Chapter 1

Introduction to Word Parts
OBJECTIVES

- Identify and define the four word parts
- Identify and define a combining form
- Analyze and define medical terms
- Build medical terms for given definitions
Chapter 1 is the most important chapter in the text because it is here that you are introduced to word parts—word roots, prefixes, suffixes, and combining vowels—and the rules for combining them to build medical terms.

You will use this information in each of the subsequent chapters to analyze, build, define, and spell terms built from word parts.
Medicine Has a Language of Its Own

Current medical vocabulary includes terms built from Greek and Latin word parts, eponyms, acronyms, and terms from modern language.
Origins of Medical Language

A. Greek and Latin terms such as tarmur (L) and hemorrhage (G).

B. Eponyms such as Parkinson disease.

C. Acronyms such as LASER (light amplification by stimulated emission of radiation).

D. Modern language such as nuclear medicine scanner.
4 Word Parts

**Word Root:** Fundamental meaning of a medical term

**Prefix:** Attached to beginning of a medical term to modify its meaning

**Suffix:** Attached to end of a medical term to modify its meaning

**Combining Vowel:** Used to ease pronunciation - **usually** an “o” (e, i, or u)
Examples

Word Roots:  
- arthr: joint  
- hepat: liver  
- ven: vein  
- oste: bone

Prefixes:  
- intra-: within  
- sub-: under

Suffixes:  
- -itis: inflammation  
- -ic: pertaining to  
- -ous: pertaining to  
- -pathy: disease

Combining vowel:  o
Combining Form

Word Root + Combining Vowels

Examples: arthr/o hepat/o ven/o oste/o

Examples of word parts and combining vowel in use

P WR S P WR S WR CV WR S
sub/hepat/ic intra/ven/ous oste/o/arthr/itis
Some Basic Rules

- All medical terms have at least one word root
- Not all medical terms have a prefix, suffix, or combining vowel
- Combining vowels are used to connect word roots or word root and suffix
- When a suffix begins with a vowel, the combining vowel is not used

Example: arthritis ("o")
Some Basic Rules (cont’d)

- When connecting two word roots, a combining vowel is usually used even if vowels are present at the junction

  **Example:** oste/o/arthr/itis

- **Usually** medical terms are defined by starting at the end of the term and going back to the beginning

  **Example:** oste/o/arthr/itis—inflammation of the bone and joints
Some Basic Rules (cont’d)

- A few terms are more easily and accurately defined by starting at the beginning of the term.

Example: *melan/oma*

- *melan* = black
- *oma* = tumor
Word Parts for Practice

**Word Roots:**
(Comb. Forms)
arthr/o: joint
hepat/o: liver
ven/o: vein
osteo: bone

**Prefixes:**
intra-: within
sub-: under

**Suffixes:**
-itis: inflammation
-ic: pertaining to
-ous: pertaining
-pathy: disease

**Combining Vowel:**
o
Analyze and Define

- arthritis
- intravenous
- osteitis
- osteoarthritis
- subhepatic
- osteopathy
- arthropathy
- hepatitis
Building Medical Terms

- inflammation of joints
- pertaining to within a vein
- inflammation of the bone
- inflammation of the bone and joint
- pertaining to under the liver
- disease of the bone
- disease of the joint
- inflammation of the liver
1. Normal knee joint.

2. Knee joint showing (bone) / cv / (joint) / (inflammation).