# GLOSSARY

This list includes a selection of commonly-used medical terms, research jargon and other complex words paired with suggestions for plain language alternatives. The list is provided from the *PRISM Readability Toolkit, Third Edition* and further edited for **Seattle Children’s Hospital**. It is a compilation of original entries[[1]](#footnote-1)\* and entries selected from a variety of plain language word lists publicly available on the internet:

* Simple Words and Phrases (plainlanguage.gov)
* Writing Style Guide and Dictionary of Plain English (Duncan Kent & Associates Ltd.)

This list is by no means exhaustive, and we encourage you to refer to other resources as needed. For definitions of more specialized medical terminology, try the University of Michigan Medical School Simplification Guide to Medical Terms.

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| **Instead of …** | **Try this …****(You may need to use different forms or combinations depending on how the term is used)**  |
| --- | --- |
| A [TOP](#_Navigation_links:__A  B  C  D  E  F) |
| abdomen | stomach, tummy, belly |
| abrasion | scrape, scratch |
| absorb | take in fluids, soak up |
| abstain from | don't, don’t use, don’t have, go without |
| accompany | go (along) with, come with |
| accomplish | carry out, do |
| accordingly | so, for that reason, as a result |
| accrue | add, gain, build up |
| accumulate | add, build up, collect, gather |
| accurate | correct, exact, right |
| acquire | get |
| activate | begin, start |
| acute | sudden, new, recent; intense flare-up, serious pain; short-term |
| addictive | habit-forming |
| additional | added, extra, more, other |
| address | talk about, discuss |
| adequate | enough |
| adjacent | next to, by |
| adjuvant | an extra treatment that is used in combination with the main treatment to lower the chance of the disease coming back |
| administer | give |
| advantageous | helpful, useful |
| adverse | harmful, bad |
| adversely impact | hurt, set back |
| affirmative | yes, positive |
| aggravate | make worse |
| aggregate | all together, added together, combined |
| agitation | anxiety, restlessness, nervousness |
| ailment | sickness, illness, health problem, complaint |
| allergen | something that causes allergies |
| allergic rhinitis | hay fever  |
| alleviate | ease, decrease, lessen |
| allocate | divide, give based on a plan |
| allow | let |
| alopecia | hair loss |
| alternative | choice, option |
| ameliorate | improve, get better, make better |
| ambulate | walk |
| ambulatory | able to walk |
| amend | change |
| ameliorate | improve |
| analgesic | pain killer, pain reliever |
| analyze | look at, study, examine |
| anaphylaxis | shock or serious allergic reaction |
| anesthetic (general) | a drug that puts you to sleep |
| anesthetic (local) | a drug that numbs an area of your body |
| angina (or angina pectoris) | chest pain |
| anterior | front |
| anticipate | expect |
| anticoagulant | blood thinner |
| anti-inflammatory | helps swelling go down |
| apparent | clear, plain, show up |
| appreciate, appreciation | thankful, thanks |
| apprise | inform, tell |
| appropriate(ly) | correct(ly), proper(ly), right |
| approximate(ly) | about, around, roughly |
| arrhythmia | irregular heartbeat, when the heart doesn’t have a steady beat |
| arteriosclerosis (or atherosclerosis) | hardening of the arteries |
| articulate | say, state, tell |
| ascertain | find out, learn  |
| ascorbic acid | vitamin C |
| asphyxiate, asphyxiation | choke (ing), suffocate (tion) |
| aspirate, aspiration | fluid in the lungs |
| assay | lab test |
| assess | learn about, study |
| assessment | review, quiz, rating, report, test, interview |
| assist, assistance | help, aid |
| associated with | linked to, related to |
| asymptomatic | without symptoms |
| atopic dermatitis | itchy red rash |
| attain | meet a goal; get |
| attempt | try |
| audit | review, inspect, look at |
| aural | hearing |
| B [TOP](#_Navigation_links:__A  B  C  D  E  F) |
| bacteria | germs |
| beneficial | helpful, good |
| benefit (noun) | good effect, advantage |
| benefit (verb) | help, be useful to |
| benign | isn't harmful, not cancer |
| bilateral | on both sides |
| biopsy | sample of tissue from part of the body |
| blood glucose | blood sugar |
| blood profile | series of blood tests |
| BMI, body mass index | using your height and weight to measure if you’re overweight |
| bradycardia | slow heart beat |
| buttocks | butt, backside, rear, rear end |
| C [TOP](#_Navigation_links:__A  B  C  D  E  F) |
| calculate | add up, figure out |
| capable, capability | able, ability |
| carcinogen | something that can cause cancer |
| carcinoma | cancer |
| cardiac |  (of/in/related to) the heart |
| cardiologist | heart doctor |
| cardiovascular | heart and/or blood vessel |
| carpal | wrist |
| category | kind, class, group |
| catheter | a tube for (putting fluids into/ taking fluids out of) the body |
| catheterize | put a tube into (part of the body) |
| caveat | warning; detail to think about |
| cease | stop |
| cell culture | tissue sample or a study of the tissue |
| cellulitis | skin infection  |
| Central Nervous System (CNS) | brain and spinal cord |
| cerebral hemorrhage (or cerebral accident or cerebrovascular accident or CVA) | stroke, blood clot in the brain |
| cessation | ending, stop, pause |
| chemotherapy | drugs to treat cancer |
| chest film | chest X-ray |
| cholesterol, HDL cholesterol, LDL cholesterol | types of fat found in the blood, HDL is good cholesterol, LDL is bad |
| chronic | lasting a long time, life-long |
| clavicle | collarbone |
| clinical | (related to) medical care |
| clinical trial | a research study that tests new drugs or devices on participants |
| coagulate | clot, stop flowing |
| cognitive | learning, thinking |
| cognizant | aware (of) |
| coitus | sex |
| collaborate with | work with |
| colon/colorectal | large intestine |
| colonoscopy | an exam of the inside of the large intestine that uses a flexible tube with a camera at the end |
| commence | begin, start |
| commitment | promise |
| commonly | most often |
| communicate | write, tell, talk, let you know |
| compensate, compensation | pay, give money  |
| complete | finish, do, fill out, take part in |
| comply with | follow |
| component | part, section, phase |
| comprise | form, include, make up |
| computed tomography | CT scan or imaging test, 3-D X-ray |
| conceal(ed) | hide (hidden) |
| concerning | about, on |
| concomitant | at the same time |
| condition | how you feel, health problem |
| conduct(ing) | do(ing) |
| congenital | present at birth, born with |
| congenital anomaly | birth defect |
| congestive heart failure | when the heart can’t pump enough blood for the body |
| conjunctivitis | pink eye |
| consequence | result |
| consequently | so, because of this, as a result |
| consider | think about |
| consolidate | combine, join, put together |
| contains | has |
| constitutes | is, forms, makes up |
| construct | make, build, design |
| contingent upon | if |
| continue | go on, keep (on) |
| contraceptive | birth control |
| contract(ing) [a disease] | get(ing) [a disease] |
| contraindicated | not recommended, can cause a bad reaction, not allowed |
| contrast medium | dye that helps show areas where there might be issues in the body |
| contribute | give, help |
| controlled trial | a study that compares one intervention to another intervention |
| contusion | bruise |
| convene | meet |
| convenient | handy, works well |
| conversion | change |
| convulsion | seizure, shaking |
| coronary | (in/of/related to) the blood vessels that bring blood to the heart |
| coronary thrombosis | heart attack |
| correlation | link |
| correspond | similar to, be in agreement with |
| crucial | very important |
| currently | now |
| cutaneous |  (in/of/about/related to) the skin |
| D [TOP](#_Navigation_links:__A  B  C  D  E  F) |
| debilitating | weakening |
| decision | choice |
| decrease | lower, reduce |
| deem | think, believe, consider |
| deep vein thrombosis | a blood clot deep in the vein |
| deficiency | not enough  |
| deficit | shortage |
| degeneration | getting or gets worse |
| delete | remove, take out, cut, drop |
| demonstrate | prove, show |
| depart | leave |
| describing | tell about |
| designate | choose, name, select, appoint |
| detect | find (out) |
| determine | decide, find (out), learn (if) |
| detrimental | harmful, bad |
| develop | occur, start to get, happen |
| diabetic | person who has diabetes |
| diagnose, diagnosis | (find the) problem or condition |
| diagnostic procedure | a test to look for a problem |
| diaphoresis | sweating |
| difficulties | problems, trouble |
| diffuse | widespread, scattered |
| digit | finger or toe |
| dilute | add liquid, make less strong |
| diminish(ed) | go down, decrease, less (of), lower |
| disclose | share, tell, show |
| discoloration | change in color |
| disconnect | unhook, separate, divide |
| discontinue | drop, stop |
| discover | find (out), learn if |
| discrepancy | conflict, difference, error, split |
| disseminate(d) | give, share, send, pass on, (spread out) |
| diuretic | drug that makes you urinate (OR pee) more |
| diverticulitis | when your large intestine is swollen or infected |
| donate | give |
| *DNA* | *See Language Resource Text* |
| dose escalation |  to increase the amount we give of the study drug |
| double blind | a study where the researchers and the participants don’t know what drug the participant is getting |
| dressing | bandage |
| due to the fact | because |
| dysfunction | not working  |
| dysmenorrhea | painful period cramps |
| dyspepsia | heartburn  |
| dysphagia | trouble swallowing |
| dyspnea | trouble breathing |
| E [TOP](#_Navigation_links:__A  B  C  D  E  F) |
| echocardiography, echocardiogram | pictures of the heart |
| edema | swelling |
| efficacy | how well (an intervention) works |
| elect | choose, pick |
| electrolytes | salts in the blood that control the balance of fluids in the body |
| elevate | high, higher, raise |
| eliminate | get rid of, remove, cut, end, go to the bathroom |
| elucidate | explain |
| embolism | lump of blood, clot |
| embolist/embolus | clot that blocks a blood vessel or artery |
| emesis | throwing up, vomiting |
| empirical evidence | proof |
| employ | use |
| employment | work |
| enable | allow, let |
| encounter | meet, meeting |
| encourage | urge |
| endeavor | try |
| endometrium | lining of the uterus |
| enlarge | get bigger |
| enroll | be in, join |
| ensue | follow(ing), occur after, happen next |
| ensure | make sure |
| enumerate | count |
| enuresis | problems controlling urine, bladder control problems |
| epidemiologist | scientist who studies diseases   |
| episode | bout or attack |
| equilibrium | balance |
| equivalent | equal, the same as |
| equitable | fair |
| eradicate | get rid of |
| eruption (skin) | rash or breakout |
| especially | mainly, mostly |
| establish | set up; also, show, prove |
| etiology | cause |
| evaluate | look at, study, measure, rate |
| evidence of | proof of, signs of |
| evident | clear |
| exacerbate | make worse |
| examination | exam |
| examine | look at, study |
| excise | remove by cutting, cut out |
| exhale | breathe out |
| exhibit | show |
| expedite, expeditious | speed up, make (something) go faster, make (something) easier, (fast, quick) |
| expend | spend |
| experiencing | feeling, going through, having |
| expire, expiration | end (date), run out |
| explicit | plain, clear |
| extensive | A lot (of), wide-spread, throughout the body  |
| external | outside (the body) |
| exude | ooze |
| F [TOP](#_Navigation_links:__A  B  C  D  E  F) |
| facilitate | help, ease, make (something) easier |
| failed to | did not |
| feasible | can be done, possible, workable |
| febrile | fever |
| femur | thigh bone, bone that connects the hip and knee |
| fetus | unborn baby |
| finalize | complete, finish |
| forfeit | give up, lose |
| formulate | work out, form, make |
| forward | send |
| fracture(d) | break, (broken) |
| frequently | often, a lot |
| fructose | fruit sugar |
| function | act, role, work |
| fundamental | basic |
| furnish | give, send |
| G [TOP](#_Navigation_links:__A  B  C  D  E  F) |
| gastric |  (of/in/related to) the stomach |
| gastroenterologist | doctor who treats problems with digestion |
| gastroesophageal reflux (GERD=gastroesophageal reflux disease) | heartburn |
| generalized | wide-spread |
| gerontological | age-related, (related to) aging |
| gestation | pregnancy |
| GI specialist | doctor who treats problems with digestion |
| glucose | sugar |
| gradually | slowly, over time |
| gynecologist | doctor trained in women’s health |
| H [TOP](#_Navigation_links:__A  B  C  D  E  F) |
| hazardous | dangerous, not safe |
| hearing impairment | hearing loss or deafness |
| heart failure | heart isn't pumping hard enough |
| hematocrit | amount of red blood cells in the blood |
| hematoma | bruise |
| hemorrhage | heavy bleeding |
| hence | so |
| hepatic | (of/in/related to) the liver |
| heritable, hereditary | genetic, traits that are passed down in families |
| herpes simplex type 1 | cold sore |
| herpes simplex type 2 | herpes |
| herpes zoster | shingles |
| heterogeneous | different, mixed |
| hirsutism | unwanted hair growth |
| homogeneous | same or similar |
| however | but |
| hyperopia | farsighted(ness) |
| hypersensitivity | very sensitive to |
| hypertension (hypotension) | blood pressure that’s too high (blood pressure that's too low) |
| hyperthyroidism (hypothyroidism) | overactive thyroid, too much thyroid hormone (underactive thyroid, not enough thyroid hormone) |
| hypothesis | idea being tested |
| hypoxia | not enough oxygen in the blood |
| I [TOP](#_Navigation_links:__A  B  C  D  E  F) |
| identical | same, exactly alike |
| identified | found |
| identify | find (out), pinpoint, name, show |
| idiopathic | we don’t know what causes it |
| immediately | right away, now, at once |
| immerse | cover in, dip in |
| immunotherapy | treatment to make the immune system work better (boost immune system) |
| impact | change, affect |
| impede | slow, make it harder to |
| implant | put into the body |
| implement | carry out, put in place, start |
| impotent, impotence | when a man either can’t get or can’t keep an erection |
| in addition | also, too, and |
| invite | have the option |
| in vitro | in a test tube or lab |
| incapacitate | make it hard or impossible to do |
| inception | start, beginning |
| incidence | number of new cases, how many times it occurs |
| incision | cut, slit |
| including | along with, like, such as |
| incorrect | wrong, not right |
| increase, increased | raise, higher |
| indicate | mean, show, suggest, tell us, fill in, write down |
| indication | sign, symptom |
| ineffectual | doesn’t work, useless, of no use |
| infectious (disease) | passed from one person to the next |
| infection | illness, sickness, disease |
| infertile | (women) not able to get pregnant(men) not able to get a partner pregnant |
| inflammation | swelling, painful swelling |
| influence | affect |
| inform | tell |
| informed consent | the process of deciding to be in a research study after thinking about the pros and cons  |
| infusion | putting a substance into the body through the blood |
| ingest | eat or drink |
| inhale | breathe in |
| inhibit | stop |
| inhibitor | drug that slows down or stops something from happening |
| initial | first |
| initiate | begin, start |
| injection | Poke, needle poke |
| in lieu of | instead (of) |
| innovation | new idea, new way |
| inquire | ask |
| institute | start, set up |
| instrument | tool |
| insufficient | not enough, too little |
| intake | what you eat or drink; what goes into your body |
| intent, intention | aim, goal, purpose |
| interface  | meet, work with |
| intermittent | off and on |
| internal | inside (the body) |
| interior | inside |
| internist | doctor of internal medicine  |
| interrupt | stop |
| intramuscular | in a muscle |
| intravenous | in a vein |
| intubate | put a tube down your throat into your airway so you can breathe |
| invasive disease | disease that (can or has) spread to other parts of the body |
| invasive procedure | to go into the body through a cut, slit, or puncture |
| investigation | study |
| investigator(s) | researcher(s), people doing the study |
| issue | give |
| J [TOP](#_Navigation_links:__A  B  C  D  E  F) |
| jaundice | when the whites of the eyes and the skin look yellow  |
| juvenile (condition) | childhood (condition) |
| K [TOP](#_Navigation_links:__A  B  C  D  E  F) |  |
| L [TOP](#_Navigation_links:__A  B  C  D  E  F) |
| laceration | cut, tear, slit |
| lactation | breastfeeding |
| lactose | a sugar found in milk |
| larynx | voice box |
| lateral | side, on the side |
| lethargic | sluggish; very sleepy |
| limb | arm or leg |
| lingual | tongue |
| lipids | fats in the blood |
| lipid profile (or lipid panel) | lab test to measure the amount of fats in the blood |
| locality | place |
| locally, localized | in one area |
| locate | find |
| location | place |
| lymphoma | cancer of the lymph nodes (or tissues) |
| M [TOP](#_Navigation_links:__A  B  C  D  E  F) |
| magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) | pictures of the inside of the body taken with a special machine, like an x-ray but more detailed (also See Resource Text) |
| magnitude | size |
| maintain | keep, support |
| malaise | general feeling of being sick, feeling bad |
| malignant, malignancy | cancer cells that won’t stop growing and spread to other parts of the body  |
| malingering | pretending to be sick |
| majority (of) | most |
| manifestation | sign |
| manner | way |
| materialize | appear |
| maximum | greatest, largest, most |
| mean (statistical) | average (statistical) |
| medication | drug, medicine |
| menarche | first (menstrual) period |
| menopause | when a woman doesn’t get any more (menstrual) periods  |
| menses, menstruation | (menstrual) period |
| metabolism, metabolize | how the body breaks down food into energy |
| metastasize | spread |
| metastatic | cancer that has spread |
| miliaria | prickly heat |
| minimal (minimum) | least, smallest, slight (at least) |
| minimize | decrease, lower, reduce |
| mobile (mobility) | able (ability) to move around |
| moderate (verb) | limit, control |
| modify, modification | change |
| monitor | check (on), keep track (of), watch |
| morbidity | disease rate, illness rate |
| mortality | death rate, death, dying |
| motility | movement, ability to move |
| musculoskeletal | muscles and bones |
| mutation |  a change in the information carried by a gene; this change can affect how the gene works or may do nothing at all (also see DNA in the Language Resource Text) |
| myocardial infarction (MI) | heart attack |
| myopia | nearsighted(ness), when it’s hard to see things that are far away |
| N [TOP](#_Navigation_links:__A  B  C  D  E  F) |
| nausea (nauseous) | upset stomach, feeling like throwing up, feel like vomiting |
| nebulous | vague, not clear |
| necessary | needed, need to |
| negligible | small |
| nephropathy | kidney disease |
| neuralgia | nerve pain |
| neuron | nerve cell |
| nodule | lump |
| noncompliant | not following the plan for the research study |
| noninvasive | without using surgery, needles, or cutting the skin |
| notification, notify | to tell, let know |
| numerate | count |
| numerous | many |
| nutrient | food |
| O [TOP](#_Navigation_links:__A  B  C  D  E  F) |
| objective | aim, goal |
| obligate, obligation | require, bind, means that (you) have to, duty |
| observe | see |
| obstruct | block or close |
| obtain | get, take |
| occasionally | sometimes |
| occlude (occlusion) | block (blockage) |
| occupation(al) | job, work |
| oncologist | doctor who treats cancer |
| oncology | study or treatment of cancer |
| onset | start |
| open-label | a study where the doctor and the person taking part both know which drug (device, biologic) is being given |
| opportunity | Option, choice |
| optimum, optimal | best, greatest, most |
| option | choice, way |
| oral (oral administration) | (given) by mouth |
| orthopedic | (of/about/related to) the bones |
| osteoporosis | brittle bone disease, having bones that can break easily |
| otherwise | if not |
| otolaryngologist | ear, nose, and throat doctor |
| outcomes | results, (long-term) changes |
| P [TOP](#_Navigation_links:__A  B  C  D  E  F) |
| palliative | make feel better but not cure, ease symptoms |
| pallor | paleness |
| palpate | feel |
| palpitation | fast heartbeat |
| parameter | limit, boundary |
| paresthesia | tingling, prickling, or burning feeling on the skin that can’t be explained or doesn’t seem to have any cause  |
| participant | person who takes part  |
| participate (ing, ion) | be, do, join, opt in, take part  (ing) |
| parturition | labor and delivery, childbirth |
| pathogen(esis) | cause of a disease |
| perforation | hole |
| perform | do |
| periodically | from time to time |
| perioral | around the mouth |
| peripheral | on the edge, not central |
| permit(ted) | allow(ed), let |
| persist | last, keep going, doesn’t stop |
| persistent  | lasting |
| personnel | staff, people |
| pertaining to | about, of, on |
| peruse | read, study, examine with care |
| pervasive | widespread |
| pharmaceutical | drug |
| pharmacotherapy | use drugs to treat a disease or condition |
| pharyngitis | sore throat |
| Phase I |  A research study where researchers learn about what the safe amount of a drug is to give |
| Phase II | A research study to learn about if a new drug (device, biologic) will affect a disease |
| Phase III | A research study to compare a drug (device, biologic) with treatment that is already used to see which is better |
| Phase IV | A research study done after the FDA has approved a drug (device, biologic) to look at side effects of the drug in a large group of people |
| physician | doctor |
| physiological | having to do with the body |
| pigmentation | color |
| placebo | a pill that doesn’t have any drugs or medicine; a “sugar” pill |
| placenta | part of the mother’s womb that supplies oxygen and nutrition to her unborn baby |
| plaque (artery) | fatty deposit |
| plasma | the fluid part of blood  |
| plasma glucose | blood sugar |
| portion | part |
| positron emission tomography | PET scan or imaging test; test done to look at organs in the body |
| possess | have, own |
| posterior | back |
| postoperative (post-op) | after surgery |
| preadolescent | preteen |
| preclinical | isn’t causing symptoms yet, no signs yet |
| preclude | prevent; rule out |
| predisposed, predisposition | likely to, inclined to |
| prenatal | before birth |
| presently | right now |
| present with | have |
| preserve | keep |
| prevalence, prevalent | how often it happens, common, happens often |
| prevent | stop, put a stop to, to keep from happening |
| previous, previously | before, earlier |
| principal investigator | head researcher, scientist in charge of a study |
| prior (to) | earlier, before |
| prioritize | rank, order, put in order of importance |
| proactive | taking action on your own |
| procedure | something that is done, a process |
| proceed | do, go ahead, start, try |
| procure, procurement | buy, get |
| proficiency, proficient | skill, skilled |
| prognosis | outlook |
| progress (verb), progressive | worsen, get(s) worse |
| prohibit, prohibitive, prohibited from | prevent, restrict(ive), strict, may not, don’t allow |
| promulgate | make, issue, publish |
| prone | lying face down, lying on your stomach |
| prophylaxis | something that prevents disease or infection |
| prosthesis | replacement for a body part, such as a man-made arm |
| protocol | plan of study, rule, process |
| provide | give (us), offer, say |
| provided that | if |
| provider | doctor, clinician, person who gives health care |
| proximal | close, closer to the center of the body |
| psychopathology | mental illness |
| psychosocial | mental and social |
| psychotropic | mind-altering |
| pulmonary |  (in/or/about/related to) the lungs |
| pulmonary embolism | blood clot in the lung |
| purchase | buy |
| pursuant to | by, following, under |
| Q [TOP](#_Navigation_links:__A  B  C  D  E  F) |
| questionnaire | survey, series of questions |
| R [TOP](#_Navigation_links:__A  B  C  D  E  F) |
| radiologist | doctor who specializes in reading X-rays |
| radiology | X-ray department |
| ramifications | outcomes, problems, results |
| randomized/randomization | assigned to a group by chance, like flipping a coin [if there are 2 groups]...like drawing names out of a hat [if there are more than 2 groups] |
| random(ly) | by chance |
| random sample | group of (people) chosen by chance; like drawing names out of a hat |
| range | area, between (x) and (y), from low(est) to high(est) |
| receive | get |
| recur | return, come back, happen again |
| referral | send to see another doctor |
| reflect | say, show |
| reflux | heartburn |
| refractory | hard to treat, hard to manage |
| regarding | about, of, on |
| regardless | no matter |
| regimen | plan |
| regulate | affect, control |
| regulations | rules |
| relapse | slip, backslide, return of a disease |
| relevant (to) | about, tied in with, related to |
| relocate | move |
| remain | stay, wait |
| remainder | rest, what is left over |
| remaining | other, (second, last, final), left, left over |
| remission | cancer that has gone away |
| renal |  (in/of/about/related to) the kidneys |
| render | make, give |
| replicable | can be done again |
| represents | is |
| request | ask |
| require(d), requirement | must do or have, need(ed) |
| researchers | people doing the study |
| resect | cut out, take out through surgery, remove |
| reside, residence | live, house, home |
| respiration | breathing |
| restrictions | limits |
| retain | keep |
| retinol | vitamin A |
| retrospective study | a study looking at things that have already happened |
| revise(d), revision | change(d), new |
| reveal | give us, show, tell |
| routinely | often, commonly |
| rupture | break open, burst |
| S [TOP](#_Navigation_links:__A  B  C  D  E  F) |
| sarcoma | Cancer of the bone, cartilage, fat, muscle, blood vessels, or other connective or supportive tissue |
| satisfactory | okay, fine, good |
| sclerosis | when certain tissues of the body get hard and thick |
| sedative | a drug to make you feel calm or less anxious |
| sedentary | inactive, not active |
| seldom | rarely, not very often |
| selection | choice |
| sensation | feeling |
| sepsis | a very serious infection  |
| sequentially | in a row, in order, by number |
| several | a few, a number of, some |
| severe | serious, bad |
| severity | how bad  |
| shall  | will |
| similar (to) | like, alike |
| similarity | likeness  |
| sinusitis | sinus infection |
| solely | only |
| solicit | ask for, request |
| somnolence | sleepiness |
| specify | name |
| specimen | sample |
| spirometer | a device that measures how much air you’re able to breathe in and out of your lungs |
| state-of-the-art | latest |
| stenosis | getting more narrow |
| stimulate | excite, trigger |
| strategy, strategize | (make a) plan |
| streptococcal | strep |
| subcutaneous | under the skin |
| sublingual | medication taken by dissolving under the tongue, under the tongue |
| submit | give, send |
| subsequent(ly) | after, later, next, then |
| substantial | big, large, much |
| sucrose | sugar |
| sufficient | enough, plenty |
| suggest(s) | show(s) there might be |
| supine | lying on your back |
| sustain | keep going |
| sustenance | support, food |
| sutures | stitches |
| symptomatic | having symptoms |
| systemic | whole body |
| T [TOP](#_Navigation_links:__A  B  C  D  E  F) |
| tachycardia | very fast heart beat  |
| tap | use a needle to take out fluid |
| tear a ligament (torn ligament) | sprain |
| telephone | phone |
| terminal | not curable, causes death, going to die |
| terminate, termination | put an end to, stop, end |
| therefore | so, as a result |
| thoracic | chest |
| thrombosis | blood clots in the blood vessels |
| topical (application) | surface, on the skin, (put on, put on the skin) |
| torso | trunk, main part of your body not including head, arms, or legs |
| toxic, toxin | poisonous, poison |
| toxicity | bad side effects |
| trachea | windpipe |
| transdermal | through the skin |
| transmit(ted), transmission | send (sent), spread to, pass on |
| transpire | happen |
| trauma | injury, wound |
| tremor | shaking |
| U [TOP](#_Navigation_links:__A  B  C  D  E  F) |
| ultimate | final |
| uncommon | rare |
| undergo | have |
| understand | learn, see |
| unequivocal | clear |
| unnecessary | not needed |
| urinalysis | urine test |
| utilize, utilization | use |
| V [TOP](#_Navigation_links:__A  B  C  D  E  F) |
| validate | approve, confirm |
| variable | factor, changes over time |
| varicella | chickenpox |
| variety | many different kinds |
| vector | an insect or other animal that carries disease |
| vertigo | dizziness |
| viable | practical, workable, possible |
| visualize | picture, see, imagine |
| vitals, vital signs | heart rate, blood pressure, breathing rate, and temperature |
| W [TOP](#_Navigation_links:__A  B  C  D  E  F) |
| warrant | call for, permit |
| whereas | because, since |
| withdraw (from) | drop, leave, take back, take out |
| X [TOP](#_Navigation_links:__A  B  C  D  E  F) |
| Y [TOP](#_Navigation_links:__A  B  C  D  E  F) |
| Z [TOP](#_Navigation_links:__A  B  C  D  E  F) |

1. \*Developed in collaboration with the Group Health Plain Language Network [↑](#footnote-ref-1)