

TIP SHEET - Glossary of Lay Terms

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Glossary of Lay Terms to Use in Preparation of Consent/ Assent/ Permission Forms	
Abdominal	The body region that contains the stomach, intestines, liver, and other organs
Absorb	To take up fluids, take in
Acidosis	Condition when the blood contains more acid than normal
Acuity	Clearness, especially of vision and airways
Acute	New, recent, sudden
Adenopathy	Swollen glands (lymph nodes)
Adjuvant	Helpful, assisting, aiding
Adjuvant Treatment	Added treatment
Antibiotic	Drug that kills bacteria and other germs
Antimicrobial	Drug that kills bacteria and other germs
Antiretroviral	Drug that inhibits certain viruses
Adverse Effect	Negative side effect
Allergic Reaction	Rash, trouble breathing
Ambul -action -ory	Walk, able to walk
Anaphylaxis	Serious, potentially life-threatening allergic reaction
Anemia	Decreased red blood cells; low red blood cell count
Anesthetic general	A drug or agent used to decrease the feeling of pain or eliminate the feeling of pain by putting you to sleep
Anesthetic local	A drug or agent used to decrease the feeling of pain or by numbing an area of your body, without putting you to sleep
Angina Angina Pectoris	Pain resulting from insufficient blood to the heart
Anorexia	Condition in which a person will not eat
Antecubital	Area inside the elbow
Antibody	Protein made in the body in response to foreign substance; attacks foreign substance and protects against infection
Anticonvulsant	Drug used to prevent seizures
Antilipidemic	A drug that decreases the level of fat(s) in the blood
Antitussive	A drug used to relieve coughing
Arrhythmia	Any change from the normal heartbeat (abnormal heartbeat)
Aspiration	Fluid entering lungs

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Assay	Lab test
Asthma	A lung disease associated with tightening of the air passages
Asymptomatic	Without symptoms
Axilla	Armpit
Benign	usually without serious consequences, but some exceptions exist where there may be serious consequences, such as in the case of a malignant brain tumor (not malignant)
Bid	Twice a day
Binding/ Bound	Carried by, to make stick together, transported
Bioavailability	The extend to which a drug or other substance becomes available to the body
Blood profile	Series of blood tests
Bolus	An amount given all at once
Bone mass	The amount of calcium in a given amount of bone
Bradycarrhythmias	Slow irregular heartbeat
Bradycardia	Slow heart beat
Broncospasm	Breathing distress caused by narrowing of the airways
Carcinogenic	Capable of causing cancer
Carcinoma	Type of cancer
Cardioversion	Restoration of normal heart beat by electric shock
Catheter	A tube for withdrawing or introducing fluids
Catheter indwelling epidural	A tube placed near the spinal cord used for anesthesia during an operation
Central Nervous System CNS	Brain and spinal cord
Cessation	Stopping
CHD Coronary heart disease	heart disease
Chemotherapy	Treatment of disease, usually cancer, by chemical agents
Chronic	Continuing for a long time
Cisplatin	A drug used to kill cancer cells
Clinical	Pertaining to medical care
Clinically significant	Of major importance for treating or evaluating patients
Clinical trial	An experiment in patients
Coma	Unconscious state
Complete response	Total disappearance of disease
Congenital	Occurring prior to birth, due to parent's genetic input
Conjunctivitis	Irritation and redness of the thin membrane covering the eye

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Consolidation Phase	Treatment phase intended to make a remission permanent, follows induction
Controlled Trial	Study in which the experimental treatment or procedure is compared to the standard/ conventional care (control) treatment or procedure
Cooperative Group	Association of multiple institutions to perform clinical trials
Coronary	Pertains to the blood vessels that supply the heart
CT (CAT) Scan Computerized (axial) tomography	Computerized series of x-rays
Culture	Test for infection or organisms that could cause infection
Cumulative	Total amount (of individual events, experiences, treatments)
Cutaneous	Relating to the skin
CVA Cerebrovascular accident	Stroke
Dermatologic	Pertaining to the skin
Diastolic	Lower number in blood pressure reading; pertaining to resting or relaxation phase of heart beat
Distal	Toward the end, away from the center of the body
Diuretic	"Water pill" of drug that causes increase in urination
Doppler	Sound waves
Double Blind	Study in which neither investigators nor subjects know what drug the subject is receiving
Dysfunction	State of improper function
Dysplasia	Abnormal cells
Echocardiogram	Sound wave test of the heart
Edema	Increased fluid
EEG Electroencephalogram	Electric brainwave tracing
Efficacy	Effectiveness
Electrocardiogram ECG EKG	Electrical tracing of the heartbeat or heart rhythm
Electrolyte Imbalance	Imbalance of salts or chemicals in the blood
Elevation of Liver Function Tests	Evidence of liver or kidney damage
Emesis	Vomiting
Empiric	Based on experience
Endoscopic Examination	Examination of an internal part of the body with a lighted tube; looking at a part of the body with a lighted tube

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Enteral	By way of the intestines
Epidural	Outside the spinal cord
Eradicating	Getting rid of (such as disease)
Evaluated	Assessed; examined for medical condition
External	Outside the body
Extravasate	To leak outside of a blood vessel
Fibrillation	Irregular beat of the heart or other muscle
Fibrous	Having many fibers, such as scar tissue
FDA	U.S. Food and Drug Administration, the branch of the federal government which approves new drugs
General Anesthesia Also listed under Anesthesia (General)	Pain prevention by induction of drugged sleep, as in surgery
Gestational	Pertaining to pregnancy
Hematocrit	Amount of red blood cells in the blood
Hematoma	A bruise, a black and blue mark
Hemodynamic	Related to blood flow
Hemolysis	Breakdown in red blood cells
Heparin Lock	Needle placed in the arm with blood thinner to keep the blood from clotting inside the needle or tubing
Hepatoma	Cancer or tumor of the liver
Heritable Disease	A disease which can be transmitted to a person's children resulting in damage to future children
Histopathologic	Pertaining to the disease status of body tissues or cells
Holter Monitor	A portable machine for recording heart beats
Hypercalcemia	High blood calcium level
Hyperkalemia	High blood potassium level
Hypernatremia	High blood sodium level
Hypertension	High blood pressure
Hypoxia	Low oxygen level in the blood
Iatrogenic	Caused by a physician or by treatment
IDE	The license to test an unapproved new medical device; a new device which has not yet been approved by the FDA (Investigational device exemption)
Idiopathic	Of unknown cause
Immunoglobulin	A combination of antibodies from proteins in the blood

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Immunosuppressive	Drug which suppresses the body's immune response, used in transplantation and diseases caused by disordered immunity
Immunotherapy	Giving of drugs to help the body's protective (immune) system; usually to destroy cancer cells
Impaired Function	Abnormal function
Implanted	Placed in the body
IND	The license to test an unapproved new drug Investigational new drug; a new drug which has not yet been approved by the FDA
Induction Phase	Beginning phase or stage of a treatment
Induration	Hardening
Indwelling	Remaining in a given location, such as a catheter
Infarct	Death of tissue because of lack of blood supply
Infectious Disease	Disease which is given (transmitted) from one person to the next
Inflammation	Swelling which is generally painful, red, and feels warm
Infusion	Introduction of a substance into the body, usually into the blood
Ingestion	Eating; taking by mouth
Intermittent	Occurring (regularly or irregularly) between two time points; alternately ceasing and beginning
Internal	Within the body
Interior	Inside of the body
Intramuscular	Into the muscle; within the muscle
Intraperitoneal	Into the abdominal cavity
Intrathecal	Into the spinal fluid
Intravenous (IV)	Into (within) a vein
Intravesical	In the bladder
Intubate	The placement of a tube into the airway
Invasive Procedure	Puncture, opening or cutting into the skin
Investigational Method	A treatment method which has not been proven to be beneficial or has not been accepted as standard care/ conventional care
Ischemia Procedure	Decreased oxygen in a tissue (generally because of decreased blood flow)
Laporatomy	A procedure in which an incision is made to the abdominal (stomach) wall to enable a physician to look at the organs

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Lethargy	Sleepiness
Leukopenia	Low white blood cell count
Lipid	Fat
Lipid Profile panel	Fat and cholesterol levels in the blood
Local Anesthesia	Making a small area of the body not feel pain
Localized	Restricted to one area; limited to one area of the body
Lumen	The inside of an organ or any kind of tube shape, such as the inside of a blood vessel or needle
Lymphangiography	An x-ray of the lymph nodes or tissues after injection of dye in lymph vessels (such as the feet)
Lymphoma	A cancer of the lymph nodes (or tissues)
Malaise	A vague feeling of general discomfort in the body; feeling bad
Malfunction	Condition in which something is not functioning properly
Malignancy	Cancer or other progressively growing larger and spreading tumor, generally fatal if not successfully treated
Medulloblastoma	A drug used to treat infections caused by parasites or other causes of infections
Metabolize	Process of breaking down substances in the cells
Metastasis	Spread of cancer cells from one part of the body to another
MI	Heart attack Myocardial Infarction
Minimal	Slight
Minimize	Reduce
Monitor	Check on; keep track of; watch carefully
Mobility	Ease of movement; Ability to move around
Morbidity	Undesired result or complication; serious disease
Mortality	Death or death rate
MRI Magnetic Resonance Imaging	Body pictures created using magnetic rather than x-ray energy
Myalgia	Muscle aches
Mucosa; Mucous Membrane	Lining of tracts that make eating, breathing, urination, and reproduction possible
Myocardial Infarction	Related to the muscle of the heart; heart attack; death of the heart muscle
Nasogastric tube	Tube from the nose to the stomach
Necrosis	Death of tissue
Neoplasia	Tumor, may be non-cancerous or cancerous
Neuroblastoma	A cancer of nerve tissue

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Neurological	Pertaining to the nervous system
Neutropenia	Decrease in the main part of the white blood cells
Non-Invasive	Not breaking, cutting, or entering the skin
Nosocomial Pneumonia	Pneumonia obtained in the hospital
Occlusion	Closing; obstruction
Oncology	The study of tumors or cancer
Ophthalmic	Related to the eye
Optimal	Best, most favorable or desirable
Oral Administration	Given by mouth
Orthopedic	Related to the bones
Osteopetrosis	Rare bone disorder that has to do with dense bone
Osteoporosis	Bone disorder that has to do with loss of bone leading to increased risk of fracture
Ovaries	Female glands related to reproduction; female organs which release eggs
Parenteral	Administration by injection
Patency	Being open
Pathogenesis	The initial cause of a disease
Percutaneous	Through the skin
Perforation	Puncture, tear or hole
Peripheral	Not in the center; not central
Per OS (PS)	By mouth (generally, used with the way that a drug is being taken by you or given to you)
Pharmacokinetics	Study of the way the body absorbs, distributes and gets rid of a drug
Phase I	Initial study of a new drug in humans to determine limits of tolerance and/or to determine effectiveness
Phase II	Second phase of a study of a new drug intended to obtain initial information as to effectiveness
Phase III	Large scale trial to confirm and expand information on safety and effectiveness of a new drug
Phlebitis	Irritation or inflammation of a vein
Placebo	An inactive substance which may resemble an active agent but has no medical value
Placebo effect	Symptom or change of condition seen when a placebo is given; the symptom or change is not related to an active drug agent
Platelets	Small particles in the blood that help with blood clotting

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Potential	Possible
Potentiate	Increase or multiply the effect of a drug or toxin by administration of another drug or toxin at the same time
Potentiator	An agent that helps another agent work better
Prenatal	Before birth
Prophylaxis	A drug given to prevent disease or infection
Prosthesis	Artificial limbs, such as arms and legs
PRN	As needed
Prognosis	Outlook, probable outcomes
Prone	Lying on the stomach
Prospective Study	Study following patients forward in time
Protocol	Plan of study
Proximal	Closer to the center of the body, away from the end
Pulmonary	Pertaining to the lungs
QD	Every day; daily
QID	Four times a day
Radiation Therapy	X-ray or cobalt treatment
Random	By chance
Randomization	Assignment of treatment group by chance, similar to tossing a coin (when there are two treatment choices)
RBC	Red blood cell
Recombinant	Formation of new combinations of genes
Reconstitution	Putting back together the original parts or elements
Recur	Happen again
Refractory	Not responding to treatment
Regeneration	Regrowth of a structure or of lost tissue
Regimen	Pattern of administering treatment
Relapse	The return or reappearance of a disease
Remission	Disappearance of evidence of cancer or other disease
Renal	Related to the kidneys
Replicable	Capable of being done again
Resect	Remove or cut out (through surgery)
Retrospective Study	Study looking back over past experience
Sarcoma	A type of cancer
Sedative	A drug to calm or make less anxious
Seminoma	A type of cancer of the male reproductive organs
Sequentially	In a row
Software	Computer program

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Somnolence	Sleepiness
Spirometer	An instrument to measure the amount of air taken into and exhaled from the lungs
Standard of Care	Treatment plan which the majority of the medical community would accept as appropriate
Staging	A determination of the extent of the disease
Stenosis	Narrowing of a duct, tube, or one of the heart valves
Stomatitis	Mouth sores; inflammation of the mouth
Stratify	Arrange in groups for analysis of results (e.g., stratify by age, sex, etc.)
Stupor	Stunned state in which it is difficult to get a response or the attention of the subject
Subclavian	Under the collarbone
Subcutaneous	Under the skin
Supine	Lying on the back
Supportive Care	General medical care aimed at symptoms, not intended to improve or cure the underlying disease
Symptomatic	Having symptoms
Syndrome	A condition characterized by a set of symptoms
Systolic	Top number in blood pressure; related to the contraction part of the heart beat
Teratogenic	Capable of causing forms in unborn fetuses
Testes	Male sex glands; male organs which produce sperm
Thrombosis	Blood clotting within blood vessels
TID	Three times a day
Titration	Little by little alteration of drug dose to determine desired effect or the most effective strength of the drug
T-Lymphocytes	Type of white blood cells involved in immune reactions
Topical	Surface; on the skin
Topical Anesthetic	Applied to a certain area of the skin to reduce pain to a limited area to which applied
Toxicity	Side effects or undesirable effects of a drug
Transiently	Temporarily
Trauma	Trauma; wound
Treadmill	Walking machine often used to determine heart function
Uptake	Absorption and incorporation of a substance by living tissue; absorb and incorporate a substance, taking in of a substance by living tissue

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Valvuloplasty	Plastic repair of a valve, especially of the heart
Varices	Enlarged veins, usually in legs or lining of tube between mouth and stomach
Vasospasm	Narrowing of blood vessels due to spasm of vessel walls
Vector	A carrier, usually an insect, that carries and transmits disease-causing microorganisms
Venipuncture	Entering vein with a needle, generally through the skin
Vertical Transmission	Spread of disease
WBC	White blood cells

