

# Medical Terminology: Combining Forms, Suffixes, and Prefixes for Healthcare Students Practice Test (Sample)

## Study Guide



**Everything you need from our exam experts!**

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# Introduction

Preparing for a certification exam can feel overwhelming, but with the right tools, it becomes an opportunity to build confidence, sharpen your skills, and move one step closer to your goals. At Examzify, we believe that effective exam preparation isn't just about memorization, it's about understanding the material, identifying knowledge gaps, and building the test-taking strategies that lead to success.

This guide was designed to help you do exactly that.

Whether you're preparing for a licensing exam, professional certification, or entry-level qualification, this book offers structured practice to reinforce key concepts. You'll find a wide range of multiple-choice questions, each followed by clear explanations to help you understand not just the right answer, but why it's correct.

The content in this guide is based on real-world exam objectives and aligned with the types of questions and topics commonly found on official tests. It's ideal for learners who want to:

- Practice answering questions under realistic conditions,
- Improve accuracy and speed,
- Review explanations to strengthen weak areas, and
- Approach the exam with greater confidence.

We recommend using this book not as a stand-alone study tool, but alongside other resources like flashcards, textbooks, or hands-on training. For best results, we recommend working through each question, reflecting on the explanation provided, and revisiting the topics that challenge you most.

**Remember:** successful test preparation isn't about getting every question right the first time, it's about learning from your mistakes and improving over time. Stay focused, trust the process, and know that every page you turn brings you closer to success.

Let's begin.

# How to Use This Guide

**This guide is designed to help you study more effectively and approach your exam with confidence. Whether you're reviewing for the first time or doing a final refresh, here's how to get the most out of your Examzify study guide:**

## **1. Start with a Diagnostic Review**

**Skim through the questions to get a sense of what you know and what you need to focus on. Your goal is to identify knowledge gaps early.**

## **2. Study in Short, Focused Sessions**

**Break your study time into manageable blocks (e.g. 30 - 45 minutes). Review a handful of questions, reflect on the explanations.**

## **3. Learn from the Explanations**

**After answering a question, always read the explanation, even if you got it right. It reinforces key points, corrects misunderstandings, and teaches subtle distinctions between similar answers.**

## **4. Track Your Progress**

**Use bookmarks or notes (if reading digitally) to mark difficult questions. Revisit these regularly and track improvements over time.**

## **5. Simulate the Real Exam**

**Once you're comfortable, try taking a full set of questions without pausing. Set a timer and simulate test-day conditions to build confidence and time management skills.**

## **6. Repeat and Review**

**Don't just study once, repetition builds retention. Re-attempt questions after a few days and revisit explanations to reinforce learning. Pair this guide with other Examzify tools like flashcards, and digital practice tests to strengthen your preparation across formats.**

**There's no single right way to study, but consistent, thoughtful effort always wins. Use this guide flexibly, adapt the tips above to fit your pace and learning style. You've got this!**

## Questions

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- 1. Which prefix means Around?**
  - A. Syn-
  - B. Dia-
  - C. Sub-
  - D. Peri-
  
- 2. Involuntary contraction, twitching.**
  - A. -ology
  - B. -sarcoma
  - C. -plasia
  - D. -spasm
  
- 3. Which combining form means hidden or obscure?**
  - A. Audi/o
  - B. Coron/o
  - C. Crypt/o
  - D. Nephro
  
- 4. Which suffix means blood?**
  - A. emia
  - B. penia
  - C. pnea
  - D. lysis
  
- 5. Malignant tumor of connective tissue/non-epithelial.**
  - A. -osis
  - B. -sarcoma
  - C. -plasia
  - D. -static
  
- 6. Which suffix means formation or plastic repair?**
  - A. plasty
  - B. ectomy
  - C. itis
  - D. pathy

- 7. Which combining form means viscera?**
- A. Viscer/o**
  - B. Enter/o**
  - C. Arthr/o**
  - D. Nephro/o**
- 8. Which combining form is used in medical terms to mean tissue death or necrosis?**
- A. Path/o**
  - B. Blast/o**
  - C. Arc/o**
  - D. Necr/o**
- 9. Which prefix indicates relationship to life?**
- A. andr/o**
  - B. pulmon/o**
  - C. phot/o**
  - D. bi/o**
- 10. Which prefix means four and is the Latin-derived form used in 'quadrant'?**
- A. Dys-**
  - B. Neo-**
  - C. Ex-**
  - D. Quadri-**

## Answers

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1. D
2. D
3. C
4. A
5. B
6. A
7. A
8. D
9. D
10. D

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## **Explanations**

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### 1. Which prefix means Around?

- A. Syn-
- B. Dia-
- C. Sub-
- D. Peri-**

Peri- is the prefix meaning around. It signals that something surrounds or lies around another structure, as seen in terms like perimeter (the distance around), periosteum (the membrane around bone), and pericardium (the membrane around the heart), or perioperative (around the time of surgery). The other prefixes don't convey around: syn- means together, dia- means through or across, and sub- means under or beneath.

### 2. Involuntary contraction, twitching.

- A. -ology
- B. -sarcoma
- C. -plasia
- D. -spasm**

Recognizing a suffix that denotes involuntary contraction. In medical terms, a spasm is a sudden, involuntary contraction of a muscle or group of muscles, which matches the description "involuntary contraction, twitching." The suffix -spasm is used to describe these contractions, as in bronchospasm or laryngospasm. The other suffixes refer to different ideas: -ology means the study of something, -sarcoma is a malignant tumor of connective tissue, and -plasia means growth or formation of tissue. These do not convey the idea of an involuntary muscle contraction, so they aren't correct for this definition.

### 3. Which combining form means hidden or obscure?

- A. Audi/o
- B. Coron/o
- C. Crypt/o**
- D. Nephro

The idea being tested is that some combining forms convey a meaning of hidden or obscure. Crypt/o comes from Greek kryptos, meaning hidden. This form shows up in words like cryptic (having a hidden meaning) and cryptography (the practice of encoding messages so they're hidden). The other forms do not carry this sense: audi/o relates to hearing, coron/o to crown or the heart, and nephro to the kidney. So crypt/o is the one that means hidden or obscure.

#### 4. Which suffix means blood?

- A. emia**
- B. penia**
- C. pnea**
- D. lysis**

The suffix that denotes a blood condition is -emia. It means a condition of the blood or the presence of something in the blood. That's why terms like anemia (low red blood cells) or bacteremia (bacteria in the blood) use this ending. The other suffixes indicate different ideas: -penia means a deficiency or decrease in number, such as leukopenia; -pnea relates to breathing, as in dyspnea or apnea; -lysis means breakdown or destruction, as in hemolysis.

#### 5. Malignant tumor of connective tissue/non-epithelial.

- A. -osis**
- B. -sarcoma**
- C. -plasia**
- D. -static**

In pathology, tumors are named by the tissue they arise from and whether they are malignant or benign. A malignant tumor that comes from connective (mesenchymal) tissue—such as bone, cartilage, fat, fibrous tissue, or muscle—is called a sarcoma. The suffix -sarcoma signals this non-epithelial, connective-tissue origin and malignancy. Other endings don't fit because -osis denotes a condition or process, -plasia refers to abnormal growth (not a specific tumor type), and -static isn't used to name tumors. The term that correctly denotes a malignant connective-tissue tumor is -sarcoma.

#### 6. Which suffix means formation or plastic repair?

- A. plasty**
- B. ectomy**
- C. itis**
- D. pathy**

The suffix that means formation or plastic repair is -plasty. It indicates a surgical procedure that forms, reshapes, or reconstructs a part of the body. For example, rhinoplasty is a procedure to reshape the nose, and mammoplasty refers to shaping or reconstructing breast tissue. The other suffixes have different meanings: -ectomy denotes removal, -itis denotes inflammation, and -pathy denotes disease or disorder. Thus, -plasty is the best fit for formation or plastic repair.

## 7. Which combining form means viscera?

- A. Viscer/o**
- B. Enter/o
- C. Arthr/o
- D. Nephro/o

Viscera means the internal organs, especially those in the chest and abdomen. The combining form **viscer/o** is the one used to connect to suffixes that describe or modify these organs, so terms built with **viscer/o** convey something about the internal organs—for example, **visceral** (pertaining to the viscera) or **visceromegaly** (enlargement of internal organs). The other roots point to different parts: **enter/o** is the intestines, **arthr/o** is a joint, and **nephro/o** is the kidney. Because the question asks for the root that means viscera, **viscer/o** is the best fit.

## 8. Which combining form is used in medical terms to mean tissue death or necrosis?

- A. Path/o
- B. Blast/o
- C. Arc/o
- D. Necr/o**

**Necr/o** is the combining form that signifies tissue death. It comes from the Greek **nekros**, meaning dead body, and shows up in terms like **necrosis** (tissue death) and **necrotic** (pertaining to dead tissue). The other roots don't convey death of tissue: **path/o** relates to disease, **blast/o** to a germ or immature cell, and **arc/o** refers to an arc or bow and isn't used to describe necrosis.

## 9. Which prefix indicates relationship to life?

- A. andr/o
- B. pulmon/o
- C. phot/o
- D. bi/o**

Life-related concepts are conveyed by the combining form **bio-** (**bi/o**). This element signals living things or life itself, as seen in **biology** (study of life), **biopsy** (viewing living tissue), and **biomarker**. The other options tie to different ideas: **andr/o** refers to male/man, **pulmon/o** to the lungs, and **phot/o** to light. So **bio-/bi/o** is the one that indicates relationship to life.

**10. Which prefix means four and is the Latin-derived form used in 'quadrant'?**

**A. Dys-**

**B. Neo-**

**C. Ex-**

**D. Quadri-**

You're being asked to identify a prefix that means four and is the Latin-derived form used in quadrant. The correct prefix is quadri-. It carries the sense of four and is the Latin-derived form that appears in words like quadrant, quadrilateral, and quadriplegia, signaling four parts or sections. The other prefixes point to different ideas: dys- means bad or difficult, neo- means new, and ex- means out of or former. None of those convey the idea of four, so they don't fit.

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## Next Steps

**Congratulations on reaching the final section of this guide. You've taken a meaningful step toward passing your certification exam and advancing your career.**

**As you continue preparing, remember that consistent practice, review, and self-reflection are key to success. Make time to revisit difficult topics, simulate exam conditions, and track your progress along the way.**

**If you need help, have suggestions, or want to share feedback, we'd love to hear from you. Reach out to our team at [hello@examzify.com](mailto:hello@examzify.com).**

**Or visit your dedicated course page for more study tools and resources:**

**<https://medterms4healthcarestudents.examzify.com>**

**We wish you the very best on your exam journey. You've got this!**

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