rhythm or rate of the heart beat
arthralgia	1. joint pain 2. painful, swollen joints
arthritis	1. disease mainly affecting the joints with pain and swelling 2. painful joint disease
arthritis, osteoarthritis	1. disease mainly affecting the joints with pain and swelling 2. painful joint disease
arthritis, rheumatoid	1. disease mainly affecting the joints with pain and swelling 2. painful joint disease
arthus-type hypersensitivity reaction	local skin reaction <i>symptoms:</i> redness, itchiness, tenderness, pain or discomfort, warmth, burning, stinging, swelling, formation of hard lumps or scars

Medical Term	Consumer Meaning
ascites	swelling due to build-up of fluid around the stomach
asterixis	uncontrollable muscle spasms affecting the eyes, head, neck and body
asthenia	unusual weakness
asthma	<p>1. asthma</p> <p>2. disease where the lining of the lungs becomes inflamed (red and swollen), making it difficult to breathe. This may be due to an allergy to house dust mites, smoke, air-borne pollution or other irritants.</p> <p><i>symptoms:</i> breathlessness, wheezing, a cough sometimes brought on by exercise, and a feeling of tightness in the chest</p>
asthma medicine, corticosteroid for prevention	a medicine that acts directly on your air passages to reduce inflammation. This helps to improve your condition and to prevent asthma attacks from occurring. this medicine is called a “preventer” and needs to be taken regularly.
asthma medicine, long-acting reliever	a medicine that keeps the air passages open in people who need to take medicine every day for breathing problems due to chronic asthma. It is not used to treat an acute asthma attack. It may be especially helpful if you have difficulty breathing at night or before exercise to keep your air passages open if you start to wheeze or have difficulty breathing each time you exert yourself.
asthma medicine, short-acting reliever	a medicine that opens up the air passages in people with asthma, bronchitis and other breathing problems. It may also be used before exercise to keep your air passages open if you start to wheeze or have difficulty breathing each time you exert yourself.
ataxia	<p>1. clumsiness and lack of coordination, affecting balance and manner of walking, limb or eye movements and/or speech</p> <p>2. unsteadiness when walking</p>
atherosclerosis	disease of the arteries in which blood vessel walls thicken and harden due to cholesterol deposits
atherosis	disease of the arteries in which blood vessel walls thicken and harden due to cholesterol deposits
athetosis	unusual movements of the arms and legs
atopic	allergic
atopic dermatitis	skin allergies
atrio-ventricular block	heart condition
atropine	A medicine used in some eye drops or cough and cold preparations
atrophy	shrinkage or wasting
attenuated	weakened, lessened or reduced
autonomic nervous system	<p>1. the part of the nervous system that controls the activities of the heart, blood vessels, glands, and a variety of other parts of the body</p> <p>2. part of the nervous system</p>
AV block	a type of irregular heart beat
azathioprine	medicine used to suppress the immune system
azotaemia	kidney disease
barbiturates	medicines used to treat epilepsy
Bell’s palsy	<p>1. a paralysed nerve in the face</p> <p>2. drooping eyelid and sagging muscles on one side of the face</p> <p><i>symptoms:</i> the eyelid and corner of the mouth droop on one side of the face and there may be pain in the ear on that side</p>

Medical Term	Consumer Meaning
benign intracranial hypertension	high blood pressure in the brain <i>symptoms:</i> blurred vision
benzodiazepine	a group of medicines used as sedatives or to treat anxiety
beta adrenoceptor stimulant	1. asthma reliever 2. medicine used to treat asthma
beta-2 agonists	1. asthma reliever 2. medicine used to treat asthma
beta-blockers	medicines used to treat high blood pressure, heart conditions, glaucoma and migraine
biliuria	bile in the urine, causing it to go darker
bipolar mood disorder	periods of mania alternating with periods of depression
blanching	whitening
blepharitis	swollen eyelid
blepharoptosis	drooping upper eyelids
blepharospasm	difficulty in opening the eye
blood dyscrasia	disease of the blood with a reduced number of red or white blood cells or platelets <i>symptoms:</i> 1. tiredness, headaches, dizziness, being short of breath when exercising and looking pale 2. frequent infections such as fever, severe chills, sore throat or mouth ulcers 3. bleeding or bruising more easily than normal, nosebleeds
blurred vision	blurred vision
bone marrow depression	disease of the blood with a reduced number of red or white blood cells or platelets <i>symptoms:</i> 1. tiredness, headaches, dizziness, being short of breath when exercising and looking pale 2. frequent infections such as fever, severe chills, sore throat or mouth ulcers 3. bleeding or bruising more easily than normal, nosebleeds
bone marrow suppressant	medicine which decreases blood cell production
bradycardia	slow heart beat
breakthrough bleeding	bleeding between normal menstrual periods
brittle diabetes	diabetes which is difficult to control
bromocriptine	medicine used to treat Parkinson's disease
bronchial hypersecretion	coughing and bringing up phlegm
bronchopneumonia	1. serious lung infection 2. pneumonia <i>symptoms:</i> fever, chills, shortness of breath and a cough which produces yellow-green phlegm and occasionally blood
bronchospasm	1. difficulty in breathing 2. wheezing or coughing
bullae	raised bumps on the skin that contain fluid
bursitis	pain or swelling in or near a joint
cachexia	severe weight loss
calcitonin	medicine used to treat Paget's Disease
calcium antagonist	medicine used to treat high blood pressure and angina

Medical Term	Consumer Meaning
calcium blocker	medicine used to treat high blood pressure and angina
calcium channel blocker	medicine used to treat high blood pressure and angina
candidiasis, oral	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. a fungal infection caused by <u>Candida</u> 2. thrush <p><i>symptoms:</i> sore, creamy-yellow, raised patches in the mouth</p>
candidiasis, vaginal	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. a fungal infection caused by <u>Candida</u> in the vagina 2. thrush <p><i>symptoms:</i> itching, burning and a thick, white, “cottage cheese” discharge</p>
carcinoma	cancer
cardiac	relating to the heart
cardiac arrest	heart attack
cardiac failure	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. disease of the heart with 2. heart failure <p>Heart failure means that the heart muscle cannot pump blood strongly enough to supply all the blood needed throughout the body. Heart failure is not the same as heart attack and does not mean that the heart stops. Heart failure may start off with no symptoms, but as the condition progresses, patients may feel short of breath or may get tired easily after light physical activity such as walking. Some patients may wake up short of breath at night. Fluid may collect in different parts of the body, often first noticed as swollen ankles and feet.</p> <p><i>Symptoms:</i> shortness of breath, swelling of the feet or legs due to fluid build-up</p>
cardiac glycosides	medicines used to treat heart failure
cardiogenic shock	<p>a serious heart condition caused by very low blood pressure</p> <p><i>symptoms:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. dizziness and lightheadedness, fast pulse rate, white skin, sweating, restlessness, loss of consciousness 2. rapid, shallow breathing, cold, clammy skin, a rapid, weak pulse, dizziness, weakness and fainting
cardiomegaly	enlarged heart
cardiomyopathy	<p>a disease of the heart muscle. The muscle is weakened and therefore the heart does not beat as well as it could. The heart is then not able to pump enough blood through the body</p> <p><i>symptoms:</i> fatigue, chest pain, and palpitations</p>
cardiopulmonary	relating to the heart and lungs
carpopedal spasm	spasm of hands and feet
cartilage	cushioning substance between joints
cataract	<p>cataract</p> <p><i>symptoms:</i> blurred vision, difficulty seeing</p>

Medical Term	Consumer Meaning
cellulitis	type of infection of the skin <i>symptoms:</i> hot, tender and red skin, sometimes with fever and chills
central nervous system	part of the nervous system which is composed of the brain and spinal cord
cerebellar ataxia	dizziness, unsteadiness when walking
cerebral	relating to the brain
cerebral ischaemia	decreased blood flow to parts of the brain
cerebrospinal	relating to the brain and spinal cord
cerebrospinal fluid	fluid around the brain and spinal cord
cerebrovascular accident	stroke
chemotherapy	medicines used to treat cancer
chloasma	darkening of the skin
chlorpropamide	medicine used to treat diabetes
cholecystectomy	removal of the gall bladder
cholesterol	1. cholesterol 2. type of fat that is a normal and important substance in your body used to build cell walls, to make bile acids and to make sex hormones. Your body usually makes cholesterol, but it also comes from food 3. a blood fat
cholic	relating to bile
chorea	1. illness with unusual movements 2. irregular, rapid, jerky movements which may affect the whole body
choreoathetoid disorder	uncontrollable muscle spasms affecting the eyes, head, neck and body
chromosomal	relating to genes
chronic	long-standing
chronic obstructive lung disease	1. lung condition 2. lung disease 3. emphysema <i>symptoms:</i> wheeziness, difficulty in breathing, chronic cough
chronic obstructive pulmonary disease	1. lung condition 2. lung disease 3. emphysema <i>symptoms:</i> wheeziness, difficulty in breathing, chronic cough
ciliary spasm	twitching of an eye muscle
cimetidine	medicine used to treat reflux and ulcers
circulatory collapse	collapse due to very low blood pressure
cirrhosis	type of chronic liver disease <i>symptoms:</i> weakness, tiredness, loss of appetite, weight loss, stomach pain and swelling, nausea, vomiting, ankle swelling, and yellowing of the skin and/or eyes

Medical Term	Consumer Meaning
claudication	<p>1. blockage in the blood vessels to the legs, causing a distinctive type of pain called intermittent claudication. In this condition, which usually affects the calves, you experience muscle pain or cramping whenever you walk some distance, but the pain disappears when you rest. The pain occurs because the calf muscles are not receiving enough oxygen.</p> <p>2. a cramp-like pain in one or both legs that develops on walking and may eventually cause a limp</p>
climacteric	menopause or change of life
clonidine	a medicine used to treat high blood pressure
coagulation disorder	disease of blood clotting
colic	waves of sudden severe stomach pain
colic, renal	sudden severe back pain, which may be caused by kidney stones
colitis	<p>inflammation of the colon (large bowel)</p> <p><i>symptoms:</i> diarrhoea, usually with blood and mucus, stomach pain, fever</p>
Colitis, pseudomembranous	<p>inflammation of the colon (large bowel)</p> <p><i>symptoms:</i> diarrhoea, usually with blood and mucus, stomach pain, fever</p>
colon	large bowel
coma	coma
comatose	<p>1. being unconscious</p> <p>2. in a coma</p>
conception	fertilisation of an egg
confusion	confusion
confusional state	feeling of confusion
congenital	present at birth
congenital abnormalities	defects present at birth
congestive heart failure	<p>1. disease of the heart</p> <p>2. heart failure</p> <p>Heart failure means that the heart muscle cannot pump blood strongly enough to supply all the blood needed throughout the body. Heart failure is not the same as heart attack and does not mean that the heart stops. Heart failure may start off with no symptoms, but as the condition progresses, patients may feel short of breath or may get tired easily after light physical activity such as walking. Some patients may wake up short of breath at night. Fluid may collect in different parts of the body, often first noticed as swollen ankles and feet.</p> <p><i>Symptoms:</i> shortness of breath, swelling of the feet or legs due to fluid build-up</p>
conjunctival xerosis	dry eyes
conjunctivitis	<p>1. discharge with itching of the eyes and crusty eyelids</p> <p>2. conjunctivitis</p> <p>3. swollen runny eyes</p>
conjunctivitis sicca	discomfort caused by dry eyes
constipation	constipation
convulsions	convulsions, fits or seizures
convulsive disorder	convulsions, fits or seizures
cornea	the front layer of the eyeball
corneal punctate keratitis	sore eye and blurred vision

Medical Term	Consumer Meaning
corneal staining	blurred vision
coronary artery	blood vessel supplying blood to the heart muscle
coronary artery disease	heart disease caused by poor blood flow in the blood vessels of the heart. <i>symptoms:</i> The first symptom is usually angina or heart attack
coronary insufficiency	poor blood flow to the heart
corticosteroid	medicines such as prednisone and cortisone, which reduce the activity of your immune system
coryza	the common cold
cranial nerve paresis	weak and still neck
Crohn's Disease	an inflammatory disease that can affect any part of the gastrointestinal tract. <i>symptoms:</i> pain, fever, diarrhoea and loss of weight
Cushing's Syndrome	condition of the adrenal glands <i>symptoms:</i> weight gain, rounded (moon-shaped) face and high blood pressure
Cushingoid facies	moon-shaped face
cyclosporin	medicine used to help prevent organ transplant rejection or to treat certain problems with the immune system
cytotoxic	medicine used to treat cancer
defecation	1. opening the bowels 2. having a bowel motion
delirium	severe confusion
delirium tremens	1. DTs 2. confusion and shaking due to stopping drinking alcohol
delusion	a fixed, irrational idea not shared by others
dementia	a general decline in all areas of mental ability <i>symptoms:</i> loss of memory and other mental powers
dependence	addiction to drugs or medicines
depolarising muscle relaxant	medicine which relaxes muscles
depot formulation	medicine which is slowly released into the body
depression	1. feelings of deep sadness and unworthiness 2. depression
dermatitis	1. skin disease 2. skin rash
dermatitis, allergic contact	skin rash
dermatitis, exfoliative	flaking or peeling of the skin
dermatitis, photosensitive	increased sensitivity to sunlight caused by some medicines
dermatological	skin
dermatoses	skin diseases
desquamation	peeling of the skin
diabetes, brittle	diabetes that is hard to control
diabetes insipidus	condition in which the pituitary does not produce antidiuretic hormone <i>symptoms:</i> large amounts of urine and constant thirst

Medical Term	Consumer Meaning
diabetes mellitus (sugar diabetes)	<p>1. condition in which the body does not produce enough insulin or else the body tissues are not able to use the insulin present. This leads to hyperglycaemia (too much sugar in the blood)</p> <p>2. the body obtains most of its energy from glucose, a simple form of sugar formed in the intestine from starch and other sugars. The hormone insulin, produced by the pancreas, enables body tissues to take up glucose from the blood, either to use it for energy or store it. In diabetes mellitus not enough insulin is produced by the pancreas so that little glucose is taken up by the tissues and glucose in the blood rises to abnormal levels.</p> <p>3. in diabetes mellitus, or sugar diabetes, the level of sugar in the blood is too high. Certain cells of the pancreas fail to produce normal amounts of a chemical called insulin. This causes sugar from food to pass through the system and be excreted in the urine. Symptoms include excessive thirst, the passing of a greatly increased amount of urine, increase in appetite with a loss of weight, feeling tired, drowsy, weak, depressed, irritable and generally unwell</p> <p><i>symptoms:</i> excessive thirst, increased appetite with weight loss, feeling tired, drowsy, weak, depressed, irritable and generally unwell, and passing large amounts of urine</p>
diabetes, labile	diabetes which is hard to control
dialysis	a procedure used to remove waste products from the blood of a person with kidney failure
diarrhoea	diarrhoea
diazepam	medicine used to treat anxiety
digoxin	medicine used to treat heart failure
dilation	widening
diplopia	double vision
disease modifying anti-rheumatic drugs (DMARDs)	medicines used to treat arthritis
disopyramide	medicine used to treat irregular heart beats
disorientation	disorientation
diuretic	<p>1. medicine used to help the kidneys get rid of salt and water by increasing the amount of urine produced</p> <p>2. medicine used to treat high blood pressure and fluid buildup</p> <p>3. fluid or water tablet</p> <p>4. medicine which helps to reduce the amount of excess fluid in the body by increasing the amount of urine produced.</p> <p>Diuretics are used to treat swelling of the ankles, feet or legs, which is called oedema. This can occur in some heart, lung or kidney conditions. They may also be used to lower high blood pressure and to treat fluid build-up during before the menstrual period.</p>
diverticulitis	<p>inflammation of bowel wall</p> <p><i>symptoms:</i> fever, vomiting and stomach pain or discomfort</p>
dizziness	dizziness
dopamine	a naturally occurring chemical produced by certain brain cells
drowsiness	drowsiness
drug fever	fever and chills caused by a medicine

Medical Term	Consumer Meaning
dry eyes	1. dry eyes 2. irritation or feeling of having something in the eye
dry mouth	dry mouth
duodenum	tube leading out of the stomach
dysarthria	difficulty in speaking
dysfunctional uterine bleeding	irregular menstrual periods
dysgeusia	taste disturbance or loss of taste
dyskinesia	uncontrollable twitching, jerking or writhing movements
dysmenorrhoea	painful menstrual periods
dyspareunia	1. painful sexual intercourse 2. painful sex
dyspepsia	1. an uncomfortable feeling in the stomach or belching after eating 2. indigestion
dysphagia	difficulty in swallowing
dysphasia	difficulty in speaking or understanding words
dysphoria	1. unusual mood 2. feeling tense and restless
dyspnoea	1. shortness of breath 2. difficulty in breathing 3. chest tightness
dystonia	uncontrollable muscle spasms affecting the eyes, head, neck and body
dysuria	pain when passing urine
ecchymosis	bruising
ectoparasiticide	medicine used to treat worms
ectopic	in abnormal position
ectopic heart beat	extra heart beat
ectopic pregnancy	foetus growing outside the womb
eczema	1. skin rash 2. a skin condition with itching, redness and a burning feeling. In some forms of eczema there may be oozing sores that become hard and scaly 3. inflammation of the skin, marked by itching and rash and often including blisters that weep and become crusted
eczema, nummular	patchy skin rash
eczematous	skin rash
ejaculation, abnormal	impaired sexual function in males
electrocardiogram (ECG)	record of the electrical activity of the heart
electroconvulsive therapy (ECT)	electrical shock treatment
electroencephalogram (EEG)	record of the electrical activity of the brain
electrolyte	naturally occurring chemicals present in body fluids, that are needed for normal body functions
electrolyte imbalance	unusual amount of salt in the body
embolism	sudden blocking of a blood vessel
embolism, pulmonary	blockage of lung artery
emesis	vomiting
emphysema	1. a serious lung disease that makes breathing difficult 2. emphysema <i>symptoms:</i> shortness of breath, with a cough
enamel hypoplasia	loss of enamel from the teeth

Medical Term	Consumer Meaning
encephalitis	swelling or infection of the brain <i>symptoms:</i> headache and fever, progressing to hallucinations, confusion, paralysis of part or all of the body, disturbances of behaviour, speech and eye movements, stiff neck and sensitivity to light
encephalogram	special x-ray of the brain
encephalopathy	disease of the brain <i>symptoms:</i> headache and fever, progressing to hallucinations, confusion, paralysis of part or all of the body, disturbances of behaviour, speech and eye movements, stiff neck and sensitivity to light
encephalopathy, hepatic	disease of the brain caused by liver illness <i>symptoms:</i> impaired consciousness, memory loss, personality change, tremors, seizures, stupor and coma
endocarditis	inflammation of the lining of the heart <i>symptoms:</i> fatigue, weakness, fever, heart murmurs, and heart failure
endocrine	relating to hormones
endogenous depression	depression without known cause or reason
endometrial cancer	cancer of the lining of the uterus (womb) <i>symptoms:</i> unusual vaginal bleeding or discharge
endometrial hyperplasia	overgrowth of the lining of the uterus (womb)
endometriosis	condition in which material similar to the lining of the uterus (womb) grows outside the uterus causing pain or bleeding <i>symptoms:</i> fever, vaginal discharge and lower stomach pain and discomfort
endometrium	the lining of the uterus (womb)
enteric coated	special coating to prevent medicines being broken down in the stomach
enterocolitis	inflammation of the bowel causing severe diarrhoea
enuresis	bed wetting
eosinophilia	increase in some white blood cells
epigastric distress	upset stomach
epilepsy	1. condition where you have repeated fits or convulsions 2. epilepsy
ergot alkaloids	medicines used to treat migraine headaches, such as ergotamine or dihydroergotamine
erythema	redness of the skin
erythema multiforme	severe condition of the skin that may affect the mouth and other parts of the body <i>symptoms:</i> red, often itchy spots, similar to the rash of measles, which starts on the limbs and sometimes on the face and the rest of the body. The spots may blister or may progress to form raised, red, pale-centred marks. Those affected may have fever, sore throat, headache and/or diarrhoea

Medical Term	Consumer Meaning
erythema nodosum	1. red-purple swellings on the shins, thighs and, less commonly, the arms. Joint and muscle pains and fever may also occur 2. skin rash with red lumps
erythematous streaking	red streaks on the skin
erythrasma	bacterial infection of the skin which affects the groin, armpits and skin between the toes. Affected areas are raised above the rest of the skin and are irregularly shaped. On white skin, affected areas look red-brown; on dark skin, they may look either lighter or darker than the normal skin
erythrocyte	red blood cell
euphoria	feeling of extreme happiness
exanthema	skin rash
exercise-induced asthma	asthma due to exercise
exfoliative dermatitis	severe flaking or peeling of the skin
exophthalmos	eyes sticking out too far
extrapyramidal symptoms	1. unusual movements, including trembling and shaking of the hands and fingers, twisting movements of the body, shuffling walk and stiffness of the arms and legs 2. uncontrollable movements
extrasystoles	extra heart beats
facial plethora	redness of face
faeces	bowel motions
fasciculation	muscle twitching
fatigue	1. fatigue 2. tiredness
febrile convulsions	convulsions or fits due to fever
febrile illness	unwell with high temperature or fever
fetal	relating to an unborn baby
fetal hypoxia	not enough oxygen getting to an unborn baby
fetus	unborn baby
fever	1. fever 2. high temperature
fibrinolysis	breakdown of blood clot
fibrocystic breast disease	lumpy breast
fibroids	growths in the uterus (womb) which are not cancer
fibrosis	scarring and thickening
flaccid	loose or limp
flatulence	1. wind 2. excessive gas in the stomach or bowel 3. stomach discomfort or fullness, relieved by belching or passing wind
flu-like symptoms	flu-like symptoms
foetal	relating to an unborn baby
foetus	unborn baby
folic acid antagonist	medicine used to treat cancer
folliculitis	infection of the hair roots
fungistatic	medicine used to treat fungal infections
furunculosis	boils
gait	manner of walking
galactorrhoea	unusual secretion of breast milk
gastrectomy	removal of the stomach
gastric	relating to the stomach

Medical Term	Consumer Meaning
gastric haemorrhage	bleeding from the stomach wall <i>symptoms:</i> vomiting blood or material that looks like coffee grounds, bleeding from the back passage, black sticky bowel motions (stools) or bloody diarrhoea
gastritis	inflammation of the stomach <i>symptoms:</i> pain, nausea, vomiting, vomiting blood, blood in the bowel motions
gastroenteritis	inflammation of the stomach and intestines, usually caused by a virus <i>symptoms:</i> mild to severe nausea, vomiting, cramps, diarrhoea
genital moniliasis	1. a fungal infection caused by <u>Candida</u> in the vagina 2. thrush <i>symptoms:</i> itching, burning and a thick, white, “cottage cheese” discharge
gingival hyperplasia	bleeding, tender or enlarged gums
glaucoma	1. high pressure in the eye 2. glaucoma Glaucoma is a condition in which the pressure of fluid in the eye may be high. However, some people with glaucoma may have normal eye pressure. Glaucoma is usually caused by a build up of the fluid which flows through the eye. This build up occurs because the fluid drains out of your eye more slowly than it is being pumped in. Since new fluid continues to enter the eye, joining the fluid already there, the pressure continues to rise. This raised pressure may damage the back of the eye resulting in gradual loss of sight. Damage can progress so slowly that the person is not aware of this gradual loss of sight. Sometimes even normal eye pressure is associated with damage to the back of the eye. There are usually no symptoms of glaucoma. The only way of knowing that you have glaucoma is to have your eye pressure, optic nerve and visual field checked by an eye specialist or optometrist. If glaucoma is not treated it can lead to serious problems, including total blindness. In fact, untreated glaucoma is one of the most common causes of blindness.
globus hystericus	feeling of a lump in the throat
glomerulonephritis	kidney disease
glossitis	swollen, red, sore tongue
glucocorticoid	hormone produced by the body which regulates fat and body metabolism
glycosuria	sugar (glucose) in the urine
goitre	swelling on the neck caused by enlargement of the thyroid gland. It usually results from a lack of iodine or overactivity of the thyroid gland. Large swellings may press on the food pipe or windpipe, making swallowing or breathing difficult
gonadotrophin	a sex hormone produced by the body
gout	disease with painful, swollen joints caused by uric acid crystals

Medical Term	Consumer Meaning
grand mal	1. a type of epileptic seizure in which the sufferer may cry out, falls to the ground unconscious, and has generalised jerky muscle contractions 2. a major fit or seizure
granulocytopaenia	lack of white blood cells <i>symptoms:</i> frequent infections such as fever, severe chills, sore throat or mouth ulcers
Guillain-Barre syndrome	a temporary inflammation of the nerves, causing pain, weakness, and paralysis in the extremities and often progressing to the chest and face. It typically occurs after recovery from a viral infection or, in rare cases, following immunisation for influenza.
gynaecomastia	breast enlargement in men
haematemesis	vomiting blood
haematoma	1. bruise 2. blood clot 3. a localised collection of blood (usually clotted) caused by bleeding from a ruptured blood vessel
haematuria	blood in the urine
haemochromatosis	too much iron in the body, eventually causing liver enlargement and cirrhosis, diabetes mellitus, bronzed skin colour, unusual heart beat and other heart conditions. In men, a loss of sexual drive and a reduction in the size of the testes are often the first signs.
haemodialysis	1. removal of waste products from the blood by means of artificial filtration, used to treat kidney failure 2. haemodialysis
haemoglobin	1. the pigment in red blood cells. Haemoglobin carries oxygen to the tissues from the lungs, and carbon dioxide from the tissues back to the lungs 2. oxygen carrying substance in the blood
haemolysis	destruction of red blood cells
haemorrhage	bleeding
haemorrhoids	1. haemorrhoids 2. piles
haemosiderosis	a general increase in iron stores in the body
halitosis	bad breath
hallucination	seeing, feeling or hearing things that are not there
headache	headache
heart attack	heart attack. A heart attack occurs when one of the major blood vessels supplying blood to your heart becomes blocked. This means that your heart cannot receive the oxygen it needs and becomes damaged. This may lead to further problems such as heart failure, irregular heart rhythms and blood clots.
heart block	slow or irregular heart beat

Medical Term	Consumer Meaning
heart failure	<p>1. heart failure 2. disease of the heart with shortness of breath, and swelling of the feet or legs due to fluid build-up.</p> <p>Heart failure means that the heart muscle cannot pump blood strongly enough to supply all the blood needed throughout the body. Heart failure is not the same as heart attack and does not mean that the heart stops. Heart failure may start off with no symptoms, but as the condition progresses, patients may feel short of breath or may get tired easily after light physical activity such as walking. Some patients may wake up short of breath at night. Fluid may collect in different parts of the body, often first noticed as swollen ankles and feet.</p>
hemiballismus	<p>1. unusual movement of the limbs on one side of the body 2. irregular, uncontrollable, flinging movements of the arm and leg on one side of the body</p>
hepatic	relating to the liver
hepatic dysfunction	liver disease
hepatic impairment	liver problems
hepatitis	<p>a liver disease</p> <p><i>symptoms:</i> nausea, vomiting, loss of appetite, feeling generally unwell, fever, itching, yellowing of the skin and eyes, light coloured bowel motions, dark coloured urine</p>
hepatitis, cholestatic	<p>a liver disease</p> <p><i>symptoms:</i> nausea, vomiting, loss of appetite, feeling generally unwell, fever, itching, yellowing of the skin and eyes, light coloured bowel motions, dark coloured urine</p>
hiatus hernia	<p>part of the stomach pushes up into the chest</p> <p><i>symptoms:</i> belching, heart burn</p>
hirsutism	excessive hairiness, particularly in women
hormone	<p>1. hormone 2. chemical messenger produced by the body</p>
hydrocephalus	blocked circulation of fluid in the brain which can cause swelling of the brain and head
hyperactivity	unusually active
hyperacusis / hypoacusis	changes in hearing
hyperaemia	redness of the eye(s)
hyperaesthesia	increased feeling or sensitivity, especially in the skin
hypercalcaemia	<p>high calcium levels in the blood</p> <p><i>symptoms:</i> loss of appetite, nausea, vomiting, constipation, stomach pain</p>
hypercalciuria	high calcium levels in the urine
hypercholesterolaemia	high cholesterol levels in the blood
hyperexcitation	unusually excited
hyperglycaemia	<p>high sugar (glucose) levels in the blood.</p> <p><i>symptoms:</i> passing large amounts of urine, excessive thirst and having a dry mouth and skin</p>

Medical Term	Consumer Meaning
hyperhidrosis	excessive sweating
hyperkalaemia	high potassium levels in the blood
hyperkinesia	unusually overactive
hyperphosphataemia	high phosphate levels in the blood
hyperpigmentation	darker areas of skin
hyperprolactinaemia	high prolactin levels in the blood
hyperpyrexia	1. very high fever 2. heatstroke 3. fever and/or chills
hyperreflexia	unusually increased reflexes
hypersalivation	increased saliva
hypersensitivity	allergic reaction
hypertension	high blood pressure Everyone has blood pressure. This pressure helps get your blood all around your body. Your blood pressure may be different at different times of the day, depending on how busy or worried you are. You have hypertension (high blood pressure) when your blood pressure stays higher than is needed, even when you are calm and relaxed. If high blood pressure is not treated it can lead to serious health problems, including stroke, heart disease and kidney failure.
hyperthermia	extremely high body temperature
hyperthermia, malignant	1. dangerously high body temperature 2. a rapid rise in body temperature to a dangerously high level brought on by general anaesthesia
hyperthyroidism	overactive thyroid gland. This is a condition where the thyroid gland makes too much thyroid hormone. The excess hormones cause the body's metabolism to speed up. <i>symptoms:</i> increase in appetite, loss of weight, intolerance to heat, increased sweating, tremors, rapid heart rate
hypertonia	unusual muscle stiffness causing poor control of movement
hypertrichosis	excessive growth of normal hair
hypertriglyceridaemia	high triglycerides levels in the blood
hyperuricaemia	high uric acid levels in the blood, which may cause gout
hypoalbuminaemia	a decrease in albumin in the blood, causing water retention
hypoesthesia	decreased feeling or sensitivity, especially in the skin
hypogammaglobulinaemia	lowered immunity due to diseases such as some blood disorders, malaria, kidney disease requiring dialysis
hypoglycaemia	low sugar (glucose) levels in the blood <i>symptoms:</i> sweating, weakness, hunger, dizziness, trembling, headache, flushing or paleness, numbness, having a fast, pounding heart beat
hypokalaemia	low potassium levels in the blood
hypokinesia	unusually reduced or slow body movement
hypomagnesaemia	low magnesium levels in the blood
hyponatraemia	low sodium levels in the blood
hypophosphataemia	low phosphate levels in the blood
hypopigmentation	pale areas of the skin
hyporesponsive	1. shock-like state 2. being unresponsive for a period of time

Medical Term	Consumer Meaning
hypotension	low blood pressure <i>symptoms:</i> dizziness, lightheadedness
hypotension, orthostatic or postural	dizziness on standing up, especially when getting up from a sitting or lying position
hypothyroidism	an underactive thyroid gland, causing a decrease in metabolism <i>symptoms:</i> tiredness, lethargy, muscle weakness, cramps, feeling the cold, a slow heart rate, dry and flaky skin, hair loss, a deep and husky voice, weight gain
hypotonia	1. low muscle strength 2. unusual muscle slackness
hypovolaemia	low blood volume causing very low blood pressure
hysterectomy	removal of the womb
icteric	yellowing of the skin and/or eyes
ileitis	1. an inflammatory disease that can affect any part of the gastrointestinal tract. 2. Crohn's Disease <i>symptoms:</i> pain, fever, diarrhoea, weight loss
ileus	blockage in the bowel <i>symptoms:</i> persistent constipation with swollen stomach and vomiting
ileum	part of the small bowel
immune system	1. the body's natural defences against harmful bacteria, viruses and fungi 2. body system which fights disease
immunocompromised	lowered immunity
immunoglobulins	blood products used to prevent some infections
immunosuppression	lowered resistance to disease
immunosuppressive	1. medicine which lowers the body's resistance to disease 2. medicine that reduces the activity of the body's natural defences
impotence	1. impotence 2. inability to get or maintain an erection
incontinence	loss of control of your bladder or bowels
incontinence, faecal	inability to retain stools in the rectum
incontinence, urinary	uncontrollable, involuntary passing of urine
indomethacin	medicine used to treat arthritis
induration	hard lump
infertility	infertility
inflammation	pain, swelling, redness and heat
influenza-like symptoms	flu-like symptoms, such as high temperature, sore throat, runny nose, cough and chills
infusion	slow injection
inhalation	breathing in
inotropic action	strengthening the heart muscle
insomnia	1. inability to sleep 2. trouble sleeping 3. difficulty sleeping 4. sleeplessness
intestinal obstruction	a blockage in the intestine

Medical Term	Consumer Meaning
intermittent porphyria	a rare blood pigment disorder
interstitial	in the small, narrow spaces between tissues or parts of an organ
interstitial nephritis	kidney disease
intertriginous	between skin folds
intraabdominal	within the stomach
intraarticular	1. into a joint 2. within a joint
intracranial	within the head
intramuscular	1. into a muscle 2. within a muscle
intraocular	1. into the eye 2. within the eye
intraocular pressure	pressure in the eye
intrapertitoneal	1. into the stomach 2. within the stomach
intrapleural	1. into the space around the lungs 2. within the space around the lungs
intrathecal	1. into the space around the spinal cord 2. within the space around the spinal cord
intravenous	1. into a vein 2. within a vein
intravesical	1. into the bladder 2. within the bladder
involuntary	uncontrollable
involutional psychosis	mental illness occurring at change of life
iritis	inflammation of the coloured part of the eye
ischaemia	1. condition caused by reduced blood flow to part of the body, usually caused by narrowing or blocking of blood vessels to that part of the body 2. insufficient supply of blood to a specific organ or tissue
ischaemia, cerebral	reduced blood flow to the brain
ischaemic heart disease	heart disease caused by reduced blood flow in the blood vessels of the heart muscle. <i>symptoms:</i> The first symptom is usually angina or heart attack
jaundice	yellowing of the skin and/or eyes, also called jaundice
jaundice, cholestatic	yellowing of the skin and/or eyes
jejunitis	disease of the small bowel
keratinisation	hardened or thickened areas of the skin
keratitis	a disease of the cornea <i>symptoms:</i> irritation or feeling of having something in the eye
ketoacidosis	loss of appetite, unexplained weight loss, nausea, vomiting, stomach pain, difficulty breathing, slow heart beat, unusual muscle pain or feeling weak, tired or uncomfortable
lactation	breast feeding
laryngeal oedema	swelling of the throat
laryngospasm	spasm of the muscles around the voice box, causing choking
larynx	voice box
lassitude	tiredness or weariness
laxatives	1. medicines which assist bowel movements 2. medicines used to treat constipation
left ventricular failure	heart failure

Medical Term	Consumer Meaning
lens opacity	1. clouding of the eye 2. blurred vision
lenticular	relating to the eye
lethargy	feeling of tiredness, drowsiness, or lack of energy
leucopenia	lack of white blood cells <i>symptoms:</i> frequent infections such as fever, severe chills, sore throat or mouth ulcers
leukaemia	1. leukaemia 2. cancer of the blood
libido	sexual drive
lichenoid eruption	a type of skin rash
lithium	a medicine used to treat mood swings and some types of depressions
lumbar	lower back
lymphadenopathy	swollen glands in the neck, armpit or groin
lymphoma	cancer of lymph glands
maculopapular	red raised skin rash
malaise	generally feeling unwell
malignancy	cancer
malignant effusion	fluid around the lungs or heart due to cancer
mammary glands	breasts
mania	1. mental condition characterised by episodes of overactivity, elation or irritability 2. mood of excitement, over-activity and uninhibited behaviour
manic depression	mood swings
manic episode	mood of excitement, over-activity and uninhibited behaviour
mastalgia	breast pain
melaena	black tar-like stools
melasma	darkening of parts of the skin
menarche	the age menstrual periods begin
meningitis	infection around the brain or spinal cord <i>symptoms:</i> fever, nausea, vomiting, headache, stiff neck and extreme sensitivity to bright light
menorrhagia	heavy menstrual periods
mercaptopurine	medicine used to treat some cancers
metastasis	spread of cancer
metastatic vertebral lesions	cancer that has spread to the backbone
metered-dose aerosol	puffer
metered-dose inhaler	puffer
methaemoglobinaemia	abnormal blood pigment levels
methotrexate	medicine used to treat arthritis and some types of cancer
micturate	pass urine
micturition, frequent	passing urine more often than usual
migraine	1. throbbing headache, usually affecting one side of the head and often accompanied by nausea, vomiting and sensitivity to light 2. migraine
miliaria	heat rash

Medical Term	Consumer Meaning
moniliasis, oral	1. a fungal infection caused by <u>Candida</u> 2. thrush <i>symptoms:</i> sore, creamy-yellow, raised patches in the mouth
moniliasis, vaginal	1. a fungal infection caused by <u>Candida</u> in the vagina 2. thrush <i>symptoms:</i> itching, burning and a thick, white, “cottage cheese” discharge
motor neurone disease	disease causing increasing muscle paralysis
mucositis, oral	sore, red mouth
muscle cramps	muscle cramps
muscle spasm	muscle spasm
muscle weakness	muscle weakness
myalgia	aching muscles, muscle tenderness or weakness, not caused by exercise
myasthenia gravis	1. disease of the muscles causing drooping eyelids, double vision, difficulty in speaking and swallowing and sometimes muscle weakness in the arms or legs 2. a condition in which the muscles become weak and tire easily. The eyes, face, throat and limb muscles are most commonly affected. Typically the sufferer has drooping eyelids, a blank facial expression, and weak, hesitant speech
mydriasis	dilated pupils
myelitis	inflammation of the spinal column
myelogenous	relating to bone marrow
myeloma	cancer of blood cells
myocardial infarction	1. heart attack 2. chest pain 3. chest pain which may spread to the neck and shoulders A heart attack occurs when one of the major blood vessels supplying blood to your heart becomes blocked. This means that your heart cannot receive the oxygen it needs and becomes damaged. This may lead to further problems such as heart failure, irregular heart rhythms and blood clots.
myopathy	disease of muscle <i>symptoms:</i> aching muscles, muscle tenderness or weakness, not caused by exercise
myopia	short sightedness
myosis	constricted pupils <i>symptoms:</i> blurred vision, difficulty focussing
myxoedema	1. a condition in which there is thickening and coarsening of the skin and other areas such as the lips and nose. It often results from an underactive thyroid gland. 2. an underactive thyroid gland, causing a decrease in metabolism 3. low output from thyroid gland <i>symptoms:</i> weight gain, hair loss, feeling cold, slow heart rate and feeling mentally and physically sluggish

Medical Term	Consumer Meaning
narcotic	medicine used to relieve pain
nasal stuffiness	blocked nose
nausea	feeling sick, also called nausea
nebuliser	machine which produces a fine spray for inhalation
neonate	new born baby
neoplasm	cancer
nephritis	kidney disease
nephritis, acute interstitial	kidney disease <i>symptoms:</i> blood in the urine
nephrolithiasis	kidney stones
nephropathy	kidney disease
nephropathy, diabetic	kidney disease associated with diabetes
nephrotic syndrome	kidney disease
neuralgia	severe stabbing or throbbing pain along one or more nerves
neuritis, peripheral	painful swelling in the arms or legs
neurodermatitis	skin rash caused by anxiety
neuroleptic malignant syndrome	a reaction to some medicines with a sudden increase in body temperature, extremely high blood pressure and severe convulsions
neuromuscular	relating to nerves and muscles
neuromuscular blocking agent	medicine used to relax muscles
neuropathy, peripheral	numbness or weakness of the arms and legs
neutropenia	lack of white blood cells <i>symptoms:</i> frequent infections such as fever, severe chills, sore throat or mouth ulcers
nocturia	need to urinate during the night
non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs)	medicines used to relieve pain, swelling and other symptoms of inflammation, including arthritis
nondepolarising muscle relaxant	medicine used to relax muscles
noradrenaline	hormone produced by the body which affects blood pressure and other body functions
nystagmus	rapid, uncontrollable movements of the eyes
ocular	relating to the eye
ocular discomfort	irritation or feeling of having something in the eye
ocular foreign body sensation	irritation or feeling of having something in the eye
ocular irritation	irritation or feeling of having something in the eye
ocular pain	irritation or feeling of having something in the eye
oculomotor disturbance	uncontrollable muscle spasms affecting the eyes, head, neck and body
oculogyric crisis	involuntary upward movement of the eyes
oedema, angioneurotic	swelling of the face, lips, mouth, tongue or throat which may cause difficulty in swallowing or breathing
oedema, peripheral	swelling of hands, ankles or feet
oedema, pulmonary	build-up of fluid in the lungs <i>symptoms:</i> breathlessness, which may be very severe and usually worsens on lying down
oesophagitis	inflammation of the food pipe

Medical Term	Consumer Meaning
oesophagitis, reflux	<p>a condition caused by the washing back, or reflux, of food and acid from the stomach into the food pipe</p> <p><i>symptoms:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. a burning sensation in the chest rising up to the throat, also known as heartburn 2. heartburn, which usually occurs after eating or at night and which worsens when bending over
oesophagus	food pipe
oestrogen	female hormone
oligomenorrhoea	scanty menstrual periods
oligospermia	low sperm count
oliguria	passing less urine than is normal
oophorectomy	removal of the ovaries
ophthalmic	relating to the eye(s)
optic neuritis	<p>disease of the nerves of the eye causing blindness</p> <p><i>symptoms:</i></p> <p>sudden dimming or loss of vision</p>
oral	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. relating to the mouth 2. by mouth
oral hypoglycaemic agents	tablets used to treat diabetes
orchidectomy	removal of the testicles
osteoarthritis	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. disease mainly affecting the joints with pain and swelling 2. painful joint disease, most commonly affecting the hips, knees and spine 3. pain, swelling, creaking and stiffness of one or more joints
osteomalacia	softening or weakening of bones due to a lack of vitamin D, causing an increased risk of broken bones
osteoporosis	disease which causes bones to become less dense, gradually making them weaker, more brittle and likely to break. Broken bones may result from injury or falls. Breaks may occur during normal, everyday activity, such as lifting, or from minor injury that would not ordinarily fracture normal bone. Fractures usually occur at the hip, spine, or wrist and can lead not only to pain, but also to considerable deformity and disability, such as stooped posture from curvature of the spine, and loss of mobility.
otitis media	<p>infection of the middle ear</p> <p><i>symptoms:</i></p> <p>temporary hearing loss and pain, earache</p>
otitis, externa	<p>infection of the outer ear</p> <p><i>symptoms:</i></p> <p>itching and sometimes pain</p>
ototoxicity	hearing loss, often with loss of balance
oxytocic drugs	medicines used to induce labour
paediatrics	relating to children
palliative therapy	treatment of symptoms
pallor	pale skin
palpitations	fast or irregular heart beats, also called palpitations
pancreatitis	<p>inflammation of the pancreas</p> <p><i>symptoms:</i></p> <p>severe upper stomach pain, often with nausea and vomiting</p>

Medical Term	Consumer Meaning
pancytopenia	<p>a rare type of anaemia in which the red blood cells, white blood cells and platelets are all reduced in number</p> <p><i>symptoms:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. tiredness, being short of breath and looking pale 2. frequent infections such as fever, severe chills, sore throat or mouth ulcers 3. bleeding or bruising more easily than normal, nose bleeds
panic attack	<p>a brief period of acute anxiety</p> <p><i>symptoms:</i></p> <p>symptoms begin suddenly and usually include difficulty breathing, chest pains, fast heart rate, dizziness and lightheadedness, sweating, trembling and faintness</p>
papilloedema	<p>swelling of nerves at the back of the eye</p> <p><i>symptoms:</i></p> <p>blurred vision</p>
papular formation	lumps on the skin
paraesthesia	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. tingling or numbness of the hands or feet 2. pins and needles
paralysis	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. paralysis 2. inability of muscles to move
paralytic ileus	<p>A condition where the small bowel does not work properly</p> <p><i>symptoms:</i></p> <p>severe pain in the stomach with bloating, gut cramps and vomiting</p>
paranoia	mental illness causing severe suspiciousness
paraplegia	weakness or paralysis of both legs and sometimes part of the lower body
parathyroid glands	small glands near thyroid gland in the neck
parathyroid hormone	hormone produced by the parathyroid glands in the neck which helps control the level of calcium in the body
parenteral	by injection
parenteral fluids	fluids for injections
paresis	weakness causing loss of movement
Parkinson's disease	<p>disease of the brain affecting movement</p> <p><i>symptoms:</i></p> <p>trembling, rigid posture, slow movements and a shuffling, unbalanced walk</p>
Parkinsonian syndrome	<p>disease of the brain affecting movement</p> <p><i>symptoms:</i></p> <p>trembling, rigid posture, slow movements and a shuffling, unbalanced walk</p>
parkinsonism	<p>disease of the brain affecting movement</p> <p><i>symptoms:</i></p> <p>trembling, rigid posture, slow movements and a shuffling, unbalanced walk</p>
paroniria	vivid dreams
paronychia	infection of a nail bed
parotitis	swelling of glands in the neck
parturition	giving birth
pediculosis	lice in the hair

Medical Term	Consumer Meaning
pelvic inflammatory disease	infection of the internal female sex organs <i>symptoms:</i> stomach pain and tenderness, fever and irregular menstrual periods
peptic ulcer	1. ulcer in stomach or duodenum 2. stomach ulcer <i>symptoms:</i> pain and discomfort (indigestion) which is felt between the navel and the breast bone
perianal	around the back passage
periarteritis nodosa	painful lumps under the skin, accompanied by a fast heart beat, fever and weight loss
pericarditis	swelling of the lining that surrounds the heart <i>symptoms:</i> pain behind the breast bone, sometimes spreading to the neck and shoulders, and sometimes fever
peristalsis	wave-like movement of the muscles in the walls of the digestive tract causing food and waste products to move through the body
peritoneum	membrane lining the stomach wall, covering the liver, stomach, spleen, gallbladder and intestines
petechiae	red or purple, flat, pinhead spots under the skin
phaeochromocytoma	a rare tumour of the adrenal gland, which sits near the kidney. <i>symptoms:</i> bouts of anxiety and headaches. There may be palpitations (banging of the heart felt in the chest), dizziness, a feeling of weakness, nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea, dilated pupils and blurring vision, stomach pains, and raised blood pressure
Peyronie's disease	painful erection
pharyngitis	sore throat and discomfort when swallowing
phenobarbitone	a medicine used to treat convulsions
phenothiazine	1. a medicine used to treat mental illness or psychotic conditions and to relieve severe nausea and vomiting 2. a type of medicine used to treat some mental conditions
phenytoin	1. a medicine used to treat epilepsy 2. a medicine used to treat convulsions
phlebitis	1. swelling and clotting in a vein 2. swelling and redness along a vein which is extremely tender when touched
phobia	persistent fear of (and desire to avoid) a particular object or situation
photophobia	1. uncomfortable sensitivity to light 2. increased sensitivity to light
photosensitivity	1. increased sensitivity of the skin to sun 2. symptoms of sunburn (such as redness, itching, swelling, blistering) which may occur more quickly than normal
pigmentary retinopathy	a condition which causes changes in colour vision or difficulty seeing at night
pigmentation changes	change in the colour of the skin
pituitary gland	a small gland at the base of the brain
pityriasis	skin rash
placenta	organ which develops in the uterus (womb) during pregnancy which links the blood supply of the mother and baby

Medical Term	Consumer Meaning
platelet	blood cells which help blood to clot
pleurisy	inflammation of the lining of the lungs <i>symptoms:</i> sharp chest pains which is worse when breathing in
pneumoencephalogram	a kind of brain x-ray
pneumonia	1. serious lung infection 2. pneumonia <i>symptoms:</i> with fever, chills, shortness of breath, cough, phlegm and occasionally blood
pneumonitis	swelling of the lungs <i>symptoms:</i> coughing, difficulty breathing, wheezing
polydipsia	persistent excessive thirst
polyneuritis	inflammation of several nerves at once
polyuria	passing more urine than normal
porphyria	a rare blood pigment disorder
possetting	regurgitating milk
postmenopausal	women who no longer have their menstrual periods, either naturally due to their age or because they have had a hysterectomy
precocious puberty, idiopathic	sexual development in a young child
premenstrual syndrome	1. combination of various physical and emotional symptoms which occur in women one or two weeks before their menstrual period. 2. PMS <i>symptoms:</i> irritability, tension, depression, fatigue, breast-tenderness, fluid retention, headache, backache, lower stomach pain
premenstrual tension	1. combination of various physical and emotional symptoms which occur in women one or two weeks before their menstrual period. 2. PMT <i>symptoms:</i> irritability, tension, depression, fatigue, breast-tenderness, fluid retention, headache, backache, lower stomach pain
preoperative	before surgery
pressor	medicine used to raise blood pressure
pressurised aerosol	1. aerosol 2. puffer
priapism	persistent painful erection of the penis which occurs without sexual arousal
probenecid	medicine used to treat gout
proctitis	sore back passage, sometimes with bleeding and discharge
prophylaxis	preventing
prostatic hypertrophy	prostate problems
prostatism	prostate problems
prurigo	thickening and itching of the skin due to repeated scratching
pruritus	itching
pruritus, anal	itching of the skin around the back passage
pruritus, genital	itching of the genital area

Medical Term	Consumer Meaning
pseudomembranous colitis	inflammation of the colon (large bowel) <i>symptoms:</i> diarrhoea, usually with blood and mucus, stomach pain, fever
psoriasiform rash	skin rash with white, silvery coloured appearance
psoriasis	skin disease with thickened patches of red skin, often with silvery scales
psychic disturbances	mental illness with strange or disturbing thoughts or moods
psychomotor seizure	kind of fit or convulsion
psychosis	severe mental condition in which the person loses contact with reality and is unable to think and judge clearly
ptosis	drooping of the upper eyelid
pulmonary	relating to the lung
pulmonary fibrosis	scarring and thickening in the lungs with shortness of breath
purpura	1. unusual bleeding or bruising under the skin 2. purple or red-brown spots visible through the skin
purpura, thrombocytopenic	1. unusual bleeding or bruising under the skin 2. purple or red-brown spots visible through the skin
pustular	with pimples
pustular formation	blisters containing pus
pyoderma	pus in skin
pyrazinamide	medicine used to treat tuberculosis (TB)
pyrexia	fever or high temperature
radiotherapy	treatment with x-rays
rash, erythematous	red skin rash
rash, maculopapular	red raised skin rash
rash, morbilliform	measles-like skin rash
rash, pustular	skin rash with pus-filled blisters
Raynaud's syndrome	numbness, tingling and colour change (white, blue then red) in fingers and toes when exposed to the cold
rectal	relating to the back passage
rectum	the back passage
reflux	unusual backflow of fluid
reflux oesophagitis	a condition caused by the washing back, or reflux, of food and acid from the stomach into the food pipe <i>symptoms:</i> 1. a burning sensation in the chest rising up to the throat, also known as heartburn 2. heartburn, which usually occurs after eating or at night and which worsens when bending over
relaxant	medicine used to relax muscles
renal	relating to the kidneys
renal calculi	kidney stones
renal failure, acute	1. kidney disease 2. kidney disease where you pass little or no urine <i>symptoms:</i> little or no urine, drowsiness, nausea, vomiting, breathlessness
renal failure, chronic	kidney disease <i>symptoms:</i> nausea, loss of appetite, weakness
renal impairment	kidney problems
renal tubular damage	kidney disease

Medical Term	Consumer Meaning
respiratory	relating to the lungs
respiratory depression	shallow breathing
respiratory insufficiency	difficulty breathing
retinal detachment	detachment of the back part of the eye <i>symptoms:</i> seeing bright flashes of light with floaters, progressing to a loss of sight
retinitis	swelling of retina causing changes in sight
retinopathy	disease of retina
rhabdomyolysis	temporary paralysis or weakness of muscles
rhinitis	runny or blocked nose, sneezing, facial pressure or pain
rhinitis, allergic	1. itching sensation in the nose, throat and eyes, followed by sneezing, stuffiness, runny nose and often watering eyes 2. hay fever 3. runny, blocked or itchy nose, sneezing
rhinorrhoea	runny nose
rigidity	stiffness or tightness in the arms or legs
rosacea	skin condition of the face where the nose and cheeks are unusually red
salivation	production of saliva
sarcoma	a type of cancer
schizophrenia	mental illness with disturbances in thinking, emotional reactions and behaviour
seborrhoea	skin condition caused by the excess secretion of oil from the skin glands <i>symptoms:</i> dandruff and oily skin
sedation	drowsiness or sleepiness
sedative	medicine used to produce calmness or to help you sleep
seizures	seizures, fits or convulsions
senile psychosis	mental disease of old age
septicaemia	1. serious bacterial infection of the blood 2. blood poisoning <i>symptoms:</i> high fever, chills, headache, confusion, rapid breathing
serotonin	substance or chemical produced in various parts of the body
serum sickness	a hypersensitivity reaction to the administration of a foreign serum <i>symptoms:</i> fever, swelling, skin rash, enlargement of the lymph nodes
shock	a dangerous decrease of blood pressure which, if untreated, may lead to collapse, coma and death <i>symptoms:</i> rapid, shallow breathing, cold, clammy skin, a rapid, weak pulse, dizziness, weakness and fainting
sialoadenitis	sore saliva glands
sialorrhoea	too much saliva
sinusitis	feeling of tension or fullness in the nose, cheeks and behind your eyes, sometimes with a throbbing ache, fever, stuffy nose and loss of the sense of smell
skin atrophy	thinning of the skin

Medical Term	Consumer Meaning
sleep apnoea	temporarily stopping breathing while you sleep
somnambulism	sleep walking
somnolence	1. sleepiness 2. drowsiness
spasm	spasm
spasticity	stiffness and restriction of movement in a group of muscles
speech disorder	difficulty in speaking or slurred speech
sperm	male sex cell
spermatogenesis	making sperm
spinal cord compression	<i>symptoms:</i> severe back pain
splenic	relating to the spleen
spondylitis, ankylosing	disease of the joints of the spine
status asthmaticus	severe asthma attack
status epilepticus	prolonged or repeated fits or seizures without any recovery between attacks
steatorrhoea	excessive fat in bowel motions causing diarrhoea
Stevens Johnson Syndrome	rare skin condition with severe blisters and bleeding in the lips, eyes, mouth, nose and genitals
stomatitis	1. sore mouth 2. mouth ulcers and cold sores
striae	stretch marks
stroke	damage to part of the brain caused by an interruption to its blood supply. <i>symptoms:</i> collapse, numbness or weakness of the arms or legs, headache, dizziness and confusion, visual disturbance, difficulty swallowing, slurred speech and loss of speech
subcutaneous	under the skin
sulphonamides	a group of antibiotics used to treat bacterial infections
superinfection	1. a second infection which occurs during the course of an existing infection 2. infection by other bacteria or organisms resistant to ...
sweating	sweating
sympathomimetic	some cough and cold preparations and weight reducing medicines
syncope	fainting
syndrome of inappropriate ADH secretion (SIADH)	overproduction of a hormone causing fluid retention, resulting in weakness, tiredness or confusion
synovial fluid	joint fluid
synovium	lining of joints
Systemic Lupus Erythematosus (SLE)	a disease affecting the skin, joints and kidneys
tachyarrhythmia	fast heart rate
tachycardia	1. fast heart beat 2. fast heart rate
tardive dyskinesia	1. uncontrollable twitching or jerking movements of the arms and legs 2. a reaction to some medicines with worm-like movements of the tongue or other uncontrolled movements of the mouth, tongue, cheeks or jaws, which may progress to the arms and legs
taste loss	taste loss
telangiectasia	redness of the skin

Medical Term	Consumer Meaning
tendinitis	swelling of the tendons <i>symptoms:</i> pain, tenderness, sometimes restricted movement
tenesmus	feeling of incomplete emptying of the bowel
tenosynovitis	pain, tenderness and swelling around the tendons
teratogenic	can cause birth defects
testicular	relating to the testes
testosterone	male sex hormone
theophylline	a medicine used to treat asthma
thoracic	relating to the chest
thrombocytopenia	low blood platelet count <i>symptoms:</i> bleeding or bruising more easily than normal
thromboembolic disorder	history of blood clots or stroke
thromboembolism	blockage of a blood vessel by a blood clot formed elsewhere in the body <i>symptoms:</i> sudden severe headache, loss of vision, loss of coordination, slurred speech, shortness of breath, chest pain, numbness heat or swelling in the arms and legs
thrombolytic	medicine used to dissolve blood clots
thrombophlebitis	swelling and redness along a vein which is extremely tender when touched
thrombosis	blood clot
thrush, oral	1. a fungal infection caused by <u>Candida</u> 2. thrush <i>symptoms:</i> sore, creamy-yellow, raised patches in the mouth
thrush, vaginal	1. a fungal infection caused by <u>Candida</u> in the vagina 2. thrush <i>symptoms:</i> itching, burning and a thick, white, “cottage cheese” discharge
thyroidectomy	removal of the thyroid gland
thyroiditis	swelling of the thyroid gland in the neck
thyrotoxicosis	an overactive thyroid gland <i>symptoms:</i> anxiety, trembling, sweating, palpitations, increased appetite, weight loss, intolerance to heat
tics	uncontrolled body movements
tinea	fungal infection of skin, hair or nails
tinnitus	buzzing, hissing, whistling, ringing or other persistent noise in the ears
tolerance	need to take increasingly higher doses of a medicine to gain the same effect
Tourette’s syndrome	condition with uncontrolled speech and body movements (tics)

Medical Term	Consumer Meaning
toxic epidermal necrolysis	1. severe skin reaction 2. severe skin disease <i>symptoms:</i> starts with painful red areas, then large blisters and ends with peeling of layers of skin. This is accompanied by fever and chills, aching muscles and generally feeling unwell.
tranquilliser	1. medicine used to produce calmness 2. medicine used to treat anxiety or to help you sleep
transient pigment floaters	small images floating through or across your vision
tremor	shaking or tremors
tricyclic antidepressants	a group of medicines used to treat depression
trigeminal neuralgia	sudden, repeated attacks of facial pain
triglyceride	a blood fat
trimester	the first, second or last three months of pregnancy
urinary frequency	frequent need to urinate
urinary obstruction	difficulty or pain when passing urine
urinary retention	1. difficulty passing urine 2. unable to pass urine
urinary urgency	urgent need to urinate (pass water)
urticaria	1. hives 2. pinkish, itchy swellings on the skin, also called hives or nettle rash 3. itchy rash
uterine relaxation	relaxation of muscles of womb
vaccine	a medicine that works by causing your body to produce its own protection against an infectious disease. One of the ways it does this is by making substances called antibodies in the blood / gut wall which fight the organism. If a vaccinated person comes into contact with the organism, the body is usually ready to destroy it. Most people will produce enough antibodies against the organism/disease. However, as with all vaccines, 100% protection cannot be guaranteed.
vaginitis	discharge and itching in the vagina due to infection
varicella	chicken pox
vasculitis	narrowing or blockage of blood vessels
vasoconstrictor	medicine which narrows blood vessels
vasodilation	widening of blood vessels
vasopressor drug	medicine used to raise blood pressure
vasovagal attack	fainting
ventricular arrhythmia	unusual heart beat
ventricular extrasystoles	unusual fast heart beat
ventricular fibrillation	dangerously fast heart beat
ventricular tachycardia	abnormal fast heart beat
vermicular (movements)	wriggling movement of the tongue
vertigo	1. dizziness 2. spinning sensation
vesicles	1. blisters 2. raised bumps on the skin that contain fluid
vinca alkaloid	medicine used to treat some types of cancer
visual acuity	sharpness of vision
vomiting	vomiting
vulvovaginitis	infection of the female genitals with vaginal discharge
warfarin	medicine used to prevent blood clots

Medical Term	Consumer Meaning
water intoxication	passing less urine than normal, which may be accompanied by lack of energy, vomiting, headache and confusion
weight gain	weight gain
xerophthalmia	dry eyes