CHAPTER 3

Understanding Prefixes

Content Review Slides
Learning Objectives

• Define and spell the prefixes commonly used in medical terminology.
• Identify prefixes in medical terms.
• Use prefixes to build medical terms.
Common Prefixes

- intra- = within
- post- = to follow after
- pre- = to come before
- sub- = under, beneath, below
Common Prefixes (cont.)

- anti- = against, opposite of
- con- = with, together, jointly
- contra- = counter, against
- meta- = after, change

anti- = against
bi/o = life antibiotic
-ic = pertaining to
Prefixes That Indicate Number or Quantity

- ambi- = both
- bi- = two
- di-, dipl- = double
- hemi- = half
- mono- = one
Diplopia (double vision)

Source: Alex Melnick / Shutterstock.com
Prefixes That Indicate Number or Quantity (cont.)

- **multi-** = many, more than once, numerous
- **nulli-** = none
- **pan-** = all
- **poly-** = excessive, over, many

poly- = many
arter/o = artery
-itis = inflammation

polyarteritis
Prefixes That Indicate Number or Quantity (cont.)

- primi- = first
- quadri- = four
- semi- = half or partial
- tetra- = four
- tri- = three
- uni- = one
Prefixes That Indicate Location or Timing

- ab- = away from
- ad- = toward
- ana- = up, toward
- ante- = before, to come before
Prefixes That Indicate Location or Timing (cont.)

- dia- = through
- dis- = apart, away
- ec-, ecto- = outside, out
- endo- = within
Figure 3.1
Endogastric procedure using an endoscope to observe the internal stomach lining.
Prefixes That Indicate Location or Timing (cont.)

- ep-, epi- = upon, over, above, on top
- eso- = inward
- ex-, exo- = outside or away from
- extra- = outside
Prefixes That Indicate Location or Timing (cont.)

• hypo- = below
• infer- = below
• inter- = between
• intra- = within
• para- = alongside, abnormal
Prefixes That Indicate Location or Timing (cont.)

- peri- = around
- post- = to follow after
- pre- = before, to come before
- sub- = below
- super-, supra- = above
- sym-, syn- = together, joined
Figure 3.2  Skin Layers
Prefixes That Indicate a Specific Quality about a Term

- a-, an- = without or absence of
- brady- = slow
- circum- = around
- dys- = bad, abnormal, painful, difficult
- eu- = normal or good
- heter-, hetero- = different
Prefixes That Indicate a Specific Quality about a Term (cont.)

- hyper- = excessive, abnormally high, above
- hypo- = deficient, abnormally low, below
- macro- = large
- mal- = bad
- mega-, megalo- = large, great
Prefixes That Indicate a Specific Quality about a Term (cont.)

- micro- = small
- neo- = new
- pseudo- = false
- tachy- = rapid, fast
- trans- = through, across, beyond
- ultra- = beyond normal

\[ tachy\]- = rapid
\[ cardi/o \] = heart \[ tachycardia \]
\[ -ia \] = condition of
Figure 3.3
Ultrasound imaging. Source: Photodisc/Thinkstock
Prefix Quiz

1. peri-  a. through
2. ante-  b. around
3. dis-  c. apart
4. dia-  d. alongside
5. para-  e. before
Answers to Prefix Quiz

1. peri- a. through
2. ante- b. around
3. dis- c. apart
4. dia- d. alongside
5. para- e. before