



Medical Terms Cheat Sheet

The clue to medical terms is in their suffix which follows the end of a word and creates a new one. For example, the suffix, "pathy," means disease. So, when you see a word ending in "pathy," it's referring to a disease, as in *nephropathy* which means disease of the kidney (nephro).

Suffix for Conditions	What it means
<i>-algia</i>	Pain
<i>-itis</i>	Inflammation
<i>-oid</i>	Resemble e.g. <i>fibroid</i>
<i>-oma</i>	Tumor
<i>-phasia</i>	Speech e.g. <i>aphasia</i> (without speech usually following a stroke)
<i>-plegia</i>	Paralysis e.g. <i>hemiplegia</i> (half paralyzed)
<i>-rrhage</i>	Burst forth e.g. <i>hemorrhage</i>
<i>-sclerosis</i>	Hardening
<i>-lith</i>	Stones or calcifications

Root Word for Body Parts	What it means
<i>hemo/a</i>	Blood
<i>nephro</i>	Kidney
<i>pneumo</i>	Lung
<i>cardi</i>	Heart
<i>gastro</i>	Stomach
<i>duodeno</i>	Small intestine
<i>coli</i>	Large intestine or colon
<i>opthal or ocul</i>	Eye
<i>derm</i>	Skin
<i>neur</i>	Nerves
<i>oste</i>	Bone
<i>hepat</i>	Liver
<i>encephal</i>	Brain
<i>phleb</i>	Vein
<i>myel</i>	Spinal cord or bone marrow

Suffix for surgery and procedures	What is means
<i>-ectomy</i>	Removal of
<i>-otomy</i>	Large surgical opening
<i>-ostomy</i>	Small surgical hole leading out of the body e.g. colostomy bag
<i>-centesis</i>	Tap or puncture to drain fluid
<i>-tripsy</i>	To crush e.g. lithotripsy to crush kidney stones
<i>-oscopy</i>	To examine with a scope exploring the body cavity e.g. colonoscopy

There are a number of endings to medical terms that simply mean "pertaining to" and they are: *ac*, *al*, *ary*, *ic*, *ical*, *ous*, *tic* and *ar*. For example, *cardiac* means pertaining to the heart, *venous* means pertaining to the vein and *pelvic* means pertaining to the pelvis.