

# **SPD Employee Continuing Education**

## **Training Guide**



### **Medical Terminology**

**Prepared by the SPD Advisory Group  
August 2001**

## OBJECTIVE:

Upon completion of this training, the participants will be able to:

- ❖ Enhance their understanding of Medical Terminology
- ❖ Identify a word prefix
- ❖ Identify root word elements
- ❖ Identify a word suffix
- ❖ Enhance their oral communication skills.

## Introduction:

The medical supply technician communicates daily with individuals from various backgrounds, from doctors to nurses to patients and their families. Communication is extremely important in that pertinent information is exchanged regarding patient care needs, thus meeting the user's demands and keeping medical supply technicians up-to-date on current inventory and their specific uses.

Knowledge of basic medical/surgical terminology is essential for the SPD technician. Correct terminology between the technician and user will allow rapid response to their requests. Many times when items are requested, generic or "slang" terminology is used. It is essential that the medical supply technician be familiar with the vast amount of terminology used. The key to understanding medical terminology is understanding the relationship between root words, prefixes, and suffixes.

The root word is the building block of the word. For example, the root word of dermatitis, dermatome, dermatologist and dermatology is **derma**, which means skin. The prefix appears at the beginning of a word and enhances its meaning. Dispense, disinfect, disease, and disperse all have **dis** as their prefix. The suffix appears at the end of a word and also enhances its meaning. Cytology, biology, physiology, and cardiology all have **ology** as their suffix.

## Definition:

Terminology - a system of science or technical appellations; the science that deals with the investigation, arrangement, and constructions of terms.

<b>abdomen:</b>	the part of the body between the chest and the pelvis.
<b>abscess:</b>	a localized collection of pus in any area of the body.
<b>acid:</b>	a sour substance having a pH of less than 7.
<b>aerobe:</b>	a microorganism which needs the presence of free oxygen or air for growth.
<b>algae:</b>	a group of plants that live in water and moist places and that range in size from one celled microscopic plants to massive seaweeds.
<b>allergen:</b>	a substance that causes an allergic reaction or induces hypersensitivity.
<b>amniocentesis:</b>	the removal of a sample of amniotic fluid from a pregnant uterus via abdominal perforation.
<b>amputation:</b>	the removal of a limb or other body appendage, especially by surgery.
<b>anastomosis:</b>	a connection between two tubular organs; the surgical or pathological formation of a passage between two normal distinct structures.
<b>anatomy:</b>	the science of the shape and structure of organisms and their parts.
<b>anaerobe:</b>	a microorganism that lives and grows in the absence of free oxygen.
<b>anesthesia:</b>	the partial or complete loss of feeling as a result of disease, injury, or the administration of a drug or gas.
<b>anesthesiologist:</b>	a physician specializing in the medical study and application of anesthesia.
<b>angiogram:</b>	the introduction of a contrast material (radiopaque dye) into the the vascular system for an x-ray photograph.
<b>anoscope:</b>	an endoscope or speculum used to examine the anal canal.
<b>anti-:</b>	word element meaning opposed to, against, or opposing in effect or activity.

<b>antibacterial:</b>	destroying or stopping the growth of bacteria.
<b>antiseptic:</b>	a mild disinfectant used on the skin and mucous membranes to lower the count and inhibit the growth of bacteria.
<b>aorta:</b>	the trunk of the arterial system of the body, the great artery which rises from the left ventricle and carries blood to all arteries of the organs and limbs.
<b>ascites:</b>	the excessive or abnormal accumulation of serous fluid in the peritoneal cavity, often accompanied by marked distention of the abdomen.
<b>asepsis:</b>	absence of septic matter, or freedom from infection.
<b>aspirate:</b>	to treat by aspiration, to remove or withdraw fluids.
<b>autoclave:</b>	an apparatus for effecting sterilization by steam under pressure.
<b>autopsy:</b>	the examination of a dead body to determine the cause of death.
<b>axilla:</b>	the armpit.
<b>bacteria:</b>	plural for bacterium, unicellular plant like microorganism responsible for the most diseases in plants and animals.
<b>bacteriology:</b>	the study of bacteria, particularly in relation to medicine and agriculture.
<b>bi-:</b>	word element meaning two.
<b>bile:</b>	a yellow or greenish alkaline fluid secreted by the liver and stored in the gallbladder, which aids in digestion and promotes absorption of fats.
<b>bio:</b>	word element meaning life or living.
<b>bioburden:</b>	the number of microorganisms on a contaminated object; also termed bioload.
<b>biopsy:</b>	the excision of tissue and microscopic examination of that tissue.
<b>bowel:</b>	intestine, the digestive tract below the stomach.
<b>cadaver:</b>	a dead body usually intended for dissection.

<b>cardiac:</b>	near, of, or pertaining to the heart.
<b>carrier:</b>	a person or an animal harboring pathogenic microorganisms who is at least temporarily immune to the organisms but transmits them directly or indirectly to others.
<b>caustic:</b>	a burning and corrosive substance which can destroy living tissue.
<b>cautery:</b>	a method of destroying tissue by electricity, heat or caustic chemicals; used to treat decubitus and to seal off blood vessels (bleeders) during a surgical procedure.
<b>cell:</b>	the smallest structural unit of a living organisms capable of performing all the basic functions of life.
<b>cervical:</b>	referring to the neck.
<b>chole-:</b>	word element pertaining to bile.
<b>chronic:</b>	constant, continuous, long-term.
<b>colectomy:</b>	the excision of the colon or a part of the colon.
<b>colon:</b>	the large intestine.
<b>colostomy:</b>	the surgical construction of an artificial anus from the colon onto the surface of the abdomen for the purpose of bowel evacuation.
<b>communicable disease:</b>	a disease which can be spread from one person to another, directly or indirectly.
<b>compress:</b>	a material such as gauze or cloth folded and firmly pressed to a part to prevent hemorrhage, or moistened with water or medication to reduce inflammation.
<b>contagious:</b>	transmitted or communicable by contact.
<b>contamination:</b>	the act of making something impure or unclean, especially the introduction of infectious material or disease germs into or onto normal sterile objects.
<b>cross infection:</b>	infection transmitted between hospitalized persons infected with different pathogenic organisms.
<b>cryo-:</b>	word element meaning cold or freezing.

<b>cutdown:</b>	the creation of an incision in order to reach a vein; used for passage of an intravenous catheter to administer IV fluids or transfusions.
<b>C.V.P.:</b>	abbreviation for central venous pressure.
<b>cysto-:</b>	word element meaning bladder or cyst.
<b>debridement:</b>	the surgical removal of dead or unhealthy tissue.
<b>decontamination:</b>	to make safe by removing or reducing contamination by infectious organisms or other harmful substances.
<b>diarrhea:</b>	the rapid, excessive evacuation of watery bowel movements.
<b>disease:</b>	an abnormal body condition, especially as a result of infection, environmental stress or anything that impairs normal physiological function.
<b>disinfectant:</b>	an agent which destroys, neutralizes or inhibits the growth of pathogenic bacteria.
<b>drain:</b>	a tube inserted into the opening of a wound or cavity to promote discharge of fluid.
<b>dressing:</b>	a bandage or covering for an external wound.
<b>duodenum:</b>	the first part of the small intestine starting at the lower end of the stomach and extending to the jejunum.
<b>-ectomy:</b>	word element meaning removal of.
<b>encephalo:</b>	word element referring to the brain.
<b>enteric:</b>	pertaining to the intestinal tract.
<b>epidural:</b>	the space outside the dura matter of the brain and spinal cord.
<b>epistaxis:</b>	a nasal hemorrhage, nosebleed.
<b>excrete:</b>	to eliminate or give off waste products such as feces, perspiration and urine.
<b>fenestrated:</b>	having openings.
<b>flatus:</b>	air or gas generated in the stomach or intestine.

<b>gangrene:</b>	the death and decay of body tissue due to blood stoppage to a limb or other body part caused by injury or disease.
<b>gavage:</b>	tube feeding of nutrient substances into the stomach.
<b>geriatrics:</b>	the medical study of old people and problems of the aged.
<b>germicide:</b>	a germ-killing agent.
<b>glutaraldehyde:</b>	a compound used as a tissue fixative for microscopic examination and in aqueous solution as a disinfectant and sterilant.
<b>gonorrhea:</b>	a highly contagious, infectious venereal disease caused by Gonococcus bacteria. Transmitted chiefly by sexual intercourse, gonorrhea is the most common venereal disease.
<b>gram's stain:</b>	a method of rating different types of bacteria by their reaction to a violet stain.
<b>hemo-:</b>	a prefix meaning blood.
<b>hemorrhage:</b>	bleeding, especially large amounts of abounding flow from a vessel.
<b>hepatitis:</b>	an inflammation of the liver caused by toxic or infectious agents, the most marked symptom being jaundice.
<b>hyperthermia:</b>	abnormally high body temperature.
<b>hypothermia:</b>	a symptomatic or induced low body temperature, below 97.6F.
<b>ileostomy:</b>	the surgical creation of an opening into the ileum portion of the small intestine and establishment of an ileal stoma on the abdominal wall.
<b>immune:</b>	not susceptible or responsive to a particular disease.
<b>immunity:</b>	a condition of body resistance to a specific pathogen.
<b>incision:</b>	a surgical cut into soft tissue.
<b>incontinence:</b>	the inability to control body excretions of urine or feces.
<b>incubate:</b>	to maintain a baby or a bacterial culture at optimum environmental conditions for growth.

<b>infection:</b>	invasion of the body by pathogenic microorganisms and the reaction of the tissue to their presence and to the toxins generated by them.
<b>infectious:</b>	caused by or capable of being communicated by infection.
<b>infestation:</b>	the invasion of or swarming on the body; i.e. lice, mites or ticks.
<b>intra-:</b>	prefix meaning within or inside of.
<b>intubation:</b>	the insertion of a tube. Ex., an endotracheal into the trachea.
<b>irrigation:</b>	the cleansing of a body cavity or wound by a stream of water or medicated solution.
<b>isolation:</b>	the act of setting apart or quarantining a patient with a communicable disease.
<b>laceration:</b>	a torn wound as distinguished from a cut or incision.
<b>laparotomy:</b>	a surgical incision into the abdominal wall.
<b>lavage:</b>	irrigation of a hollow organ such as the stomach.
<b>limb:</b>	an appendage, an arm or leg.
<b>local:</b>	pertaining to or restricted to one small area or part.
<b>lumbar puncture:</b>	spinal puncture, the insertion of a hollow needle into the spine between the lower ribs and the pelvis to obtain cerebrospinal fluid for examination.
<b>manometer:</b>	a glass or plastic instrument used for measuring the pressure of liquids or gases.
<b>microorganism:</b>	a plant or animal visible only with microscopic magnification.
<b>mucus:</b>	the protective, lubricating secretion of the mucous membrane.
<b>nasal:</b>	pertaining to the nose.
<b>nutrition:</b>	the act or process of nourishment of the body by food.

<b>obstetrics:</b>	the branch of medical science which deals with pregnancy, childbirth and the reproductive period after delivery.
<b>oral:</b>	pertaining to the mouth, used in or taking through the mouth.
<b>otoscope:</b>	an instrument used to examine the ear.
<b>paracentesis:</b>	the puncture or draining of a body cavity.
<b>parasite:</b>	an organism which grows, feeds, and lives in or on another organism without making any useful return to the host.
<b>patho-:</b>	the word element meaning disease.
<b>pathogen:</b>	anything which causes disease, especially microorganisms such as bacteria or fungi.
<b>pathology:</b>	the scientific study of disease, its nature, causes, processes, development and consequences.
<b>pediatrics:</b>	the branch of medicine dealing with infants and children, their development, care, and treatment of disease.
<b>pelvis:</b>	a basin shaped skeletal structure consisting of the hip bones and the lower portion of the vertebral column.
<b>phenol:</b>	carbolic acid, a white, caustic, poisonous compound used in disinfectants, resins, plastics and drugs.
<b>ppm:</b>	abbreviation for parts per million.
<b>proctoscope:</b>	a scope designed for dilating and examining the rectum.
<b>prosthesis:</b>	an artificial replacement of a body part, such as an arm, leg, breast or hip.
<b>protozoan:</b>	any one-celled animal like microorganism of the subkingdom Protozoa.
<b>pyrexia:</b>	fever.
<b>respirator:</b>	a mechanical device used to replace or assist the breathing of a patient with respiratory problems.

<b>rickettsia:</b>	any of a various parasitic microorganisms of the genus rickettsia which live on ticks, fleas and lice, causing diseases such as typhus and Rocky Mountain spotted fever in man.
<b>sanitation:</b>	a physical or chemical process by which the microbial count on inanimate objects is reduced to a level safe for human use.
<b>sepsis:</b>	the presence of pathogenic organisms or their toxins in the blood or tissues.
<b>septic:</b>	pertaining to pathogenic organisms and their toxins.
<b>sigmoidoscope:</b>	an endoscope used to examine the sigmoid colon.
<b>splint:</b>	a rigid or semirigid device used to immobilize a joint or prevent movement of fractured bones.
<b>sporicide:</b>	any agent with the ability to kill spores.
<b>staphylococcus:</b>	any of various spherical, parasitic bacteria of the genus Staphylococcus. Gram-positive, occurring in grape like clusters, staphylococcus pathogens cause boils, septicemia, and other infections.
<b>stat:</b>	abbreviation for the Latin "statim," meaning immediately or at once.
<b>S.T.E.L.:</b>	abbreviation for short-term excursion (exposure) limit.
<b>sterile:</b>	free of all living microorganisms.
<b>sterilization:</b>	the process of destroying all microorganisms on a substance by exposure to physical or chemical agents.
<b>sterilizer:</b>	an apparatus used in destroying microorganisms.
<b>sternum:</b>	the breast bone.
<b>stoma:</b>	an incised opening of the ileum or colon into the abdominal wall, kept open for fecal drainage as in an ileostomy or colostomy.

<b>streptococcus:</b>	any of various round or ovoid bacteria occurring in pairs and chains, often pathogenic, causing diseases such as scarlet fever, strept throat, and rheumatic fever.
<b>suture:</b>	the process of joining two surfaces by sewing, a material used in closing a wound with stitches.
<b>thoracentesis:</b>	the surgical puncture and drainage of the chest cavity for diagnosis of lung disease and/or removal of fluid from the thorax.
<b>thoracotomy:</b>	a surgical incision of the chest wall.
<b>thorax:</b>	the part of the body between the neck and the abdomen that encloses the chest cavity in which the lungs and heart lie.
<b>toxin:</b>	a poison, poisonous substance secreted by certain organisms.
<b>trachea:</b>	windpipe, a thin-walled tube of cartilage which provides air passage from the throat to the bronchial tubes.
<b>tracheostomy:</b>	the act of cutting into the trachea through the neck, usually for insertion of a tube to provide an artificial airway.
<b>tracheotomy:</b>	a surgical incision into the trachea for the purpose of removing a foreign body, obtaining a biopsy, or removing a lesion.
<b>transfusion:</b>	the direct introduction of whole blood, plasma, serum, or various artificial blood substitutes into the bloodstream.
<b>triage:</b>	a system designed to sort out or classify emergency room patients according to nature of injury or disease.
<b>trocarr:</b>	a sharp-pointed instrument used with a cannula to puncture a body cavity for fluid aspiration.
<b>T.W.A.:</b>	abbreviation for time-weighted average.
<b>ureter:</b>	one of two long narrow tubes that carry urine from the kidneys to the urinary bladder.
<b>urethra:</b>	the canal extending from the urinary bladder to the outside of the body through which urine is discharged.
<b>urology:</b>	the branch of medicine dealing with the physiology and

pathology of the urinary system in the female and the genitourinary system in the male.

- uterus:** the pear-shaped organ of reproduction of female mammals located in the pelvic cavity.
- vector:** any organism, but usually an arthropod, which carries pathogens from one host to another.
- venous:** relating to a vein or veins.
- virology:** the study of viruses.
- virus:** any of various submicroscopic pathogens that require host cells for growth and reproduction and cause diseases such as the common cold and polio.
- windpipe:** the trachea.

## Post test

### Medical Terminology

1. A suffix appears at the \_\_\_\_\_ of a word.
2. A prefix appears at the \_\_\_\_\_ of a word.
3. The presence of pathogenic organisms or their toxins in the blood or tissue is called ?
  - a. septic
  - b. sepsis
  - c. infection
  - d. infestation
4. The insertion of a tube into the trachea is called \_\_\_\_\_.
5. Angiogram refers to a diagnostic radiology exam of the vascular system, true or false? True \_\_\_\_\_  
False \_\_\_\_\_
6. What is the prefix meaning (blood)?
  - a. cryo
  - b. C.V.P.
  - c. hemo
  - d. plasma
7. A \_\_\_\_\_ is any one celled animal like microorganisms of the subkingdom \_\_\_\_\_.
8. What is the part of the body called , that is located between the neck and abdomen, that encloses the the chest cavity in which the heart and lungs lie?
  - a. axilla
  - b. trachea
  - c. thorax
  - d. sternum
9. A \_\_\_\_\_ is a sharp-pointed instrument used with a cannula to puncture a body cavity for fluid aspiration.
10. The study of viruses is called?
  - a. urology
  - b. pathology
  - c. cytology
  - d. virology

## Post test answers

1. end
2. beginning
3. b. (sepsis)
4. intubation
5. true
6. c. (hemo)
7. protozoan, protozoa
8. c. (thorax)
9. trocar
10. d. (virology)