



**Faculty of Applied Science**  
**Medical Technical Radiology**  
Radiographic and Medical  
Terminology I  
(MTR109)

## Lecture 2

# COMMON PREFIXES AND SUFFIXES

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# Outline

What are Prefixes?

Types of Prefixes in Medical Terminology

Class activity

What are suffixes?

Types of suffixes in medical terminology

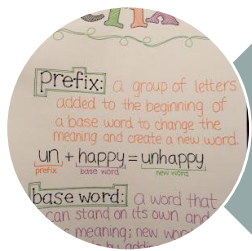
Class activity?

# Learning outcome

By the end of this session you will be able to:



**Define common medical prefixes and suffixes and explain their meanings.**



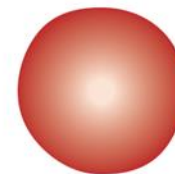
**Identify different types of prefixes** (number, location, degree, condition) and **suffixes** (disease, procedure, condition).



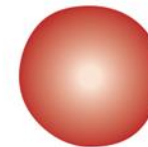
**apply** prefixes and suffixes with their correct meanings using structured exercises.

# What are Prefixes?

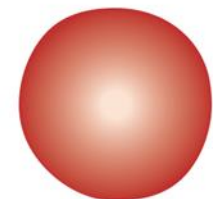
- A prefix is a word element located at the beginning of a word root. Substituting one prefix for another alters the meaning of the word.
- For example, in the term macro/cyte, macro- is a prefix meaning large; -cyte is a word root meaning cell. A macrocyte is a large cell. By changing the prefix macro- to micro- (small), the meaning of the word changes. A microcyte is a small cell.



Normal  
RBC



Microcyte



Macrocyte

# Types of Prefixes in Medical Terminology

- Prefixes of Quantity / Number
- Prefixes of Time & Speed
- Prefixes of Location / Position
- Prefixes of Size
- Prefixes of Condition / State
- Prefixes of Origin / Cause
- Prefixes of Direction

# Prefixes of Quantity / Number

Prefix	Meaning	Example	Meaning
mono-	one	monocyte	one nucleus cell
bi-	two	bilateral	Two sides
Tri-	three	tricuspid	Three point
poly	Many	polyuria	Excessive urination
multi	Many	multicellular	Many cells
oligo	few	oliguria	Low

# Prefixes of Time & Speed

Prefix	Meaning	Example	Meaning
brady-	Slow	bradycardia	slow heart rate
tachy-	Fast	tachypnea	rapid breathing
chronic-	Long time	chronic disease	long duration
acute-	Sudden / severe	acute pain	rapid onset
Hyper-	High	Hyperglycemia	High blood sugar
Hypo-	low	Hypoglycemia	Low blood sugar

# Prefixes of Location / Position

Prefix	Meaning	Example	Meaning
Epi-	Above	Epidermis	Above skin
Sub-	Below	Subcutaneous	Under skin
Inter-	Between	Intercostal	Between ribs
Intra-	within	Intravenous	Within vein
endo	inside	Endoscopy	Inside viewing
peri	Around	Pericardium	Around heart



# Prefixes of Size

prefix	Meaning	Example	Meaning
Micro	Small	Microcyte	Small cell
Macro	Large	Macrocyte	Large cell
Mega	Enlarged	Megacolon	Large colon

# Prefixes of Condition / State

prefix	meaning	example	meaning
A- /an-	Without	Anemia	Lack of blood
Dys-	Abnormal	Disypnea	Difficult breathing
Eu	Normal / good	Euthyroid	Normal thyroid
Mal	Bad	Malnutrition	Bad nutrition

# Prefixes of Origin / Cause

prefix	meaning	example	meaning
auto-	Self	Autoimmune	Against self
idio-	Unknown	Idiopathic	Unknown case
toxico-	Poison	Toxicology	Study of poison

# Prefixes of Direction

prefix	meaning	Example	meaning
ab-	Away from	Abduction	Move away
ad-	Toward	Adduction	Move toward
retro-	Backward	Retrocardiac	Behind heart
trans-	across	Transdermal	Across skin

# Class activity 1

Match each prefix (Column A) with its correct meaning (Column B).

## Column A

- 1.epi-
- 2.endo-
- 3.auto-
- 4.dys-
- 5.inter-
- 6.Tri-
- 7.Macro

## Column B

- A. large
- B. abnormal / difficult
- C. above
- D. self
- E. inside
- F. three
- G. between

1-C, 2-E, 3-D, 4-B, 5-G 6-F, 7-A

# Class activity 2

Match each prefix (Column A) with its correct meaning (Column B).

## Column A (Prefixes)

- 1.hypo-
- 2.hyper-
- 3.brady-
- 4.tachy-
- 5.peri-
- 6.intra-
- 7.sub-
- 8.poly-

## Column B (meaning)

- A. excessive / high
- B. around
- C. slow
- D. below
- E. low / deficient
- F. many
- G. within
- H. fast

1-E, 2-A, 3-C, 4-H, 5-B, 6-G, 7-D, 8-F

# What are Suffixes?

- Suffixes are word parts that are located at the end of words. Suffixes can alter the meaning of medical terms. It is important to spell and pronounce suffixes correctly.

# Suffixes Related to Diseases & Conditions

Suffix	Meaning	Example	Meaning of Example
<b>-itis</b>	Inflammation	Arthritis	Inflammation of joints
<b>-osis</b>	Abnormal condition	Leukocytosis	Increased white blood cells
<b>-oma</b>	Tumor, mass	Lymphoma	Tumor of lymph tissue
<b>-pathy</b>	Disease	Neuropathy	Nerve disease
<b>-emia</b>	Blood condition	Anemia	Low hemoglobin
<b>-algia</b>	Pain	Neuralgia	Nerve pain



# Suffixes Related to Procedures

Suffix	Meaning	Example	Meaning
<b>-ectomy</b>	Surgical removal	Splenectomy	Removal of spleen
<b>-otomy</b>	Cutting into	Tracheotomy	Incision into trachea
<b>-ostomy</b>	Creating an opening	Colostomy	Opening into colon
<b>-scopy</b>	Visual examination	Endoscopy	Viewing inside body
<b>-plasty</b>	Surgical repair	Angioplasty	Repair of blood vessel

# Suffixes Related to Diagnostic Tests

Suffix	Meaning	Example	Meaning
<b>-gram</b>	Record or image	Electrocardiogram	Heart record
<b>-graphy</b>	Process of recording	Radiography	X-ray imaging
<b>-graph</b>	Instrument for recording	Mammograph	Breast imaging device
<b>-metry</b>	Measurement	Spirometry	Lung volume measurement

# Suffixes Related to Cells & Tissues

Suffix	Meaning	Example	Meaning
<b>-cyte</b>	Cell	Erythrocyte	Red blood cell
<b>-blast</b>	Immature cell	Myeloblast	Early bone marrow cell
<b>-plasia</b>	Formation	Hyperplasia	Increased tissue growth

# Suffixes Related to Size, Number & Speed

Suffix	Meaning	Example	Meaning
<b>-megaly</b>	Enlargement	Splenomegaly	Enlarged spleen
<b>-penia</b>	Deficiency	Thrombocytopenia	Low platelets
<b>-trophy</b>	Development	Atrophy	Decreased size
<b>-rrhea</b>	Flow, discharge	Diarrhea	Excessive bowel movement

# Class activity 1

**Match each suffix in Column A with the correct meaning in Column B.**

## **Column A (Suffix)**

1. -itis
2. -ectomy
3. -emia
4. -oma
5. -scopy
6. -megaly
7. -algia
8. -osis
9. -gram
10. -penia

## **Column B (Meaning)**

- A. Pain
- B. Surgical removal
- C. Record or image
- D. Inflammation
- E. Tumor or mass
- F. Visual examination
- G. Blood condition
- H. Enlargement
- I. Deficiency or decrease
- J. Abnormal condition

1-D, 2-B, 3-G, 4-E, 5-F, 6-H, 7-A, 8-J, 9-C, 10-I

# Class activity 2

**Match each suffix in Column A with the correct meaning in Column B.**

## **Column A**

1. Gastritis
2. Anemia
3. Radiography
4. Hepatomegaly
5. Biopsy
6. Arthralgia
7. Leukopenia

## **Column B**

- A. Imaging using X-rays
- B. Low white blood cell count
- C. Inflammation of the stomach
- D. Liver enlargement
- E. Removal of tissue for examination
- F. Low hemoglobin level
- G. Joint pain

1-C, 2-F, 3-A, 4-D, 5-E, 6-G, 7-B

# Class activity 3

Match each suffix in Column A with the correct meaning in Column B.

## Column A (Suffix)

- 1.-plasty
- 2.-otomy
- 3.-rrhea
- 4.-cyte
- 5.-pathy

## Column B (Example)

- A. Erythrocyte
- B. Neuropathy
- C. Tracheotomy
- D. Diarrhea
- E. Angioplasty

1-E, 2-C, 3-D, 4-A, 5-B

# Next lecture

- Root words in medical terminology



# References

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