

Building Medical Terms

Word Root

Prefix



Suffix

Combining forms

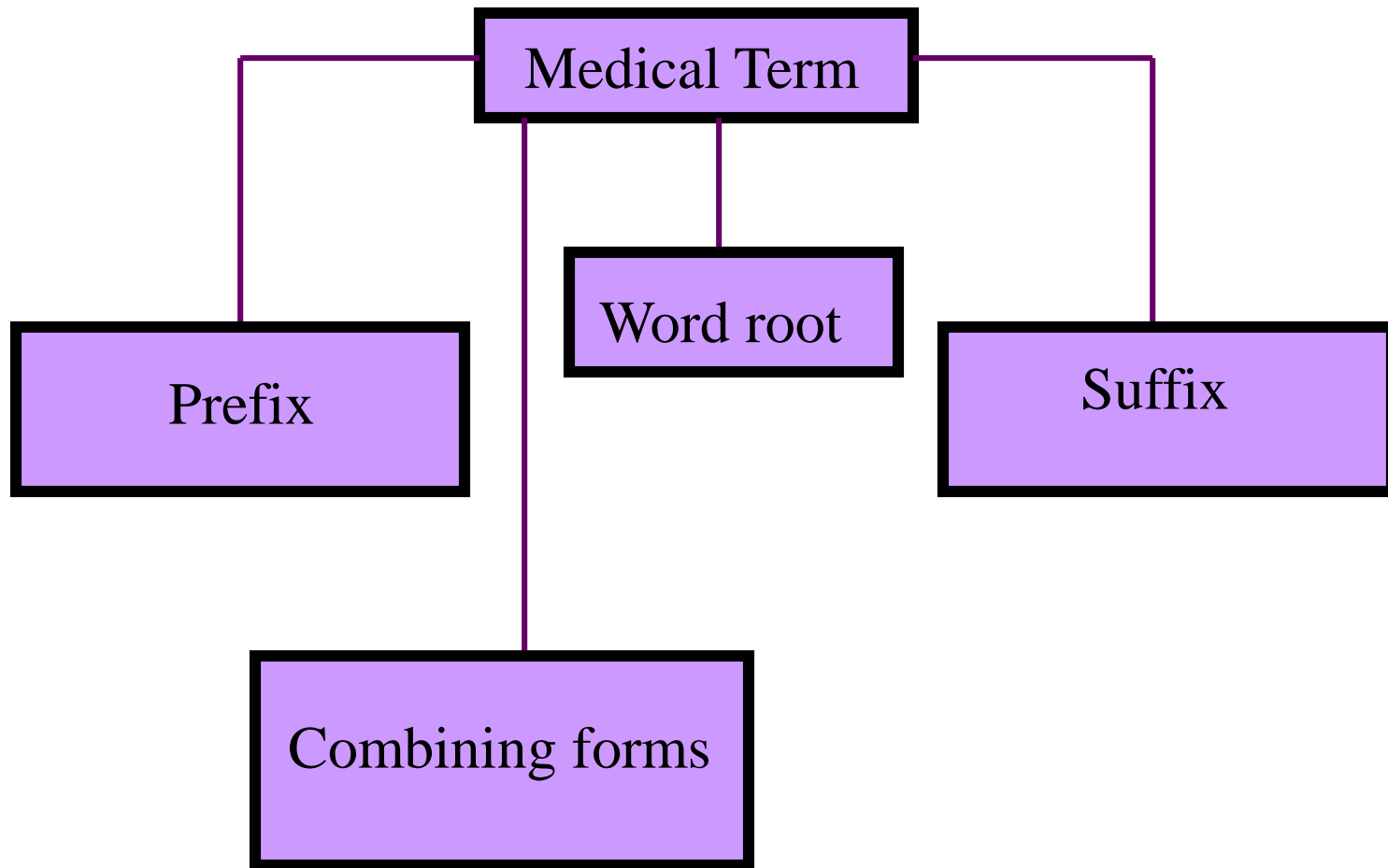
Objectives



After studying this chapter, you will be able to:

- **Define the four word parts used to build medical terms.**
- **Define common medical combining forms.**
- **Define common medical prefixes.**
- **Define common medical suffixes.**
- **Describe how word parts are put together to form words.**

Forming Medical Terms



Forming Medical Terms

Medical terms are formed from two or more word parts.

Word root

- The main part of a word which contains the basic meaning.

Prefix

- Word parts attached to the beginning of a word that modifies the meaning.

Suffix

- Word parts attached to the end of a word that modifies the meaning.

Combining forms

- The word root and a combining vowel that enable two parts to be connected.

Word Roots and Combining Forms

Combining Forms

Meaning

acanth (o)	→	spiny, thorny
actin (o)	→	light
aer (o)	→	air; gas
athero	→	plaque; fatty substance
bacill (i)	→	bacilli; bacteria
bar (o)	→	weight; pressure

Word Roots and Combining Forms

Combining Forms

blasto



carcin(o)



chondro



cry(o)



crypt(o)



cyan(o)



Meaning

immature cells

cancer

cartilage

cold

hidden

blue

Word Roots and Combining Forms

Combining Forms

Meaning

cyt(o)



cell

dextr(o)



right

dips(o)



thirst

dors(o)



back

erythr(o)



red

esthesio



**sensation,
perception**

Word Roots and Combining Forms

Combining Forms

Meaning

galact(o) →

milk

gluco →

glucose

gero →

old age

glyco →

sugars

gyn(o) →

women

home(o) →

same

kin(o) →

movement

Word Roots and Combining Forms

Combining Forms

Meaning

kinesi(o)



motion

lact(o)



milk

leuk(o)



white

lith(o)



stone

mio



smaller; less

narco



sleep; numbness

necro



death; dying

Word Roots and Combining Forms

Combining Forms

Meaning

noct(i)



night

oncho



tumor

path(o)



disease

phago



eating

phon(o)



sound; voice

pseud(o)



false

pyo



pus

Word Roots and Combining Forms

Combining Forms

Meaning

pyro



fever

salping(o)



tube

schiz(o)



split; division

scler(o)



hardening

scolio



crooked; bent

somato



body

spiro



breath; breathe

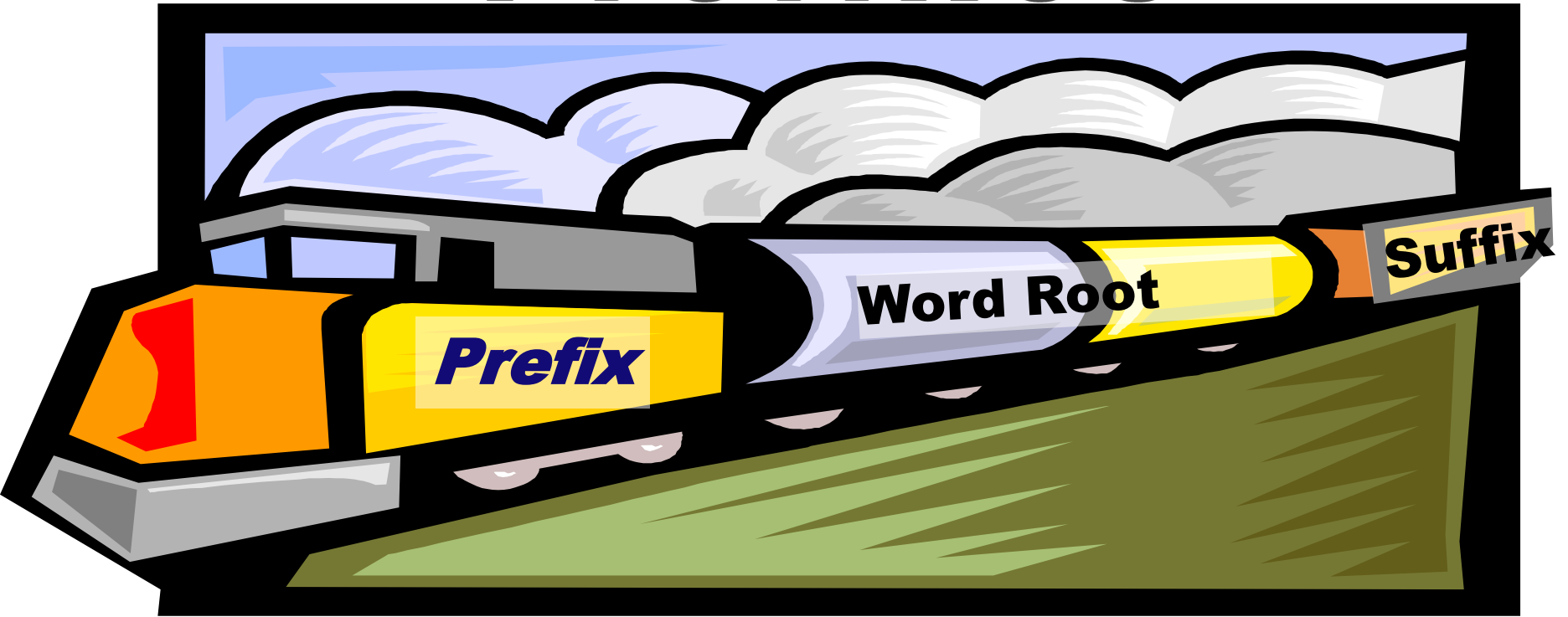
Word Roots and Combining Forms

Combining Forms

Meaning

tel(o)	→	distant; end; complete
tono	→	tension; pressure
tropho	→	food; nutrition
xanth(o)	→	yellow
xeno	→	stranger
Xer(o)	→	dry

Prefixes



- **Prefixes are attached to the beginning of words.**
- **Modifies the meaning of the word or word root.**
- **Indicates size, quantity, position of, and location.**

Prefixes

Prefix	Meaning
a	without
ab	away from
ambi	both, around
ana	up, toward
ante	before
anti	against
aut(0)	self

Prefixes

Prefix

Meaning

brachy ●—————● **short**

brady ●—————● **slow**

contra ●—————● **against**

dys ●—————● **abnormal; difficult**

hemi ●—————● **half**

hyper ●—————● **above normal**

hypo ●—————● **below normal**

Prefixes

Prefix







Meaning

inter		between
iso		equal; same
mal		bad; inadequate
meta		after
micr(o)		small
olig(o)		few; little; scanty
peri		around; about; near

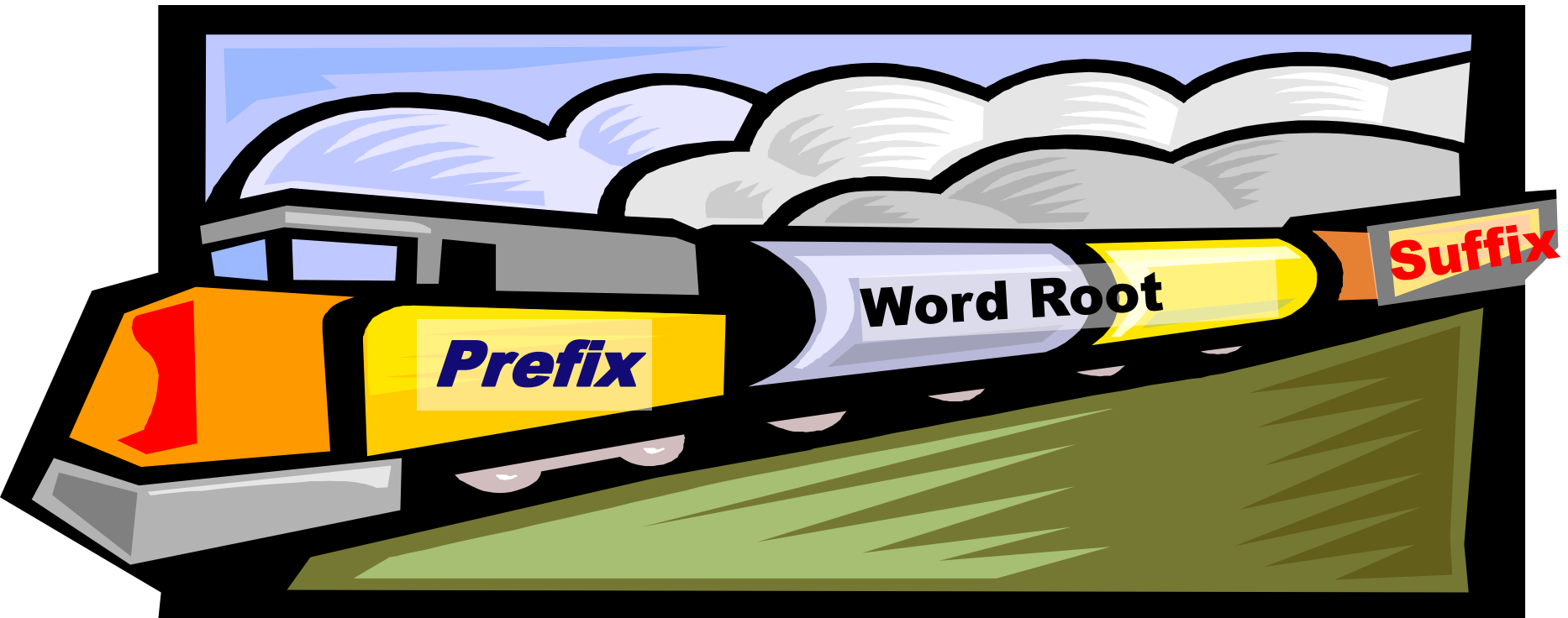
Prefixes

Prefix

Meaning

pro		before; forward
re		again; backward
retro		behind; backward
semi		half
supra		above; over
tachy		fast
un		not

Suffixes



- **Attaches to the end of the word and carries the underlying meaning of the word.**
- **Suffixes can also be combining forms.**

Suffixes

Suffix		Meaning
-ad	●—————●	toward
-algia	●—————●	pain
-asthenia	●—————●	weakness
-blast	●—————●	immature; forming
-cidal	●—————●	destroying; killing
-clast	●—————●	breaking
-crine	●—————●	secreting

Suffixes

Suffix

Meaning

-crit



separate

-cyte



cell

-cytosis



condition of cells

-derma



skin

-dynia



pain

-ectasis










expanding; dilating

-ectomy



removal of

Suffixes

Suffix		Meaning
-emesis		vomiting
-emia		blood
-esthesia		sensation
-globin		protein
-gram		a recording
-graph		recording instrument
-graphy		process of recording

Suffixes

Suffix

Meaning

-ic	↔	pertaining to
-ism	↔	condition; disease
-itis	↔	inflammation
-kinesia	↔	movement
-logist	↔	one who practices
-lysis	↔	destruction of
-malacia	↔	softening

Suffixes

Suffix

Meaning

-mania



obsession

-megaly



enlargement

-oid



like; resembling

-opia



vision

-ostomy



opening

-para



bearing

-pathy



disease

Suffixes

Suffix

Meaning

-penia	→	deficiency
-pepsia	→	digestion
-pexy	→	fixation
-phage	→	eating; devouring
-phobia	→	fear
-phonia	→	sound
-phrenia	→	of the mind

Suffixes

Suffix

Meaning

-phylaxis



protection

-plasty



surgical repair

-plegia



paralysis

-pnea



breath

-ptosis



falling down; drooping

-rrhagia



heavy discharge

-rrhaphy










surgical suturing

Suffixes

Suffix

Meaning

-rrhexis		rupture
-spasm		contraction
-stasis		stopping; constant
-stenosis		narrowing
-tomy		cutting operation
-trophy		nutrition
-tropia		turning

Apply Your Knowledge

Using various word parts, build terms for the following meanings.

Meaning

- **Absence of blood**
- **Bluish color of hands and feet**
- **Equal vision in both eyes.**
- **Fast heart.**
- **Breakdown of sugar.**

Term

anemia

cyanosis

isopia

tachycardia

glycolysis

Apply Your Knowledge

Using various word parts, build terms for the following meanings.

Meaning

- Lack of white blood cells.
- Softening of bone.
- Inflammation of a vein.
- Nerve pain.
- Science of skin and its diseases.

Term

leukopenia

osteomalacia

phlebitis

neuralgia

dermatology