

Glossary of Medical/Anesthesia Terms

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Absorption	The way a drug or other substance enters the body
Acapnia	Decreased carbon dioxide in the blood
Acidosis	Condition when blood contains more acid than normal
Adjunct	An additional drug, treatment, or procedure used for increasing the effectiveness of the primary drug, treatment, or procedure
Absorption	The way a drug or other substance enters the body
Acapnia	Decreased carbon dioxide in the blood
Aerosol	Drug or substance made as a mist to be breathed in
Ameliorate	To improve
Analgesic	Drug used to control pain
Anemia	Decreased red blood cells; low red blood 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 take away the feeling of pain by numbing part of your body, without putting you to sleep
Angiospasm	Cramp in the blood vessels
Anoxia	No oxygen
Antecubital	The area inside the elbow
Antiarrhythmic	Drug used to restore the natural rhythm of the heart
Antibiotic	Drug used to stop or slow down the growth of germs
Antiemetic	Drug used to stop vomiting
Antihistamine	Drug used to treat allergic reactions
Antinauseant	Drug used to stop nausea and vomiting
Antiseptic	Substance used to stop or slow down the growth of germs
Apnea	Cessation of breathing
Arrhythmia	Any change from the normal heartbeat
Aspiration	Removal of gas or fluid from the body cavity or organs by suction <i>Also:</i> Fluid entering lungs following vomiting
Auscultation	Use of a stethoscope to listen to sounds inside the body
Barbiturates	A group of drugs that are used for different reasons, including general anesthesia, sedation, and stopping seizures
Bioavailability	The extent to which the substance becomes available for action in the body
Bolus	A single, large quantity of a substance, given all at once
Bradycardia	slow heartbeat
Bronchi	More than one bronchus
Bronchitis	Inflammation of the bronchi

Bronchoconstrictor	Drug used to make the bronchi tighten up and become narrower
Bronchodilator	Drug used to make the bronchi open up and become bigger
Bronchospasm	Breathing distress caused by narrowing of the airways
Bronchoscope	Tool used to look into the bronchi, to examine the lungs
Bronchospasm	Breathing distress caused by narrowing of the airways
Bronchus	Tube that carries air from the windpipe to the lungs
Catheter	A tube introduced into the body to withdraw or introduce fluids
Catheter: indwelling epidural	A tube placed near the spinal cord used for anesthesia during operations
COPD (Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease)	Lung disorder in which the flow of air to the lungs is blocked (e.g., emphysema)
Contraindicated	Should not be used
Contusion	Bruise
CVA (cerebralvascular accident)	Stroke
Diastolic	The lower number in blood pressure reading
Depressant	Drug that slows down the action of the central nervous system
Diaphragm	Thin flat muscle that helps with breathing and separates the abdominal area from thoracic cavity (heart and lung area)
ECHO (Echocardiography)	An ultrasound of the heart; High frequency sound waves bounce back from the heart and form a an image of your heart.
EEG (Electroencephalogram)	Electric brainwave tracing
ECG or EKG (Electrocardiogram)	Electrical tracing of heartbeat
Electrolyte Imbalance	Imbalance of minerals in the blood
Embolus	Blood clot
Emesis	Vomiting
Endoscopic Examination	Examination of an internal part of the body with a lighted tube
Epidural	Outside the spinal cord
Epinephrine	Hormone made by the adrenal glands that speeds up body functions and helps the body deal with stress

Esophagus	Food pipe; the tube food passes through between your mouth and stomach
Esophagoscopy	Using a device to examine the esophagus
Fibrillation	Irregular beat of the heart or other muscle
Fast or fasting	To go without food
Hematocrit	Amount of red blood cells in the blood
Hematoma	Accumulation and clotting of blood or black and blue mark
Hemoglobin (Hgb)	Substance that carries oxygen and gives blood its red color
Hemolysis	Break down of red blood cells
Heparin Lock	Needle with blood thinner to keep the blood from clotting
Holter Monitor	A portable machine for recording heart beats
Hypercalcemia	High blood calcium level
Hypercapnia	Too much carbon dioxide in the blood
Hyperemesis	Excessive vomiting
Hyperkalemia	High blood potassium level
Hypernatremia	High blood sodium level
Hypertension	High blood pressure
Hypocalcemia	Low blood calcium level
Hypokalemia	Low blood potassium level
Hyponatremia	Low blood sodium level
Hypopnea	Weak, slow breathing
Hypotension	Low blood pressure
Hypothesis	A theory that forms the basis for a study to prove it
Hypoxia	A decrease in oxygen in the blood
IDE	Investigational Device Exemption, the license to test an unapproved new medical device
Idiopathic	Unknown cause
IND	Investigational New Drug, the license to test an unapproved new drug
Induction Phase	Beginning phase or stage of a treatment
Infusaport	A device surgically placed under the skin in order to give fluids and medication
Infusion	Introduction of a substance into the body (usually blood or drugs)
Ingestion	Eating; taking by mouth
Intramuscular	A medication injected into the muscle
Intrathecal	A medication injected into the spinal fluid
Intravenous	A medication injected through the vein or through the blood vessel
Intubate	The placement of a tube into the airway
Ischemia	low oxygen in tissue due to decreased blood circulation

	caused by obstruction of blood vessels
Laryngeal	Having to do with the voice box
Larynx	Voice box
Localized	Limited to specific area
Lumbar Puncture	After the skin is numbed, a needle is inserted into the lower back to withdraw spinal fluid for analysis
Lumen	The space inside an organ or tubular structure like artery or intestine
MH (Malignant Hyperthermia)	A condition (often genetic) that causes the patient's body temperature to quickly and dangerously increase during anesthesia
Narcotic	Strong habit-forming drug that stops pain and depresses the central nervous system
Nasogastric Tube	Tube from the nose to the stomach
Nausea	The feeling of wanting to vomit
Neuropharmacologic	Drug that acts on the nervous system
Norepinephrine	Hormone discharged from the nerves, the brain, and the adrenal glands that helps the body deal with stress and low blood pressure
NSAID	Non-Steroidal Anti-Inflammatory Drug used to relieve pain due to some kind of inflammation, such as arthritis, muscle sprain.
Occlusion	Closing or obstruction
Paralysis	Loss of ability to move muscles
Parenteral	Administration of a substance by injection
Patency	Condition of being open
PCA	Patient Controlled Anesthesia
Percutaneous	Through the skin
Per OS or PO	By mouth
Pharmacodynamics	Study of how a drug acts on the body
Pharmacokinetics	The study of the way the body absorbs, distributes and gets rid of a drug; The study of the way a drug enters and leaves the blood and tissues over time
Phlebitis	Irritation or inflammation of the vein
Platelets	Small particles in the blood that help with clotting
Potentiate	Increase or multiply the effect of a drug or toxin by administration of another drug or toxin at the same time
Potentiator	A substance (like a drug) that helps another (drug) work better
PRN	As needed

Prognosis	Probable outcome or expected result
Prophylactic	A drug given to prevent disease or infection; to prevent or guard against
Prospective Study	A study following patients forward in time
Protocol	A study plan or study
Retrospective Study	A study looking back over past experience of a patient
Sedative	A drug to calm down
Spirometer	An instrument to measure the amount of air taken into and exhaled from the lungs
Stenosis	The narrowing of a duct, tube, or one of the valves in the heart
Subcutaneous (S.c. or SQ)	Under the skin
Sublingual	Under the tongue; Giving a substance by placing it under the tongue (not to be swallowed) (e.g., nitroglycerin)
Sympathomimetic	Drug used to speed up heart rate, raise blood pressure, and open up air passages
Systolic	The higher number in blood pressure reading
TEE (Transesophageal Echocardiography)	This is an echo (echocardiogram) of your heart done through your food pipe (esophagus)
Thoracic Cavity	Space where the heart, lungs, esophagus, trachea, bronchi, and thymus are found
Thrombosis	Clotting, a blood clot
Titration	A method of determine the strength of a solution; Slow increase in drug dosage, guided by patient's responses
Topical Application	Giving a medication by putting it directly on the skin
Topical Anesthetic	Applied to a certain area of the skin and reducing pain only in the area to which applied
Toxicity	Any harmful effect of a drug or poison
Trachea	Windpipe
Tracheostomy	Surgery to make a hole through the neck from the windpipe to the outside of the body
Tranquilizer	Drug used to control anxiety
Transdermal Patch	Patch containing a drug that is put on the skin so the drug will enter the body through the skin
Uptake	Absorption of substance (like a drug) by tissue
Vasoconstrictor	Drug used to make blood vessels constrict, tighten up, and become narrower
Vasodilator	Drug used to make blood vessels relax, open up, and become bigger

Vasospasm	The narrowing of the blood vessels
Vehicle	A medium in which the drug is prepared or dissolved
Vena Cava	Largest vein in the body
Venipuncture	Putting a needle into a vein
Ventilator	Machine used to help a person breathe
Washout	The period immediately after stopping medication or a treatment