

MEDICAL TERMS OFTEN CONFUSED

have a follow-up (or followup) examination. ?Follow-up (or followup) studies will be done. Incidentally, CHECKUP, FLAREUP and WORKUP (three more great medical words!) follow the same principle.

- **foul** – adj., (1) Offensive to the senses, as a foul odor, foul play. (2) Out of bounds, such as foul ball.
- **fowl** – n., a bird of any kind, especially a domestic chicken, duck, goose or turkey.
- **galactorrhea** – n., abnormal flow of breast milk.
- **galacturia** – n., milk-like appearance to the urine.
- **gauge**, n., a standard measure, as of wire; v.t., to find the exact measurement of.
- **gouge**, n., a hollow chisel used for cutting or removing bone or cartilage; v.t. to scoop out, as with a gouge.
- **hart**, n., a type of deer
- **heart**, n., the center of the vascular system of mammals, essentially a pump, cf cor.
- **hippocampus**, n., a “horned” part of the brain.
- **hippopotamus**, n., a large herbivorous “river horse” of African inland waters.
- **humeral**, adj., pertaining to the humerus bone.
- **humoral**, adj., referring to a body fluid (such as a hormone).
- **humor**, n., 1. something funny. 2. a bodily fluid (such as lymph). 2a. fluid or juice from an animal or plant.
- **humors**, n., pl. the body fluids
- **humorous**, adj., characterized by humor.
- **humerus**, n., a long bone of the upper arm.
- **hyper-**, prefix meaning excessive, above, beyond.
- **hypo-**, prefix meaning deficient, decrease, under, beneath, below.
- **ileum**, n., the part of the small intestine located between the jejunum and the large intestine. Ref: ileus, ileac (when referring to the intestine).
- **ilium**, n., the superior portion of the hip bone. Ref: iliac artery.
- **incite**, v., to cause to happen, as to incite a riot.
- **insight**, n., the ability to see within oneself, one's motives, seeing intuitively.
- **infra-** prefix, meaning under, beneath, below.
- **inner**, adj., that part closest to the center, or within. (Sometimes dictated instead of intra-, but not really preferred.)
- **inter-**, prefix, meaning between.
- **intra-**, prefix, meaning within (sometimes dictated as inner, which is okay, but not really preferred).
- **intralocular**, adj., within the locus of a structure (rarely used).
- **intraocular**, adj., within the eye.
- **its** — possessed by something; “The bear could not pick up its shadow.”
- **it's** — A contraction of it is. If you can substitute “it is” in the sentence, then this is the form to use.
- **knot** – a tie or twist, such as in suture knots; a node/ganglion; a difficult situation, such as Gordian knot.
- **naught** – nothing; “all for naught.”
- **not** – negative.
- **loath** adj., reluctant, unwilling. “The patient is loath to undertake surgery at this time.
- **loathe** v., dislike intensely; hate; detest.
- **lookout**, n. (one word) a person who stands watch against danger.
- **look out**, v., (two words) a warning of danger
- **loop**, n., doubling back or fold, of a cord or cordlike or tubelike structure, as a loop of bowel.
- **loupe**, n., a magnifying lens, often referred to in cystoscopies, and in surgery where a magnifying glass is required, such as cataract surgery (pronounced “loop”).
- **loose**, adj., not rigidly fastened or securely attached.
- **lose**, v., to miss from one's possession or customary place; to fail to win or gain.
- **malleolus**, n., the rounded lateral projections of the bone at the ankle.

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- **peak**, n., the pointed top of a graph (peaks and troughs); the pointed top of a mountain. Sometimes used as a back formation verb, “peaked.”
- **peek**, v., to look at something; “peek-a-boo.” Sometimes used as a back formation noun (take a peek at...).
- **peal**, v., to make a clanging sound, such as a bell.
- **peel**, v., to remove in layers, such as an onion or tissue.
- **perennial** – occurring all year long, as in perennial allergies. **perineal**, adj., refers to the perineum (the area between the scrotum and anus in the male, and between the vulva and anus in the female).
- **peritoneal**, adj., refers to the peritoneum, the serous membrane lining the abdominal and pelvic cavities.
- **peroneal**, adj., refers to the fibula or to the outer side of the leg and muscles thereof; the peroneus longus and the peroneus brevis.
- **perimeter**, the edge of something; surrounding; going around an object. “She only shopped the perimeter of the store.”
- **parameter**, a quality (as a means of variance. A characteristic, element or or factor. “Given these parameters, we will proceed as follows.”
- **perfuse**, vt., n.,: vt. to cause to flow or spread, such as blood or lymph. n., the act of flowing, such as blood or lymph.
- **profuse**, adj. or n., lavish, extravagant, bountiful.
- **plain**, adj., simple, unadorned, as in a plain x-ray.
- **plane**, n., a flat surface or layer; a surfacing tool.
- **pleural**, adj., refers to the pleura, the serous membrane lining each half of the thorax, as the “pleural cavity” or “pleural effusion.”
- **plural**, adj., more than one.
- **prostate**, n. and adj., the prostate gland.
- **prostrate**, adj., lying prone.
- **principal**, adj. and n., the most important, the chief, e.g. “principal diagnosis” the “principal of a school.”
- **principle**, n., a law or rule. Think of the word rule as rhyming in LE as does the word principle.
- **radical**, adj., many meanings, but the most prevalent in medicine is meaning 1. in Dorland’s – “directed to the cause, directed to the root or source of a morbid process, such as “radical surgery.”
- **radicle**, n., any one of the smallest branches of a vessel or nerve.
- **radish** – a tuberous vegetable.
- **ravage**, v., to wreak havoc.
- **Ravich** – a type of urological instrument.
- **ravish**, v., take by force, as in rape.
- **recession**, n., (Oph), the moving of the head of an eye muscle (usually the medial rectus or lateral rectus, that adduct or abduct the eyeball), and reimplanting it in a slightly different position for correction of strabismus.
- **resection**, n., excision of a portion of an organ or of a structure.
- **regime**, n., government or social system; mode of rule or management (often misused or mispronounced in medicine for “regimen”).
- **regimen**, n., a systematic course of diet, therapy, or exercise, meant to achieve certain ends.
- **role**, n., a part we play in life.
- **roll**, v., to roll something (roll over, roll a ball, etc.)
- **scatoma**, n., stercoroma; a tumor-like mass in the rectum formed by an accumulation of fecal material.
- **scotoma**, n., an area of depressed vision; a dark or blind spot in the visual field which is surrounded by an area of more normal vision.
- **soar**, v., to ride on wind currents such as soaring birds do and humans do when parasailing and hang gliding; hovering.