Definitions & Lay Glossary of Medical Terms

According to federal guidelines, language in Informed Consent Forms should be suitable for the general public, meaning language at the 8th grade level. The definitions in the glossary can help researchers translate commonly used scientific words into lay language that may be more easily understood.

For help with medical terms, see the MedlinePlus® Medical Dictionary.

Lay Language

Glossary of Clinical Trials Terms

Lay Language

abdomen	belly, stomach
abdominal distention	bloating
absorb	take up fluids, take in
acid taste	sour taste
acidosis	condition when blood contains more acid than normal
acuity	clearness, keenness, esp. of vision and airways
acute	new, recent, sudden, urgent
acute cholecystitis	gall stones, which may cause upper abdominal pain and require hospitalization and surgery
adenopathy	swollen lymph nodes (glands)
adjuvant	helpful, assisting, aiding, supportive
agent	drug, medication
albumin	protein found in blood
allergic reaction	rash, hives, swelling, trouble breathing
alopecia	loss of hair
ambulate/ambulation/ ambulatory	walk, able to walk
analgesic	pain-relieving drug
anaphylaxis	serious, potentially life-threatening allergic reaction
anasarca	build up of fluid throughout the whole body, which occurs in severely ill people
anemia	low number of red blood cells, can causes tiredness and shortness of breath. May require a blood transfusion
anesthetic	a drug or agent used to decrease the feeling of pain, or eliminate the feeling of pain by putting you to sleep
angina	chest pain due to decreased oxygen getting to the heart.
anorexia	disorder in which person will not eat; lack of appetite
antecubital	related to the inner side of the forearm
antibody	protein made in the body in response to foreign substance
anticonvulsant	drug used to prevent seizures
antiemetic	medication to prevent nausea/vomiting
antilipemic	a drug that lowers fat levels in the blood
antimicrobial	drug that kills bacteria and other germs
antiretroviral	drug that works against the growth of certain viruses
antitussive	a drug used to relieve coughing
aplastic anemia	a disorder caused by decreased production of red blood cells
arrhythmia	irregular heart beat
arterial thrombosis	blood clot in an artery that blocks the artery. This could be serious and life threatening
arterial catheter	small tube placed in an artery
arthralgia	joint pain
ascites	build up of fluid in the abdomen, which causes bloating and discomfort. This could require that the fluid be removed by a procedure called paracentesis
aspiration	fluid entering the lungs, such as after vomiting
assay	lab test
asthenia	feeling weak and having no energy
asthma	lung disease associated with tightening of air passages, making breathing difficult

autoimmune enteritis	this is when your immune system attacks normal cells in your body, including the cells that line your digestive tract. This may result in bleeding and inflammation of the esophagus, bowel (intestines), and lower gi tract (colon), which can cause bleeding, diarrhea and perforations (holes). This could be serious or life threatening. Hospitalization and treatment with medications (steroids) may be necessary. This can become severe and may require surgical removal of parts of the intestines or colon. These surgical procedures might result in your having a stoma (hole) though which digested food passes
axilla	armpit
baseline	1. Information gathered at the beginning of a study from which variations found in the study are measured. 2. A known value or quantity with which an unknown is compared when measured or assessed. 3. The initial time point in a clinical trial, just before a participant starts to receive the experimental treatment which is being tested. At this reference point, measurable values such as cd4 count are recorded. Safety and efficacy of a drug are often determined by monitoring changes from the baseline values.
benefit	a valued or desired outcome; an advantage
benign	not malignant, without serious consequences
bilirubinemia	high levels of bilirubin in the blood
bioavailability	the extent to which a drug or other substance becomes available to the body
biologic	any therapeutic serum, toxin, anti-toxin, or analogous microbial product applicable to the prevention, treatment, or cure of diseases or injuries
biopsy	removal and examination of tissue
blind	a randomized trial is "blind" if the participant is not told which arm of the trial he is on
bolus	a large amount given all at once
bone mass	the amount of calcium and other minerals in a given amount of bone
bowel perforation	perforation of the digestive system
bradycardia	slow heartbeat
brain stem edema	accumulation of fluid around the brain stem, this can be life threatening
bronchospasm	breathing distress caused by narrowing of the airways
carcinogenic	cancer-causing
cardiac	related to the heart
cardiac arrest	sudden, unexpected stopping of the heart.
cardiac effusion	collection of fluid around the heart
cardiac toxicity	damage to the heart
cardiomyopathy	heart muscle becomes damaged and the heart doesn’t pump properly
cardiovascular	heart and blood vessels
cardioversion	return to normal heartbeat by electric shock
case study	a research strategy that focuses on one case (an individual, a group, an organization, etc.) within its social context during one time period
catheter	a tube for withdrawing or giving fluids
central nervous system (CNS)	brain and spinal cord
cerebral trauma	damage to the brain
cessation	stopping
chemotherapy	treatment of disease, usually cancer, by chemical agents
chronic	continuing for a long time, ongoing
clinical	pertaining to medical care

cluster sample	a probability sample that is determined by randomly selecting clusters of people from a population and subsequently selecting every person in each cluster for inclusion in the sample
cognitively impaired	having either a psychiatric disorder (e.g., psychosis, neurosis, personality or behavior disorders, or dementia) or a developmental disorder (e.g., mental retardation) that affects cognitive or emotional functions to the extent that capacity for judgment and reasoning is significantly diminished
cohort	a group of subjects initially identified as having one or more characteristics in common who are followed over time
coma	unconscious state
compassionate use	a method of providing experimental therapeutics prior to final FDA approval for use in humans
compensation	payment or medical care provided to subjects injured in research; does not refer to payment (remuneration) for participation in research
competence	a legal term to indicate a person's capacity to act on one's own behalf; a person's ability to understand information presented, to realize the consequences of acting (or not acting) on that information, and to make a choice.
complete response	total disappearance of disease
confounding factor	any factor that might serve as an alternative explanation for a study's result; confounding factors include non-randomized samples, selection bias, and any arbitrary differences between people that are being compared.
congenital	present before birth
conjunctivitis	redness and irritation of the thin membrane that covers the eye
consolidation phase	treatment phase intended to make a remission permanent (follows induction phase)
constipation	difficulty passing stools
contract	an agreement
contraindicated	disadvantageous, perhaps dangerous; a treatment that should not be used in certain individuals or conditions due to risks. For instance, a drug may be contraindicated for pregnant women and people with high blood pressure
control group	in many clinical trials, one group of patients will be given an experimental drug or treatment, while the control group is given either a standard treatment for the illness or a placebo
controlled trial	research study in which the experimental treatment or procedure is compared to a standard (control) treatment or procedure
convenience sample	a non-probability sample that is determined by selecting participants that are readily accessible (convenient) to the researcher, (examples in studies of Stanford students might include going to an organizational meeting or hanging out outside of rastall and asking students exiting the lunchroom to take a survey)
cooperative group	association of multiple institutions to perform clinical trials
coronary	related to the blood vessels that supply the heart, or to the heart itself
correlational relationship	a relationship where two variables are associated (this can be measured in terms of strength and direction using statistical tests) but not causally related
cross-over design	a type of clinical trial in which each subject experiences, at different times, both the experimental and control therapy
culture	test for infection, or for organisms that could cause infection
cumulative	added together from the beginning

cutaneous	relating to the skin
debilitation	weakened condition
debrief	giving participants previously undisclosed information about the research project following completion of their participation in research. In studies involving deception, if the participants are not informed of the deception in the informed consent, the IRB-SBS requires a signed debrief form for each participant following completion of his/her participation in the study
deception	the intentional withholding of information from participants, or deception about the study's purpose and exact nature, that is deemed necessary by the researcher in order to meet the study's goals
dehydrate	lose water or body fluids
dermatitis	skin irritation, rash
dermatologic	pertaining to the skin
deteriorate	condition to grow worse
diagnostic trials	refers to trials that are are conducted to find better tests or procedures for diagnosing a particular disease or condition
diarrhea	frequent, loose watery stools, which can cause dehydration and may require hospitalization and treatment with intravenous fluids
diastolic	lower number in a blood pressure reading
distal	toward the end, away from the center of the body
distal parathesias	numbness and tingling in the hands and feet.
diuretic	water pill or drug that causes increase in urination
doppler	device using sound waves to diagnose or test
dose-ranging study	a clinical trial in which two or more doses of an agent (such as a drug) are tested against each other to determine which dose works best and is least harmful
double-blind design	an experiment in which neither the participants nor the research staff who interact with them knows the memberships of the experimental or control groups. Also known as double-masked design (see single-blind design and open design)
duration	length of time involved
dysplasia	abnormal cells
echocardiogram	using soundwaves for examination of the heart
edema	build up of fluid in the body causing swelling.
efficacy	effectiveness
electrocardiogram	electrical tracing of the heartbeat (ECG or EKG)
electrolyte changes	changes in electrolytes (body salts), which usually do not cause any symptoms but that can sometimes cause fatigue, muscle weakness, cramping, rigidity, irregular heart beat, or seizures
elevated lipase, amylase	may indicate inflammation of the pancreas, which could result in abdominal pain and discomfort and could require hospitalization and intravenous treatment
elevated uric acid levels	may worsen kidney function; cause joint pain (gout) and kidney stones
eligibility criteria	summary criteria for participant selection; includes inclusion and exclusion criteria
emancipated minor	a legal status given to those individuals who have not yet attained the age of legal competency as defined by state law, but who are entitled to adult treatment because of assuming adult responsibilities such as being self-supporting and not living at home, marriage, or procreation
emesis	vomiting, throwing up
empirical	based on experimental data, not on a theory.
encephalopathy	disease of the brain that severely alters thinking.

endoscopic examination	examination of an internal part of the body with a lighted tube
endpoint	overall outcome that the protocol is designed to evaluate
enteral	by way of the intestines
enzyme	a chemical in the blood that causes chemical changes
epidemiology	The branch of medical science that deals with the study of incidence and distribution and control of a disease in a population.
epidural	outside the spinal cord
epistaxis	bloody nose
equitable	fair or just; used in the context of selection of participants to indicate that the benefits and burdens of research are fairly distributed
erythema	redness of the skin
ethnographic research	ethnography is the study of people and their cultures
evaluated, assessed	examined for a medical condition
excrete	discharge, pass
expanded access	refers to any of the FDA procedures, such as compassionate use, parallel track, and treatment IND that distribute experimental drugs to participants who are failing on currently available treatments for their condition and also are unable to participate in ongoing clinical trials
experimental drug	a drug that is not FDA licensed for use in humans, or as a treatment for a particular condition
experimental group	the group in an experimental design study that receives treatment in the form, or in various forms, of the independent variable
external	outside the body
extravasate	to leak outside of a planned area, such as out of a blood vessel
fatigue	feeling tired
fetus	unborn baby
fever	abnormally high body temperature
fibrillation	irregular beat of the heart or other muscle
fibrosis	scars
fibrous	having many fibers, such as scar tissue
field research	behavioral, social, or anthropological research involving the study of people or groups in their own environment and without manipulation for research purposes
fluoroscope	x-ray machine
fungus	form of infection
gait	walk
gastrointestinal	stomach and intestines
general anesthesia	pain prevention by giving drugs to cause loss of consciousness, as during surgery
generalizability	the ability to apply the results of a specific study to groups or situations beyond those actually studied
genetic screening	tests to identify persons who have an inherited predisposition to a certain phenotype or who are at risk of producing offspring with inherited diseases or disorders
genotype	the genetic constitution of an individual
gestational	pertaining to pregnancy
guardian	an individual who is authorized under applicable state or local law to give permission on behalf of a child to general medical care
headache	pain in the head
heart palpitations	heart beats that are fast and hard
hematocrit	amount of red blood cells in the blood

hematoma	blood clot
hematuria	blood in urine
hemodynamic measuring	measuring of blood flow
hemolysis	breakdown in red blood cells
hemolytic uremic syndrome	red blood cells begin to dissolve, which leave wastes in the blood and the kidneys are unable to get rid of excess fluid and wastes
hemoptysis	vomiting blood
hemorrhage	loss of blood (heavy bleeding)
hemorrhagic cystitis	inflammation of the bladder with severe bleeding
heparin lock	needle placed in the arm with blood thinner to keep the blood from clotting
hepatoma	cancer or tumor of the liver
heritable disease	disease that can be transmitted to one's offspring, resulting in damage to future children
high thyroid function	may cause fatigue, weight loss, rapid heartbeat, sweating, trouble with heat, nervousness
histopathologic	pertaining to the disease status of body tissues or cells
holter monitor	a portable machine for recording heart beats
hormone	a chemical in the body
human subjects	Individuals whose physiologic or behavioral characteristics and responses are the object of study in a research project. Under the federal regulations, human subjects are defined as: living individual(s) about whom an investigator conducting research obtains: (1) data through intervention or interaction with the individual; or (2) identifiable private information.
hypercalcemia	high levels of calcium in the blood
hyperkalemia	high levels of potassium in the blood, which can cause the heart to stop beating
hyperkeratosis	thickening of the skin, nails.
hypernatremia	high blood sodium level
hyperpigmentation	darkening of the skin
hyperpyrexia	high body temperature, a fever.
hypertension	high blood pressure
hyperuricemia	excess amount of uric acid in the blood, gout, which can cause pain in the joints
hypokalemia	decreased levels of potassium in the blood, which can cause irregular heart beat
hypomagnesemia	low magnesium, which may result in muscle cramps, weakness, tremors or irregular heartbeat
hyponatremia	decreased levels of sodium in the blood, which can cause confusion, seizures, fatigue and low levels of consciousness
hypophosphatemia	low phosphate, which may result in muscle weakness, bone pain, confusion and muscle breakdown
hypopigmentation / vitiligo	patches of the skin turn lighter than the surrounding skin
hypotensive	low blood pressure
hypothesis	a supposition or assumption advanced as a basis for reasoning or argument, or as a guide to experimental investigation
hypothesis	a testable statement of how two or more variables are expected to be related to one another
hypoxemia	a decrease of oxygen in the blood
hypoxia	a decrease of oxygen reaching body tissues

hysterectomy	surgical removal of the uterus, ovaries (female sex glands), or both uterus and ovaries
iatrogenic	caused by a physician or by treatment
idiopathic	of unknown cause
immunity	defense against, protection from
immunization	administration of a substance to prevent disease
immunoglobin	a protein that makes antibodies
immunological effects	effect on the immune system
immunosuppressive	drug which works against the body's immune (protective) response, often used in transplantation and diseases caused by immune system malfunction
immunotherapy	giving of drugs to help the body's immune (protective) system; usually used to destroy cancer cells
incapacity	refers to a person's mental status and means inability to understand information presented, to appreciate the consequences of acting (or not acting) on that information, and to make a choice
inclusion/exclusion criteria	the medical or social standards determining whether a person may or may not be allowed to enter a clinical trial
incompetence	used as a legal term to indicate the inability to manage one’s own affairs
induction	start
induration	hardening
indwelling	remaining in a given location, such as a catheter
infarct	death of tissue due to lack of blood supply
infectious disease	disease that is transmitted from one person to the next
inflammation	swollen, red, and painful
informed consent	the process of learning the key facts about a clinical trial before deciding whether or not to participate
infusion	slow injection of a substance into the body, usually into the blood by means of a catheter
ingestion	eating; taking by mouth
insomnia	inability to sleep
institutionalized	confined, either voluntarily or involuntarily (e.g., a hospital, prison, or nursing home)
interferon	drug which acts against viruses; antiviral agent
intermittent	occurring (regularly or irregularly) between two time points; repeatedly stopping, then starting again
interstitial pneumonitis, pneumonitis	inflammation of the lungs, which can cause shortness of breath and difficulty breathing
intervention	includes both physical procedures by which data are gathered and manipulations of the participant or the participant's environment that are performed for research purposes
intracatheter	small tube in a vein
intramuscular	into the muscle; within the muscle
intraperitoneal	into the abdominal cavity
intrathecal	into the spinal fluid
intravenous (IV)	through the vein
intravesical	in the bladder
intubate	the placement of a tube into the airway
invasive procedure	puncturing, opening, or cutting the skin
investigational method	a treatment method which has not been proven to be beneficial or has not been accepted as standard care

investigator	the individual(s) designated to have the appropriate level of authority and responsibility to direct the research project and/or activity
irradiation	x-ray
ischemia	decreased oxygen in a tissue (usually because of decreased blood flow)
jaundice	yellowing of the skin
laparotomy	Surgical procedure in which an incision is made in the abdominal wall to enable a doctor to look at the organs inside.
Legally Authorized Representative (LAR)	a person authorized either by statute or by court appointment to make decisions on behalf of another person
lesion	wound or injury; a diseased patch of skin
lethargy	sleepiness, tiredness
leukopenia	low white blood cell count
lipid	fat
local anesthesia	creation of insensitivity to pain in a small, local area of the body, usually by injection of numbing drugs
localized	restricted to one area, limited to one area
longitudinal study	a study in which data are collected from the same sample at least two different times
low blood sugar / hypoglycemia	abnormal decrease in sugar in the blood, which can cause weakness, fatigue, and if severe, can cause loss of consciousness
low thyroid function	may cause fatigue, weight gain, fluid retention, feeling cold, decreased cognitive function
low white cell count	increased risk of infection
lumen	the cavity of an organ or tube (e.g., blood vessel)
lymphangiography	an x-ray of the lymph nodes or tissues after injecting dye into lymph vessels (e.g., in feet)
lymphocyte	a type of white blood cell important in immunity (protection) against infection
lymphoma	a cancer of the lymph nodes (or tissues)
malaise	a vague feeling of bodily discomfort, feeling badly
malfunction	condition in which something is not functioning properly
malignancy	cancer or other progressively enlarging and spreading tumor, usually fatal if not successfully treated
mature minor	someone who has not reached adulthood (as defined by state law) but who may be treated as an adult for certain purposes (e.g. consenting to medical care)
medullablastoma	a type of brain tumor
megaloblastosis	change in red blood cells
metabolic acidosis	the body becomes more acid
metabolism	chemical changes which provide energy
metabolize	process of breaking down substances in the cells to obtain energy
metastasis	spread of cancer cells from one part of the body to another
metronidazole	drug used to treat infections caused by parasites (invading organisms that take up living in the body) or other causes of anaerobic infection (not requiring oxygen to survive) mi myocardial infarction, heart attack
minimal	slight
minimal risk	a risk is minimal where the probability and magnitude of harm or discomfort anticipated in the proposed research are not greater, in and of themselves, than those ordinarily encountered in daily life or during the performance of routine physical or psychological examinations or tests
moderate risk	a risk is moderate when it includes non-public behavior or data and/or allows for connection of the response to the individual’s identity

monitor	check on; keep track of; watch carefully
monitoring	the collection and analysis of data as the project progresses to assure the appropriateness of the research, its design and participant protections
morbidity	undesired result or complication
mortality	death
motility	the ability to move
mucosa, mucous membrane	moist lining of digestive, respiratory, reproductive, and urinary tracts
mucositis/stomatitis	sores in the mouth and esophagus, which may be painful and cause difficulty swallowing
myalgia	muscle aches
myocardial	pertaining to the heart muscle
myocardial infarction	heart attack
nasogastric tube	tube placed in the nose, reaching to the stomach nci the national cancer institute
nausea	feeling sick to the stomach
necrosis	death of tissue
neoplasia/neoplasm	tumor, may be benign or malignant
neuroblastoma	a cancer of nerve tissue
neurologic deficits	a neurologic deficit is a decrease in the function of the brain, spinal cord, muscles, and/or nerves
neurological	pertaining to the nervous system
neuropathy	damage to the nerves which can cause numbness, pain, and weakness
neutropenia	condition in which the number of white bloods cells called neutrophils is abnormally low
noninvasive	not breaking, cutting, or entering the skin
nosocomial	acquired in the hospital
null hypothesis	the proposition, to be tested statistically, that the experimental intervention has “no effect,” meaning that the treatment and control groups will not differ as a result of the intervention
occlusion	closing; blockage; obstruction
off-label use	a drug prescribed for conditions other than those approved by the fda.
oncology	the study of tumors or cancer
open design	an experimental design in which both the investigator(s) and the participants know the treatment group(s) to which participants are assigned
open-ended questions	survey questions that allow respondents to answer in their own words
open-label trial	a clinical trial in which doctors and participants know which drug or vaccine is being administered
ophthalmic	pertaining to the eye
opportunistic infections	an infection caused by an organism that usually does not cause illness, but causes disease when a person’s immune response (resistance) to infection is impaired
oral administration	by mouth
orphan drugs	an FDA category that refers to medications used to treat diseases and conditions that occur rarely
orthopedic	pertaining to the bones
ostealgia	bone pain
osteopetrosis	rare bone disorder characterized by dense bone
osteoporosis	softening of the bones
ovaries	female sex glands
palpitation	rapid heart beat parameter measure

pancreatitis / inflammation of the pancreas	inflammation of the pancreas causing pain in the upper abdomen
pancytopenia	abnormal decrease in the levels of all type of blood cells
parenteral	given by injection
participant	individuals whose physiological or behavioral characteristics and responses are the object of study in a research project
patency	condition of being open
paternalism	making decisions for others against or apart from their wishes with the intent of doing them good
pathogenesis	development of a disease or unhealthy condition
peer review	review of a clinical trial by experts chosen by the study sponsor
percutaneous	through the skin
peripheral	not central
peripheral blood	vein blood
pharmacokinetics	the study of the way the body absorbs, distributes, and gets rid of a drug
phenotype	the physical manifestation of a gene function
phlebitis	irritation or inflammation of the vein
placebo	an inactive substance; a pill/liquid that contains no medicine
placebo effect	a physical or emotional change, occurring after a substance is taken or administered, that is not the result of any special property of the substance
placenta	afterbirth
plasma	fluid found in the blood
platelet	part of blood that causes clots
pleural effusion	collection of fluid around the lungs in the chest cavity, which can cause shortness of breath and may require treatment
population	the entire group (or set or type) of people from which a researcher samples, and to which she or he would ideally like to generalize
potential	possible
potentiate	increase or multiply the effect of a drug or toxin (poison) by giving another drug or toxin at the same time (sometimes an unintentional result)
potentiator	an agent that helps another agent work better
preclinical	refers to the testing of experimental drugs in the test tube or in animals - the testing that occurs before trials in humans may be carried out
prenatal	before birth
prevention trials	refers to trials to find better ways to prevent disease in people who have never had the disease or to prevent a disease from returning
privacy	a person's capacity to control the extent, timing, and circumstances of shared oneself (physically, behaviorally, or intellectually) with others
private information	includes information about behavior that occurs in a context in which an individual can reasonably expect that no observation or recording is taking place, and information which has been provided for specific purposes by an individual and which the individual can reasonably expect will not be made public
probability sample	a subset of the population chosen in such a way that every member of the population has a known (nonzero) chance of being selected into the sample
prognosis	outlook, probable outcomes
prone	lying on the stomach
prophylaxis	use of drugs to prevent disease

prospective studies	studies designed to observe outcomes or events that occur after the group of participants has been identified. prospective studies do not have to involve manipulation or intervention but may be purely observational or involve only the collection of data instead.
prosthesis	artificial part, most often limbs, such as arms or legs
protected health information	name, address, elements of dates related to an individual (e.g., birthdate), email address, numbers; telephone, fax, social security, medical record, health beneficiary/health insurance, certificate or license numbers, vehicle, account numbers, characteristics, or codes (e.g., global positioning system (gps) readings), web urls, internet protocol (io) addresses, biometric identifiers (e.g. voice, fingerprints), full face photographs or comparable images
proteinuria	excess protein in the urine
protocol	a study plan on which all clinical trials are based
proximal	closer to the center of the body, away from the end
pruritis	itchy skin
psychosis	nervous breakdown
pulmonary	pertaining to the lungs
pulmonary embolism	a blood clot that causes a sudden blockage in a lung artery, usually due to a blood clot that traveled to the lung from the leg
pulmonary fibrosis	tissue in the lungs becomes stiff making breathing difficult, resulting in shortness of breath, and if severe, can cause heart failure
pulmonary hypertension	abnormally high blood pressure in the blood vessels in the lungs, which makes it harder to pump blood into the lungs
quasi-experiment	an experimental design that is missing one or more aspects of the (classic) controlled experiment.
radiation therapy	x-ray or cobalt treatment
random	by chance (like the flip of a coin)
randomization	a method based on chance by which study participants are assigned to a treatment group
Raynaud's Syndrome	an autoimmune disorder causing blood vessels to spasm when exposed to cold
recombinant	formation of new combinations of genes
reconstitution	putting back together the original parts or elements
recruiting	the period during which a trial is attempting to identify and enroll participants
recruitment status	indicates the current stage of a trial
recur	happen again
refractory	not responding to treatment
regeneration	re-growth of a structure or of lost tissue
regimen	pattern of giving treatment
relapse	the return of a disease
reliability	the degree to which a measure yields consistent results
remission	disappearance of evidence of cancer or other disease
remuneration	payment for participation in research; this is different from compensation, which typically refers to payment for research-related injuries
renal	pertaining to the kidneys
replicable	possible to duplicate
representative sample	a sample in which the participants closely match the characteristics of the population, and thus, all segments of the population are represented in the sample

research	a systematic investigation (i.e., the gathering and analysis of information) designed to develop or contribute to generalizable knowledge
resect	remove or cut out surgically
respiratory failure	difficulty breathing with low levels of oxygen in the blood, which could be serious and life threatening and require you to have a tube inserted into your windpipe that is hooked up to a machine to help you breathe
respondents	research participants, who fill out a survey, are interviewed, participate in an experiment, are observed in a naturalistic setting, or who are otherwise studied
rhabdomyolysis	rhabdomyolysis is a breakdown of muscle fibers.
rigors	chills and shivering
saline	salt water solution
sample	a subset of a given population used for research purposes
sarcoma	a type of cancer
screening	examination, test
secretion	release
sedative	a drug to calm or make less anxious
seizures	convulsions
seminoma	a type of testicular cancer (found in the male sex glands)
sequentially	in a row, in order
side effects	any undesired actions or effects of a drug or treatment
simultaneous	at the same time
single-blind design	typically, a study design in which the investigator, but not the participant, knows the identity of the treatment assignment. occasionally the participant, but not the investigator, knows the assignment. also known as single-masked design
snowball sample	a non-probability sample that is created by using members of the group of interest to identify other members of the group (for example, asking a participant at the end of an interview for suggestions about who else to interview)
social experimentation	systematic manipulation of, or experimentation in, social or economic systems; used in planning public policy
somnolence	sleepiness
specimen	a sample, as of human tissue, blood or urine, used for diagnostic or pathological analyses
spirometer	an instrument to measure the amount of air taken into and exhaled from the lungs
staging	an evaluation of the extent of the disease
standard of care	a treatment plan that the majority of the medical community would accept as appropriate
standard treatment	a treatment currently in wide use and approved by the FDA, considered to be effective in the treatment of a specific disease or condition
statistical significance	the probability that an event or difference occurred by chance alone. In clinical trials, the level of statistical significance depends on the number of participants studied and the observations made, as well as the magnitude of differences observed
stenosis	narrowing of a duct, tube, or one of the blood vessels in the heart
Stevens-Johnson syndrome	skin condition that causes painful blisters and sores of the skin and mucous membranes, especially in the mouth
stimuli	something which causes a change
stomatitis	mouth sores, inflammation of the mouth
stratify	arrange in groups for analysis of results (e.g., stratify by age, sex, etc.)

structured interview	a data collection method in which an interviewer reads a standardized interview schedule to the respondent and records the answers
study endpoint	a primary or secondary outcome used to judge the effectiveness of a treatment
stupor	stunned state in which it is difficult to get a response or the attention of the subject
subclavian	under the collarbone
subcutaneous	under the skin
supine	lying on the back
supine position	lying on the back
supplement	add
supportive care	general medical care aimed at symptoms, not intended to improve or cure underlying disease
survey	a study in which the same data are collected from all members of the sample using a highly structured questionnaire and analyzed using statistical tests
syndrome	a condition characterized by a set of symptoms
systolic	top number in blood pressure; pressure during active contraction of the heart
T-lymphocytes	type of white blood cells
tachycardia	fast heart rate
teratogenic	capable of causing malformations in a fetus (developing baby still inside the mother's body)
testes/testicles	male sex glands
theory	a general explanation about a specific behavior or set of events that is based on known principles and serves to organize related events in a meaningful way
therapy	treatment intended and expected to alleviate a disease or disorder
thrombocytopenia	Low number of platelets, which may cause bleeding and bruising. May require a blood transfusion. Bleeding may be serious or life threatening.
thrombosis	clotting
thrombus	blood clot
tinnitus	ringing in the ears
titration	a method for deciding on the strength of a drug or solution; gradually increasing the dose
topical	on the surface
topical anesthetic	applied to a certain area of the skin and reducing pain only in the area to which applied
toxicity	side effects or undesirable effects of a drug or treatment
transdermal	through the skin
transiently	temporarily
trauma	injury; wound
treatment trials	refers to trials which test new treatments, new combinations of drugs, or new approaches to surgery or radiation therapy
Unanticipated Problem	an unanticipated problem involving risk to human participants or others, is one that (1) was unforeseen at the time of its occurrence, and (2) indicates that participants or others are at an increased risk of harm
uptake	absorbing and taking in of a substance by living tissue
urticaria	hives
validity	the degree to which a measure assesses what we think it is assessing
valvuloplasty	plastic repair of a valve, especially a heart valve

variable	any characteristic or trait that can vary from one person to another (race, sex, academic major) or for one person over time (age, political beliefs)
varices	enlarged veins
vasospasm	narrowing of the blood vessels
vector	a carrier that can transmit disease-causing microorganisms (germs and viruses)
venipuncture	needle stick, blood draw, entering the skin with a needle
vertical transmission	spread of disease
visual disturbances	inability to see properly.
voluntary	free of coercion, duress, or undue inducement. Used in the research context to refer to a subject's decision to participate (or to continue to participate) in a research activity
ward	persons who are wards of the state or any other agency, institution, or entity

ADVERSE EVENT	An unfavorable change in the health of a participant, including abnormal laboratory findings, that happens during a clinical study or within a certain time period after the study is over. This may or may not be caused by the intervention being studied. (See also **Adverse Events basic results data element on ClinicalTrials.gov.)**
ALLOCATION	A clinical trial design strategy used to assign participants to an arm of a study.
ARM	A group or subgroup of participants in a clinical trial who receives specific interventions, or no intervention, according to the study protocol. This is decided before the trial begins.
CONTROLLED TRIAL	A type of clinical trial in which observations made during the trial are compared to a standard (called the control). The control may be observations from a group of participants in the same trial or observations from outside the trial (for example, from an earlier trial, called a "historical control").
DOUBLE BLIND MASKING	A type of masking in which two or more parties involved with the clinical trial do not know which participants have been assigned which interventions. Typically, this includes the investigator and participant.
EXPANDED ACCESS	A process regulated by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) that allows manufacturers to provide investigational new drugs to patients with serious diseases or conditions who cannot participate in a clinical trial.
EXPERIMENTAL ARM	A group of participants that receives the intervention that is the focus of the study.
MASKING (or Blinding)	A clinical trial design strategy in which one or more parties involved with the trial, such as the investigator or participant, do not know which participants have been assigned which interventions. Types of masking include none **Open label, Single blind masking, and Double blind masking.**
OPEN LABEL	Describes a clinical trial in which masking is not used. That means that all parties involved with the trial know which participants have been assigned which interventions.
RANDOMIZED ALLOCATION	A strategy in which participants are assigned to arms of a clinical trial by chance.
SHAM COMPARATOR ARM	A group of participants that receives a procedure or device that is made to be indistinguishable from the actual procedure or device being studied but does not contain active processes or components.
SINGLE BLIND MASKING	A type of masking in which one party involved with the clinical trial, either the investigator or participant, does not know which participants have been assigned which interventions.