

- linoleic acid (lin-ō-lē'ik as'id) (†)** An essential fatty acid found in corn and sunflower oils. (31)
- lipoproteins (lip-ō-prō'tēnz)** Large molecules that are fat-soluble on the inside and water-soluble on the outside and carry lipids such as cholesterol and triglycerides through the bloodstream. (49)
- living will (liv'ing wil)** A legal document addressed to a patient's family and health-care providers stating what type of treatment the patient wishes or does not wish to receive if he becomes terminally ill, unconscious, or permanently comatose; sometimes called an advance directive. (3)
- lobe (lōb)** The frontal, parietal, temporal, or occipital regions of the cerebral hemisphere. (27)
- locum tenens (lō'kum tēn'ens) (†)** A substitute physician hired to see patients while the regular physician is away from the office. (12)
- loop of Henle (lōop hen'lē)** The portion of the renal tubule that curves back toward the renal corpuscle and twists again to become the distal convoluted tubule. (34)
- lumbar enlargement (lūm'bær ěn-lār'j mǎnt)** The thickening of the spinal cord in the low back region. (27)
- lunula (lū'nū-lā)** The white half-moon-shaped area at the base of a nail. (24)
- lupus erythematosus (lōō'pəs er-ə-thē-tō'səs)** An autoimmune disorder in which a person produces antibodies that target the person's own cells and tissues. (29)
- luteinizing hormone (LH) (lū'tē-in-iz-ing hōr'mōn') (†)** Hormone that in females stimulates ovulation and the production of estrogen; in males, it stimulates the production of testosterone. (32)
- lymph (līm'f)** A pale fluid found between cells that is collected by the lymphatic system and returned to the bloodstream. (28)
- lymphedema (lim'f e-dē'mā)** The blockage of lymphatic vessels that results in the swelling of tissue from the accumulation of lymphatic fluid. (29)
- lymphocyte (lim'fō-sīt) (†)** An agranular leukocyte formed in lymphatic tissue. Lymphocytes are generally small. See **T lymphocyte** and **B lymphocyte**. (28)
- lysozyme (lī'sō-zim) (†)** An enzyme in tears that destroys pathogens on the surface of the eye. (29)
- macrophage (māk'rə-fāj)** A type of phagocytic cell found in the liver, spleen, lungs, bone marrow, and connective tissue. Macrophages play several roles in humoral and cell-mediated immunity, including presenting the antigens to the lymphocytes involved in these defenses; also known as monocytes while in the bloodstream. (19)
- macula densa (mak'yū-lā den'sa) (†)** An area of the distal convoluted tubule that touches afferent and efferent arterioles. (34)
- macular degeneration (mak'yū-lār dē-žen-er-ā'shūn) (†)** A progressive disease that usually affects people over the age of 50. It occurs when the retina no longer receives an adequate blood supply. (33)
- magnetic resonance imaging (mā-gnēt'ik rēz'ə-nəns i-mā'j'ing)** A viewing technique that uses a powerful magnetic field to produce an image of internal body structures. (41)
- maintenance contract (mān'tə-nəns kōn'trākt')** A contract that specifies when a piece of equipment will be cleaned, checked for worn parts, and repaired. (5)
- major histocompatibility complex (MHC) (mā'jər his'tō-kom-pat-i-bil'i-tē kəm-plēks)** A large protein complex that plays a role in T cell activation. (29)
- malignant (mā-līg'nənt)** A type of tumor or neoplasm that is invasive and destructive and that tends to metastasize; it is commonly known as cancerous. (29)
- malleus (māl'ē-əs)** A small bone in the middle ear that is attached to the eardrum; also called the hammer. (39)
- malpractice claim (māl-prāk'tis klām)** A lawsuit brought by a patient against a physician for errors in diagnosis or treatment. (3)
- maltase (mawl-tās)** An enzyme that digests sugars. (31)
- mammary glands (mam'ā-rē glāndz)** Accessory organs of the female reproductive system that secrete milk after pregnancy. (35)
- mammography (mā-mōg'rā-fē)** X-ray examination of the breasts. (53)
- managed care organization (MCO) (mān'ijd kār ōr gə-nī-zā'shən)** A health-care business that, through mergers and buyouts, can deliver health care more cost-effectively. (1)
- mandible (man'-dē-bəl)** A bone that forms the lower portion of the jaw. (25)
- manipulation (mā-nip'yə-lā'shən)** The systematic movement of a patient's body parts. (38)
- marrow (mer'-ō)** A substance that is contained in the medullary cavity. In adults, it consists primarily of fat. (25)
- massage therapist (mā-sāzh'thēr'ə-pist)** An individual who is trained to use pressure, kneading, and stroking to promote muscle and full-body relaxation. (2)
- mastoid process (mas'-tō'id pr'ā-sēs)** A large bump on each temporal bone just behind each ear. It resembles a nipple, hence the name mastoid. (25)
- Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) (mā-tīr'ē-əl sāf'tē dā'tə shēt)** A form that is required for all hazardous chemicals or other substances used in the laboratory and that contains information about the product's name, ingredients, chemical characteristics, physical and health hazards, guidelines for safe handling, and procedures to be followed in the event of exposure. (8)
- matrix (mā'triks)** The basic format of an appointment book, established by blocking off times on the schedule during which the doctor is able to see patients. (12) The material between the cells of connective tissue. (23)
- matter (māt'er)** Anything that takes up space and has weight. Liquids, solids, and gases are matter. (23)
- maturation phase (māch'ə-rā'shən fāz)** The third phase of wound healing, in which scar tissue forms. (42)
- maxillae (mak-sī-lə)** A bone that forms the upper portion of the jaw. (25)
- Mayo stand (mā'ō stānd)** A movable stainless steel instrument tray on a stand. (42)
- medial (mē'dē-əl)** A directional term that describes areas closer to the midline of the body. (23)
- Medicaid (mēd'ī-kād')** A federally funded health cost assistance program for low-income, blind, and disabled patients; families receiving aid to dependent children; foster children; and children with birth defects. (15)
- medical asepsis (mēd'ī-kəl ə-sēps'is)** Measures taken to reduce the number of microorganisms, such as hand washing and wearing examination gloves, that do not necessarily eliminate microorganisms; also called clean technique. (42)

- medical practice act (mĕd'ī-kəl prāk'tis ākt)** A law that defines the exact duties that physicians and other health-care personnel may perform. (40)
- Medicare (mĕd'ī-kār')** A national health insurance program for Americans aged 65 and older. (15)
- Medicare + Choice Plan (mĕd'ī-kār' chois plān)** Medicare benefit in which beneficiaries can choose to enroll in one of three major types of plans instead of the **Original Medicare Plan**. (15)
- Medigap (mĕd'ī-gāp')** Private insurance that Medicare recipients can purchase to reduce the gap in coverage—the amount they would have to pay from their own pockets after receiving Medicare benefits. (15)
- medullary cavity (mĕ-de-ler-ē ká'-və-tĕ)** The canal that runs through the center of the **diaphysis**. (25)
- megakaryocytes (meg-ă-kar'ĕ-ō-sīts)(†)** Cells within red blood marrow that give rise to platelets. (28)
- meiosis (mī-ō'sis)(†)** A type of cell division in which each new cell contains only one member of each chromosome pair. (23)
- melanin (mĕl'ə-nīn)** A pigment that is deposited throughout the layers of the epidermis. (24)
- melanocyte (mĕl'ă-nō-sīt)(†)** A cell type within the epidermis that makes the pigment **melanin**. (24)
- melatonin (mĕl'ə-tō'nīn)** A hormone that helps to regulate circadian rhythms. (32)
- membrane potential (mĕm'brān' pə-tĕn'shəl)** The potential inside a cell relative to the fluid outside the cell. (27)
- meninges (mĕ-nīn'jĕz)(†)** Membranes that protect the brain and spinal cord. (27)
- meningitis (mĕn'īn-jī'tis)** An inflammation of the **meninges**. (27)
- meniscus (mĕ-nīs'kəs)** The curve in the air-to-liquid surface of a liquid specimen in a container. (37)
- menopause (mĕn'ə-pōz')** The termination of the menstrual cycle due to the normal aging of the ovaries. (35)
- menses (mĕn'sēz)** The clinical term for menstrual flow. (35)
- menstrual cycle (mĕn'strō-əl sī'kəl)** The female reproductive cycle. It consists of regular changes in the uterine lining that lead to monthly bleeding. (35)
- mensuration (mĕn'sə-rā'-shən)** The process of measuring. (38)
- mesoderm (mez'ō-derm)(†)** The primary germ layer that gives rise to connective tissue and some epithelial tissue. (35)
- metabolism (mĕ-tāb'ə-līz'əm)** The overall chemical functioning of the body, including all body processes that build small molecules into large ones (anabolism) and break down large molecules into small ones (catabolism). (23)
- metacarpals (mĕ-tə-kār-pəl)** The bones that form the palms of the hand. (25)
- metastasis (mĕ-tās'tə-sīs)** The transfer of abnormal cells to body sites far removed from the original tumor. (41)
- metatarsals (mĕt'ə-tār'salz)** The bones that form the front of the foot. (25)
- microbiology (mī'krō-bī-ōl'ə-jĕ)** The study of microorganisms. (46)
- microfiche (mī'krō-fĕsh')** Microfilm in rectangular sheets. (5)
- microfilm (mī'krə-film')** A roll of film stored on a reel and imprinted with information on a reduced scale to minimize storage space requirements. (5)
- microorganism (mī'krō-ōr'gə-nīz'əm)** A simple form of life, commonly made up of a single cell and so small that it can be seen only with a microscope. (19)
- micropipette (mī'krō-pī-pet')** A small pipette that holds a small, precise volume of fluid; used to collect capillary blood. (48)
- microvilli (mī'krō-vil'i)(†)** Structures found in the lining of the small intestine. They greatly increase the surface area of the small intestine so it can absorb many nutrients. (31)
- micturition (mik-chū-rish'ūn)(†)** The process of urination. (34)
- midsagittal (mid'saj'i-tāl)(†)** Anatomical term that refers to the plane that runs lengthwise down the midline of the body, dividing it into equal left and right halves. (23)
- minerals (mīn'ər-əlz)** Natural, inorganic substances the body needs to help build and maintain body tissues and carry on life functions. (49)
- minutes (mī-nōōtz')** A report of what happened and what was discussed and decided at a meeting. (12)
- mirroring (mīr'ər-īng)** Restating in your own words what a person is saying. (36)
- misdemeanor (mīs'dī-mĕ'nər)** A less serious crime such as theft under a certain dollar amount or disturbing the peace. A misdemeanor is punishable by fines or imprisonment. (3)
- mitosis (mī-tō'sis)** A type of cell division that produces ordinary body, or somatic, cells; each new cell receives a complete set of paired chromosomes. (23)
- mitral valve (mī'trəl vālv)(†)** See **bicuspid valve**. (28)
- mobility aids (mō'bəl-ə-tĕ ādz)** Devices that improve one's ability to move from one place to another; also called mobility assistive devices. (43)
- modeling (mōd'l-īng)** The process of teaching the patient a new skill by having the patient observe and imitate it. (14)
- modem (mō'dəm)** A device used to transfer information from one computer to another through telephone lines. (6)
- modified-block letter style (mōd'ə-fīd blōk lĕt'ər stīl)** A letter format similar to full-block style, except that the dateline, complimentary closing, signature block, and notations are aligned and begin at the center of the page or slightly to the right of center. (7)
- modified-wave schedule (mōd'ə-fīd wāv skĕj'ool)** A scheduling system similar to the wave system, with patients arriving at planned intervals during the hour, allowing time to catch up before the next hour begins. (12)
- modifier (mōd'ə-fī'ər)** One or more two-digit codes assigned to the five-digit main code to show that some special circumstance applied to the service or procedure that the physician performed. (16)
- molars (mō'lərz)** Back teeth that are flat and are designed to grind food. (31)
- mold (mōld)** Fungi that grow into large, fuzzy, multicelled organisms that produce spores. (46)
- molecule (mōl'ī-kyōōl')** The smallest unit into which an element can be divided and still retain its properties; it is formed when atoms bond together. (23)
- money order (mūn'ĕ ōr'dər)** A certificate of guaranteed payment, which may be purchased from a bank, a post office, or some convenience stores. (18)
- monocytes (mōn'ō-sīts)(†)** A large white blood cell with an oval or horseshoe-shaped nucleus that defends the body by phagocytosis; develops into a macrophage when it moves from blood into other tissues. (28)

- monosaccharide (mon-ō-sak-ā-rīd)(†)** A type of carbohydrate that is a simple sugar. (31)
- mons pubis (m'ānz py'ū-bās)** A fatty area that overlies the pubic bone. (35)
- moral values (mōr'əl vāl'yōōz)** Values or types of behavior that serve as a basis for ethical conduct and are formed through the influence of the family, culture, or society. (3)
- mordant (mōr'dnt)** A substance, such as iodine, that can intensify or deepen the response a specimen has to a stain. (46)
- morphology (mōr-fōl'ə-jē)** The study of the shape or form of objects. (48)
- morula (mōr'ū-lā)(†)** A zygote that has undergone cleavage and results in a ball of cells. (35)
- motherboard (mūth'ər-bōrd')** The main circuit board of a computer that controls the other components in the system. (6)
- motor (mō'tər)** Efferent neurons that carry information from the central nervous system to the effectors. (27)
- mucocutaneous exposure (myū-kō-kyū-tā-nē-əs ik-spō-zhər)** Exposure to a pathogen through mucous membranes. (21)
- mucosa (myōō-kō'sə)** The innermost layer of the wall of the alimentary canal. (31)
- mucous cells (myōō'kəs sēlz)** Cells that are found in the salivary glands and the lining of the stomach and that secrete mucous. (31)
- MUGA scan (mūg'ə skān)** A radiologic procedure that evaluates the condition of the heart's myocardium; it involves injection of radioisotopes that concentrate in the myocardium, followed by the use of a gamma camera to measure ventricular contractions to evaluate the patient's heart wall. (53)
- multimedia (mūl'tē-mē'dē-ə)** More than one medium, such as in graphics, sound, and text used to convey information. (6)
- multitasking (mūl'tē-tās'kīng)** Running two or more computer software programs simultaneously. (6)
- multi-unit smooth muscle (mūl'tə-yōō'nīt smōōth mūs'əl)** A type of smooth muscle that is found in the iris of the eye and in the walls of blood vessels. (26)
- murmur (mūr'mər)** An abnormal heart sound heard when the ventricles contract and blood leaks back into the atria. (28)
- muscle tissue (mūs'əl tīsh'ōō)** A tissue type that is specialized to shorten and elongate. (23)
- muscle fatigue (mūs'əl fa-tēg')** A condition caused by a buildup of lactic acid. (26)
- muscle fiber (mūs'əl fī'bər)** Muscle cells that are called fibers because of their long lengths. (26)
- muscular dystrophy (mūs'kyə-lər dis'trō-fē)(†)** A group of inherited disorders characterized by a loss of muscle tissue and by muscle weakness. (26)
- mutation (myōō-tā'shən)** An error that sometimes occurs when DNA is duplicated. When it occurs, it is passed to descendent cells and may or may not affect them in harmful ways. (23)
- myasthenia gravis (mī-as-thē-nē-ā grav'is)** An autoimmune disorder that is characterized by muscle weakness. (26)
- myelin (mī'ə-līn)** A fatty substance that insulates the axon and allows it to send nerve impulses quickly. (27)
- myelography (mī'ē-log'rā-fē)** An x-ray visualization of the spinal cord after the injection of a radioactive contrast medium or air into the spinal subarachnoid space (between the second and innermost of three membranes that cover the spinal cord). This test can reveal tumors, cysts, spinal stenosis, or herniated disks. (41)
- myocardial infarction (mī'ō-kār'dē-əl ĩn-fark'shən)** A heart attack that occurs when the blood flow to the heart is reduced as a result of blockage in the coronary arteries or their branches. (28)
- myocardium (mī'ō-kār'dē-əm)** The middle and thickest layer of the heart. It is made primarily of cardiac muscle. (28)
- myofibrils (mī'ō-fī'brils)(†)** Long structures that fill the sarcoplasm of a muscle fiber. (26)
- myoglobin (mī'ō-glō'bin)(†)** A pigment contained in muscle cells that stores extra oxygen. (26)
- myoglobinuria (mī'ō-glō-bi-nūrē-ā)** The presence of myoglobin in the urine; can be caused by injured or damaged muscle tissue. (47)
- myometrium (mī'ō-mē'trē-ūm)(†)** The middle, thick muscular layer of the uterus. (35)
- myopia (mī'ō-pē-ə)** A condition that occurs when light entering the eye is focused in front of the retina; commonly called nearsightedness. (33)
- myxedema (mik-se-dē'mā)(†)** A severe type of hypothyroidism that is most common in women over the age of 50. (32)
- nail bed (nāl bēd)** The layer beneath each nail. (24)
- narcotic (nār-kōt'ik)** A popular term for an opioid and term of choice in government agencies; see **opioid**. (50)
- nasal (nā'zəl)** Relating to the nose. The nasal bones fuse to form the bridge of the nose. (25)
- nasal conchae (nā'zəl kon'kē)(†)** Structures that extend from the lateral walls of the nasal cavity. (30)
- nasal mucosa (nā'zəl myōō-kō'sə)** The lining of the nose. (38)
- nasal septum (nā'zəl sēp'təm)** A structure that divides the nasal cavity into a left and right portion. (30)
- nasolacrimal duct (nā-zō-lāk'rə-məl dūkt)** A structure located on the medial aspect of each eyeball. These ducts drain tears into the nose. (33)
- nasopharynx (nā-zō-far'ingks)(†)** The portion of the pharynx behind the nasal cavity. (31)
- natural killer (NK) cells (nāch'ər-el kil'ər sēlz)** Non-B and non-T lymphocytes. NK cells kill cancer cells and virus-infected cells without previous exposure to the antigen. (29)
- needle biopsy (nēd'l bī'ōp'sē)** A procedure in which a needle and syringe are used to aspirate (withdraw by suction) fluid or tissue cells. (42)
- negligence (nēg'li-jəns)** A medical professional's failure to perform an essential action or performance of an improper action that directly results in the harm of a patient. (3)
- negotiable (nī-gō'shē-ə-bəl)** Legally transferable from one person to another. (18)
- neonatal period (nē-ō-nā'tāl pīr'ē-əd)(†)** The first four weeks of the postnatal period of an offspring. (35)
- neonate (nē'ə-nāt')** An infant during the first four weeks of life. (35)
- nephrologist (ne-frol'ō-jīst)(†)** A specialist who studies, diagnoses, and manages diseases of the kidney. (2)
- nephrons (nef'ronz)(†)** Microscopic structures in the kidneys that filter blood and form urine. (34)
- nerve fiber (nūrv fī'bər)** A structure that extends from the cell body. It consists of two types: axons and dendrites. (27)
- nerve impulse (nūrv ĩm'pūls')** Electrochemical messages transmitted from neurons to other neurons and effectors. (27)

- nervous tissue** (nûr'vəs tîsh'ōō) A tissue type located in the brain, spinal cord, and peripheral nerves. (23)
- net earnings** (nēt ūr'nîngz) Take-home pay, calculated by subtracting total deductions from gross earnings. (18)
- network** (nēt'wûrk') A system that links several computers together. (6)
- networking** (nēt'wûrk'îng) Making contacts with relatives, friends, and acquaintances that may have information about how to find a job in your field. (54)
- neuralgia** (nōō-rāl'jə) A medical condition characterized by severe pain along the distribution of a nerve. (27)
- neuroglial cell** (nū-roglē-āl sēl)(†) Non-neuronal type of nervous tissue that is smaller and more abundant than neurons. Neuroglial cells support neurons. (27)
- neurologist** (nōō-rəl'ə-jē) A specialist who diagnoses and treats disorders and diseases of the nervous system, including the brain, spinal cord, and nerves. (2)
- neuron** (nōōr'ōn') A nerve cell; it carries nerve impulses between the brain or spinal cord and other parts of the body. (23)
- neurotransmitter** (nōōr'ō-trāns'mīt-ər) A chemical within the vesicles of the synaptic knob that is released into the postsynaptic structures when a nerve impulse reaches the synaptic knob. (27)
- neutrophil** (nū'trō-fil)(†) A type of granular leukocyte that aids in phagocytosis by attacking bacterial invaders; also responsible for the release of pyrogens. (28)
- new patient** (nōō pā'shənt) Patient that, for CPT reporting purposes, has not received professional services from the physician within the past three years. (16)
- nocturia** (nok-tū'rē-ă)(†) Excessive nighttime urination. (47)
- noncompliant** (nōn'kəm-plī'ent) The term used to describe a patient who does not follow the medical advice given. (9)
- noninvasive** (non-in-vā'siv)(†) Referring to procedures that do not require inserting devices, breaking the skin, or monitoring to the degree needed with invasive procedures. (53)
- nonsteroidal hormone** (non-stēr'oyd-al hōr'mōn')(†) A type of hormone made of amino acids and proteins. (32)
- norepinephrine** (nōr'ep-i-nef'rin)(†) A neurotransmitter released by sympathetic neurons onto organs and glands for fight-or-flight (stressful) situations. (26)
- normal flora** (nōr'məl flō'rā) Beneficial bacteria found in the body that create a barrier against pathogens by producing substances that may harm invaders and using up the resources pathogens need to live. (19)
- no-show** (nō shō) A patient who does not call to cancel and does not come to an appointment. (12)
- nosocomial infection** (nos-ō-kōmē-āl ìn-fēk-shən) An infection contracted in a hospital. (20)
- Notice of Privacy Practices (NPP)** (nō'tis prī'və-sē prāk'tis-əs) A document that informs patients of their rights as outlined under HIPAA. (3)
- nuclear medicine** (nōō'klē-ər mēd'ī-sîn) The use of radionuclides, or radioisotopes (radioactive elements or their compounds), to evaluate the bone, brain, lungs, kidneys, liver, pancreas, thyroid, and spleen; also known as radionuclide imaging. (53)
- nucleases** (nū'klē-ās-əz) Pancreatic enzymes that digest nucleic acids. (31)
- nucleus** (nōō'klē-əs)(†) The control center of a cell; contains the chromosomes that direct cellular processes. (23)
- numeric filing system** (nōō-mēr'ik fīl'îng sīs'təm) A filing system that organizes files by numbers instead of names. Each patient is assigned a number in the order in which she joins the practice. (10)
- O and P specimen** (ō ənd pē spē'sə-mən) An ova and parasites specimen, or a stool sample, that is examined for the presence of certain forms of protozoans or parasites, including their eggs (ova). (46)
- objective** (əb-jēk'tiv) Pertaining to data that is readily apparent and measurable, such as vital signs, test results, or physical examination findings. (9)
- objectives** (əb-jēk'tivs) The set of magnifying lenses contained in the nose-piece of a compound microscope. (45)
- occipital** (ōk-sīp'ī-tl) Relating to the back of the head. The occipital bone forms the back of the skull. (25)
- occult blood** (ə-kūlt blūd) Blood contained in some other substance, not visible to the naked eye. (22)
- ocular** (ōk'yə-lər) An eyepiece of a microscope. (45)
- oil-immersion objective** (oilī-mūr'zhən əb-jēk'tiv) A microscope objective that is designed to be lowered into a drop of immersion oil placed directly above the prepared specimen under examination, eliminating the air space between the microscope slide and the objective and producing a much sharper, brighter image. (45)
- ointment** (oint'mənt) A form of topical drug; also known as a salve. (51)
- Older Americans Act of 1965** (ōl'dər ə-mēr'ī-kəns əkt) A U.S. law that guarantees certain benefits to elderly citizens, including health care, retirement income, and protection against abuse. (13)
- olfactory** (ōl-fāk'tə-rē) Relating to the sense of smell. (33)
- oliguria** Insufficient production (or volume) of urine. (47)
- oncologist** (ōn-kōl'ə-jist) A specialist who identifies tumors and treats patients who have cancer. (2)
- onychectomy** (ōn-i-kek'tō-mē) The removal of a fingernail or toenail. (42)
- oocyte** (ōō-sīt)(†) The immature egg. (35)
- oogenesis** (ō-ō-jen'ē-sis)(†) The process of egg cell formation. (35)
- open-book account** (ō'pən bōōk ə-kəunt') An account that is open to charges made occasionally as needed. (17)
- open hours scheduling** (ō'pən ourz skēj'ōōl-îng) A system of scheduling in which patients arrive at the doctor's office at their convenience and are seen on a first-come, first-served basis. (12)
- open posture** (ōpən pōs'chər) A position that conveys a feeling of receptiveness and friendliness; facing another person with arms comfortably at the sides or in the lap. (4)
- ophthalmologist** (ōf-thəl-mōl'ə-jist) A medical doctor who is an eye specialist. (39)
- ophthalmoscope** (ōf-thal'mōskōp)(†) A hand-held instrument with a light; used to view inner eye structures. (41)
- opioid** (ō'-pē-oid) A natural or synthetic drug that produces opium-like effects. (50)
- optic chiasm** (ōp'tik kī'əzm)(†) A structure located at the base of the brain where parts of the optic nerves cross. It carries visual information to the brain. (32)
- optical microscope** (ōp'ti-kāl mī'krə-skōp') A microscope that uses light, concentrated through a condenser and focused through the

- object being examined, to project an image. (45)
- opportunistic infection** (ɔp'ər-tōōnɪs'tɪk ɪn-fēk-shən) Infection by microorganisms that can cause disease only when a host's resistance is low. (19)
- optometrist** (ɔp-tōm'ɪ-trɪst) A trained and licensed vision specialist who is not a physician. (39)
- orbicularis oculi** (ɔr-bɪk'yū-lā'ris ɔk'yū-lī) The muscle in the eyelid responsible for blinking. (33)
- orbit** (ɔr'bɪt) The eye socket, which forms a protective shell around the eye. (39)
- organ** (ɔr'gan) Structure formed by the organization of two or more different tissue types that carries out specific functions. (23)
- organelle** (ɔr'gə-nəl) A structure within a cell that performs a specific function. (23)
- organic** (ɔr-gən'ɪk) Pertaining to matter that contains carbon and hydrogen. (23)
- organism** (ɔr'gə-nɪz'əm) A whole living being that is formed from organ systems. (23)
- organ system** (ɔr'gən sɪs'təm) A system that consists of organs that join together to carry out vital functions. (23)
- origin** (ɔr'ə-jɪn) An attachment site of a skeletal muscle that does not move when a muscle contracts. (26)
- Original Medicare Plan** (ə-rɪj'ə-nəl mēd'ɪ-kār plān) The Medicare fee-for-service plan that allows the beneficiary to choose any licensed physician certified by Medicare. (15)
- oropharynx** (ɔr'ə-far'ɪŋks)(†) The portion of the pharynx behind the oral cavity. (31)
- orthopedist** (ɔr'thə-pēdɪst) A specialist who diagnoses and treats diseases and disorders of the muscles and bones. (2)
- OSHA (Occupational Safety and Health Act)** (ɔ'shə) A set of regulations designed to save lives, prevent injuries, and protect the health of workers in the United States. (1)
- osmosis** (ɔz-mō'sɪs) The diffusion of water across a semipermeable membrane such as a cell membrane. (23)
- ossification** (ä-sə-fə-kä'shən) The process of bone growth. (25)
- osteoblast** (ɔs'tē-ō-bləst)(†) Bone-forming cells that turn membrane into bone. They use excess blood calcium to build new bone. (25)
- osteoclast** (ɔs'tē-ō-klast)(†) Bone-dissolving cells. When bone is dissolved, calcium is released into the bloodstream. (25)
- osteocyte** (äs'tē-ə-sɪt) A cell of osseous tissue; also called a bone cell. (25)
- osteon** (äs'tē-ən) Elongated cylinders that run up and down the long axis of bone. (25)
- osteopathic manipulative medicine (OMM)** (ɔs'tē-ō-päth'ɪk mə-nɪp'ü-lä'tɪv mēd'ɪ-sɪn) A system of hands-on techniques that help relieve pain, restore motion, support the body's natural functions, and influence the body's structure. Osteopathic physicians study OMM in addition to medical courses. (2)
- osteoporosis** (ɔs'tē-ō-pə-rō'sɪs) An endocrine and metabolic disorder of the musculoskeletal system, more common in women than in men, characterized by hunched-over posture. (40)
- osteosarcoma** (ɔs'tē-ō-sar-kō'mä) A type of bone cancer that originates from osteoblasts, the cells that make bony tissue. (25)
- otologist** (ō-tol'ō-jɪst)(†) A medical doctor who specializes in the health of the ear. (39)
- otorhinolaryngologist** (ō-tō-rɪ'nōlar-ɪŋ-gol'ō-jɪst) A specialist who diagnoses and treats diseases of the ear, nose, and throat. (2)
- out guide** (out gɪd) A marker made of stiff material and used as a placeholder when a file is taken out of a filing system. (10)
- oval window** (ɔvəl wɪn'dō) The beginning of the inner ear. (33)
- overbooking** (ɔvər-bōōk'ɪŋ) Scheduling appointments for more patients than can reasonably be seen in the time allowed. (12)
- ovulation** (ɔ'vyə-lä'shən) The process by which the ovaries release one ovum (egg) approximately every 28 days. (35)
- oxygen debt** (ɔk'sɪ-jən) A condition that develops when skeletal muscles are used strenuously for a minute or two. (26)
- oxyhemoglobin** (ɔks-ē-hē-mō-glō'bɪn)(†) Hemoglobin that is bound to oxygen. It is bright red in color. (28)
- oxytocin OT** (ɔk-sē-tō'sɪn)(†) A hormone that causes contraction of the uterus during childbirth and the ejection of milk from mammary glands during breast-feeding. (32)
- packed red blood cells** (päkt rēd blud sēlz) Red blood cells that collect at the bottom of a centrifuged blood sample. (48)
- palate** (pal'ät)(†) The roof of the mouth. (31)
- palatine** (pa'lə-tɪn) Bones that form the anterior portion of the roof of the mouth and the **palate**. (25)
- palatine tonsils** (pal'ä-tɪn tōn'sɪls)(†) Two masses of lymphatic tissue located at the back of the throat. (31)
- palpation** (päl-pä'shən) A type of touch used by health-care providers to determine characteristics such as texture, temperature, shape, and the presence of movement. (38)
- palpatory method** (pal-pä'tōr'ē mēth'əd) Systolic blood pressure measured by using the sense of touch. This measurement provides a necessary preliminary approximation of the systolic blood pressure to ensure an adequate level of inflation when the actual auscultatory measurement is made. (37)
- palpitations** (päl'pɪ-tä'shənz) Unusually rapid, strong, or irregular pulsations of the heart. (44)
- pancreatic amylase** (pan-kre-ät'ɪk əm'il-äs)(†) An enzyme that digests carbohydrates. (31)
- pancreatic lipase** (pan-kre-ät'ɪk lɪpās)(†) An enzyme that digests lipids. (31)
- panel** (pän'əl) Tests frequently ordered together that are organ or disease oriented. (16)
- papillae** (pə-pɪl'ē) The “bumps” of the tongue in which the taste buds are found. (33)
- paranasal sinuses** (par-ä-nä'zəl sɪ'nūs-əz) Air-filled spaces within skull bones that open into the nasal cavity. (30)
- parasite** (pär'ə-sɪt') An organism that lives on or in another organism and relies on it for nourishment or some other advantage to the detriment of the host organism. (46)
- parasympathetic** (pär'ə-sɪm'pə-thēt'ɪk)(†) A division of the autonomic nervous system that prepares the body for rest and digestion. (27)
- parathyroid hormone** (par-ä-thɪ'royd hōr'mōn')(†) A hormone that helps regulate calcium levels in the bloodstream. (35)
- parenteral nutrition** (pä-ren'ter-əl nōō-trɪsh'ən) Nutrition obtained when specially prepared nutrients are injected directly into patients' veins rather than taken by mouth. (49)
- paresthesias** (par-es-thē'zē-äs)(†) Abnormal sensations ranging from burning to tingling. (27)
- parietal** Bones that form most of the top and sides of the skull. (25)

- parietal cells** (pǎ-rĭě-tāl sĕlz) Stomach cells that secrete hydrochloric acid, which is necessary to convert **pepsinogen** to **pepsin**. Parietal cells also secrete **intrinsic factor**, which is necessary for vitamin B₁₂ absorption. (31)
- parietal pericardium** (pǎ-rĭě-tāl per-i-kar'dĕ-ŭm)(†) The layer on top of the visceral pericardium. (28)
- parotid glands** (pǎ-rot'id glāndz)(†) The largest of the salivary glands. The parotid glands are located beneath the skin just in front of the ears. (31)
- participating physicians** (pār-tis'ə-pāt'ing fi-zish'anz) Physicians who enroll in managed care plans. They have contracts with MCOs that stipulate their fees. (15)
- passive listening** (pās'iv līs'an-ing) Hearing what a person has to say without responding in any way; contrast with **active listening**. (4)
- patch test** (pāch tĕst) An allergy test in which a gauze patch soaked with a suspected allergen is taped onto the skin with nonallergenic tape; used to discover the cause of contact dermatitis. (41)
- patella** (pə-té-lə) The bone commonly referred to as the kneecap. (25)
- pathogen** (pāth'ə-jən) A microorganism capable of causing disease. (19)
- pathologist** (pā-thōl'ə-jĭst) A medical doctor who studies the changes a disease produces in the cells, fluids, and processes of the entire body. (2)
- patient compliance** (pāshənt kəm-pli'əns) Obedience in terms of following a physician's orders. (38)
- patient ledger card** (pāshənt lĕj'ər kārd) A card containing information needed for insurance purposes, including the patient's name, address, telephone number, Social Security number, insurance information, employer's name, and any special billing instructions. It also includes the name of the person who is responsible for charges if this is anyone other than the patient. (18)
- patient record/chart** (pāshənt rĕk'ərd/chārt) A compilation of important information about a patient's medical history and present condition. (9)
- payee** (pā-ē) A person who receives a payment. (18)
- payer** (pā'ər) A person who pays a bill or writes a check. (18)
- pay schedule** (pā skĕj'ool) A list showing how often an employee is paid, such as weekly, biweekly, or monthly. (18)
- pectoral girdle** The structure that attaches the arms to the axial skeleton. (25)
- pediatrician** (pĕ'dĕ-ə-trĭshən) A specialist who diagnoses and treats childhood diseases and teaches parents skills for keeping their children healthy. (2)
- pegboard system** (pĕg'bōrd sĭs'təm) A bookkeeping system that uses a lightweight board with pegs on which forms can be stacked, allowing each transaction to be entered and recorded on four different bookkeeping forms at once; also called the one-write system. (18)
- pelvic girdle** The structure that attaches the legs to the axial skeleton. (25)
- pepsin** (pĕp'sin)(†) An enzyme that allows the body to digest proteins. (31)
- pepsinogen** (pĕp-sin'ō-jen)(†) Substance that is secreted by the chief cells in the lining of the stomach and becomes **pepsin** in the presence of acid. (31)
- peptidases** (pĕp'ti-dās-ez)(†) Enzymes that digest proteins. (31)
- percussion** (pər-kūsh'ən) Tapping or striking the body to hear sounds or feel vibration. (38)
- percutaneous exposure** (per-kyū-tā'nĕ-ŭs ĭk-spō'zhər)(†) Exposure to a pathogen through a puncture wound or needlestick. (21)
- pericardium** (per-i-kar'dĕ-ŭm)(†) A membrane that covers the heart and large blood vessels attached to it. (28)
- perilymph** (per'i-limf)(†) A fluid in the inner ear. When this fluid moves, it activates hearing and equilibrium receptors. (33)
- perimetrium** The thin layer that covers the myometrium of the uterus. (35)
- perimysium** (per-i-mis'ĕ-ŭm)(†) The connective tissue that divides a muscle into sections called fascicles. (26)
- periosteum** The membrane that surrounds the **diaphysis** of a bone. (25)
- peripheral nervous system** (pə-rĭf'ər-əl nŭr'vəs sĭs'təm) A system that consists of nerves that branch off the central nervous system. (27)
- peristalsis** (pĕr'ĭ-stōl'sĭs) The rhythmic muscular contractions that move food through the digestive tract. (26)
- personal space** (pŭr'sə-nəl spās) A certain area that surrounds an individual and within which another person's physical presence is felt as an intrusion. (4)
- petty cash fund** (pĕt'ĕ kăsh fŭnd) Cash kept on hand in the office for small purchases. (18)
- phagocyte** (făg'ə-sĭt') A specialized white blood cell that engulfs and digests pathogens. (19)
- phagocytosis** (făg'ō-sĭ-tō'sĭs)(†) The process by which white blood cells defend the body against infection by engulfing invading pathogens. (29)
- phalanges** The bones of the fingers. (25)
- pharmaceutical** (făr'mə-sōō'tĭ-kəl) Pertaining to medicinal drugs. (50)
- pharmacodynamics** (făr'mă-kō-dĭ-nam'iks)(†) The study of what drugs do to the body: the mechanism of action, or how they work to produce a therapeutic effect. (50)
- pharmacognosy** (făr-mă-kog'nō-sĕ)(†) The study of characteristics of natural drugs and their sources. (50)
- pharmacokinetics** (făr'mă-kō-kinet'iks)(†) The study of what the body does to drugs: how the body absorbs, metabolizes, distributes, and excretes the drugs. (50)
- pharmacology** (făr'ma-kōl'ə-jĕ)(†) The study of drugs. (50)
- pharmacotherapeutics** (făr'mă-kō-thĕr'ə-pyōō'tĭks) The study of how drugs are used to treat disease; also called clinical **pharmacology**. (50)
- pharyngeal tonsils** (fă-rĭn'jĕ-əl tōn'səls)(†) Two masses of lymphatic tissue located above the palatine tonsils; also called adenoids. (31)
- pharynx** (făr'ĭngks) Structure below the mouth and nasal cavities that is an organ of the respiratory system as well as the digestive system. (30)
- phenylketonuria (PKU)** (fĕn'ĭl-kĕ'tō-nŭ'rĕ-ă)(†) A genetically inherited disorder in which the body cannot properly metabolize the nutrient phenylalanine, resulting in the buildup of phenylketones in the blood and their presence in the urine. The accumulation of phenylketones results in mental retardation. (23)
- philosophy** (fĭ-lōs'ə-fĕ) The system of values and principles an office has adopted in its everyday practice. (14)
- phlebotomy** (flĭ-bōt'ə-mĕ) The insertion of a needle or cannula (small tube) into a vein for the purpose of withdrawing blood. (48)
- photometer** (fō-tōm'ĭ-trĕ) An instrument that measures light intensity. (45)
- physiatrist** (fiz-ĭ-ă-trĭst)(†) A physical medicine specialist, who diagnoses

- and treats diseases and disorders with physical therapy. (2)
- physical therapy** (**fíz'í-kəl thēr'ə-pē**) A medical specialty that uses cold, heat, water, exercise, massage, traction, and other physical means to treat musculoskeletal, nervous, and cardiopulmonary disorders. (43)
- physician assistant (PA)** (**fī-zīsh'ən ə-sīs'tənt**) A health-care provider who practices medicine under the supervision of a physician. (2)
- physician's office laboratory (POL)** (**fī-zīsh'ənz ófis lāb'rə-tór'ē**) A laboratory contained in a physician's office; processing tests in the POL produces quick turnaround and eliminates the need for patients to travel to other test locations. (45)
- physiology** (**fíz'ē-ól'ə-jē**) The science of the study of the body's functions. (23)
- pineal body** (**pin'ē-əl bōd'ē**) A small gland located between the cerebral hemispheres that secretes melatonin. (32)
- pitch** (**pīch**) The high or low quality in the sound of a person's speaking voice. (11)
- placenta** (**plə-sēn'tə**) An organ located between the mother and the fetus. It permits the absorption of nutrients and oxygen. In some cases, harmful substances such as viruses are absorbed through the placenta. (35)
- plantar flexion** (**plan'tār flek'shūn**) (†) Pointing the toes downward. (26)
- plasma** (**plāz'mə**) The fluid component of blood, in which formed elements are suspended; makes up 55% of blood volume. (48)
- plastic surgeon** (**plás'tík sūr'jən**) A specialist who reconstructs, corrects, or improves body structures. (2)
- platelets** (**plāt'līts**) Fragments of cytoplasm in the blood that are crucial to clot formation; also called thrombocytes. (48)
- pleura** (**plūr'ə**) (†) The membranes that surround the lungs. (30)
- pleuritis** A condition in which the **pleura** become inflamed, which causes them to stick together. It can also cause an excess amount of fluid to form between the membranes. (30)
- plexus** (**plēk'səs**) A structure that is formed when spinal nerves fuse together. It includes the cervical, brachial, and lumbosacral nerves. (27)
- pneumothorax** (**nū-mō-thōr'aks**) (†) The presence of air or gas in the pleural cavity. The lung typically collapses with pneumothorax. (30)
- polar body** (**pō'lār bōd'ē**) A nonfunctional cell that is one of two small cells formed during the division of an oocyte. (35)
- polarity** (**pō-lār'í-tē**) The condition of having two separate poles, one of which is positive and the other, negative. (52)
- polarized** (**pō'lə-rízd'**) The state in which the outside of a cell membrane is positively charged and the inside is negatively charged. Polarization occurs when a neuron is at rest. (27)
- polysaccharide** (**pol-ē-sak'ā-ríd**) (†) A type of carbohydrate that is a starch. (31)
- POMR** (**pē'ō-ēm-ār**) The problem-oriented medical record system for keeping patients' charts. Information in a POMR includes the database of information about the patient and the patient's condition, the problem list, the diagnostic and treatment plan, and progress notes. (9)
- portfolio** (**pōrt-fō'lē-ō**) A collection of an applicant's résumé, reference letters, and other documents of interest to a potential employer. (1)
- positron emission tomography** A radiologic procedure that entails injecting isotopes combined with other substances involved in metabolic activity, such as glucose. These special isotopes emit positrons, which a computer processes and displays on a screen. (53)
- posterior** (**pō-stūr'ē-ar**) Anatomical term meaning toward the back of the body. Also called dorsal. (23)
- postnatal period** (**pōst-nā'tāl pīr'ē-əd**) (†) The period following childbirth. (35)
- postoperative** (**pōst-ōp'ər-ə-tív**) Taking place after a surgical procedure. (42)
- posture** (**pōs'chər**) Body position and alignment. (43)
- power of attorney** (**pou'ər ə-túr'nē**) The legal right to act as the attorney or agent of another person, including handling that person's financial matters. (18)
- practitioner** (**prāk-tīsh'ə-nər**) One who practices a profession. (1)
- preferred provider organization (PPO)** (**pri-fúrd' prə-vīd'ər or 'gə-nī-zā'shən**) A managed care plan that establishes a network of providers to perform services for plan members. (15)
- premenstrual syndrome (PMS)** (**prē-mē'n(+)strə-wal sín-drōm**) A syndrome that is a collection of symptoms that occur just before the menstrual period. (35)
- premium** (**prēmē-əm**) The basic annual cost of health-care insurance. (15)
- prenatal period** (**prē-nā'tāl pīr'ē-əd**) (†) The period that includes the embryonic and fetal periods until the delivery of the offspring. (35)
- preoperative** (**prē-ōp'ər-ə-tív**) Taking place prior to surgery. (42)
- prepuce** (**prē'pūs**) (†) A piece of skin in the uncircumcized male that covers the glans penis. (35)
- presbyopia** (**prez-bē-ōpē-ā**) A common eye disorder that results in the loss of lens elasticity. Presbyopia develops with age and causes a person to have difficulty seeing objects close up. (33)
- prescribe** (**pri-skrīb'**) To give a patient a prescription to be filled by a pharmacy. (50)
- prescription** (**pri-skríp'shən**) A physician's written order for medication. (50)
- prescription drug** (**pri-skríp'shən drūg**) A drug that can be legally used only by order of a physician and must be administered or dispensed by a licensed health-care professional. (50)
- primary care physician** (**pri'mēr'ē kār fī-zīsh'ən**) A physician who provides routine medical care and referrals to specialists. (2)
- primary germ layer** (**pri'mēr'ē jūrm lā'ər**) An inner cell mass that organizes into layers: the ectoderm, mesoderm, and endoderm. (35)
- prime mover** (**pri'm mōō'vər**) The muscle responsible for most of the movement when a body movement is produced by a group of muscles. (26)
- primordial follicle** (**pri-mōr'dēl-əl fōl'í-kəl**) (†) A structure that develops in the ovarian cortex of a female infant before she is born. (35)
- Privacy Rule** (**pri'və-sē rōōl**) Common name for the HIPAA Standard for Privacy of Individually Identifiable Health Information, which provides the first comprehensive federal protection for the privacy of health information. The Privacy Rule creates national standards to protect individuals' medical records and other personal health information. (3)
- procedure code** (**prə-sēj'ər kōd**) Codes that represent medical procedures, such as surgery and diagnostic tests, and medical services, such as an examination to evaluate a patient's condition. (16)
- proctoscopy** (**prok-tośkō-pē**) An examination of the lower rectum and anal canal with a 3-inch instrument

- called a proctoscope to detect hemorrhoids, polyps, fissures, fistulas, and abscesses. (41)
- proficiency testing program** (prə-fīshən-cē tĕst'ing prŏ'grām') A required set of tests for clinical laboratories; the tests measure the accuracy of the laboratory's test results and adherence to standard operating procedures. (45)
- progesterone** (prŏ-jĕs'tə-rŏn') A female steroid hormone primarily produced by the ovary. (32)
- prognosis** (prŏg-nŏ'sis) A prediction of the probable course of a disease in an individual and the chances of recovery. (38)
- prolactin (PRL)** (prŏ-lak'tin)(+) A hormone that stimulates milk production in the mammary glands. (32)
- proliferation phase** (prə-lif'ər-ā'shən fāz) The second phase of wound healing, in which new tissue forms, closing off the wound. (42)
- pronation** (prŏ-nā'shŭn)(+) Turning the palms of the hand downward. (26)
- pronunciation** (prə-nun'sĕ-ā'shən) The sounding out of words. (11)
- proofreading** (prŏof'rĕd'ing) Checking a document for formatting, data, and mechanical errors. (7)
- prostaglandin** (pros-tā-glan'din)(+) A local hormone derived from lipid molecules. Prostaglandins typically do not travel in the bloodstream to find their target cells because their targets are close by. This hormone has numerous effects, including uterine stimulation during childbirth. (32)
- prostate gland** (prŏs'tāt' glānd) A chestnut-shaped gland that surrounds the beginning of the urethra in the male. (35)
- prostatitis** (pros-tā-tī'tis) Inflammation of the prostate gland, which can be acute or chronic. (35)
- protected health information (PHI)** (prə-tĕkt-əd hĕlth infər-mā'shən) Individually identifiable health information that is transmitted or maintained by electronic or other media, such as computer storage devices. The core of the **HIPAA Privacy Rule** is the protection, use, and disclosure of protected health information. (3)
- proteinuria** (prŏ-tĕ-nū'rĕ-ā) An excess of protein in the urine. (47)
- protozoan** (prŏ-tə-zŏ-ən) A single-celled eukaryotic organism much larger than a bacterium; some protozoans can cause disease in humans. (46)
- protraction** (prŏ-trāk'shən) Moving a body part anteriorly. (26)
- proximal** (prŏk'si-māl)(+) Anatomical term meaning closer to a point of attachment or closer to the trunk of the body. (23)
- proximal convoluted tubule** (prŏk'si-māl kon'vŏ-lū-tĕd tū'byūl)(+) The portion of the renal tubule that is directly attached to the glomerular capsule and becomes the loop of Henle. (34)
- psoriasis** (sə-rī-ā'sis) A common skin condition characterized by reddish-silver scaly lesions most often found on the elbows, knees, scalp, and trunk. (24)
- puberty** (pyŏŏ'bər-tĕ) The period of adolescence when a person begins to develop secondary sexual traits and reproductive functions. (40)
- pulmonary circuit** (pŏŏl'mə-nĕrĕ sūr'kit) The route that blood takes from the heart to the lungs and back to the heart again. (28)
- pulmonary trunk** (pŏŏl'mə-nĕrĕ trŭngk) A large artery that branches into the pulmonary arteries and carries blood to the lungs. (28)
- pulmonary valve** (pŏŏl'mə-nĕrĕ vālv) A heart valve that is a semilunar valve. It is situated between the right ventricle and the pulmonary trunk. (28)
- pubis** (pyü'-bəs) The area that forms the front of a hip bone. (25)
- pulmonary function test** (pŏŏl'mə-nĕrĕ fŭngk'shən tĕst) A test that evaluates a patient's lung volume and capacity; used to detect and diagnose pulmonary problems or to monitor certain respiratory disorders and evaluate the effectiveness of treatment. (52)
- puncture wound** (pŭngk'chər wound) A deep wound caused by a sharp, pointed object. (42)
- punitive damages** (pyŏŏ'nī-tiv dām'ijz) Money paid as punishment for intentionally breaking the law. (17)
- pupil** (pyŏŏ'pəl) The opening at the center of the iris, which grows smaller or larger as the iris contracts or relaxes, respectively; it regulates the amount of light that enters the eye. (33)
- purchase order** (pŭrchis ōrdər) A form that authorizes a purchase for the practice. (8)
- purchasing groups** (pŭrchis-ing grŏŏps) Groups of medical offices associated with a nearby hospital that order supplies through the hospital to obtain a quantity discount. (8)
- Purkinje Fibers** (per'kin-jĕ fī'bərz) Cardiac fibers that are located in the lateral walls of the ventricles. (28)
- pyelonephritis** (pī-ĕ-lŏ-ne-frī-tis)(+) A urinary tract infection that involves one or both of the kidneys. (34)
- pyrogens** (pīŏ-jenz)(+) Fever-producing substances released by neutrophils. (48)
- quadrants** (kwŏd'rəntz) Four equal sections, such as those into which the abdomen is figuratively divided during an examination. (38)
- qualitative analysis** (kwŏl'ī-tā'tiv ə-nāl'ī-sis) In microbiology, identification of bacteria present in a specimen by the appearance of colonies grown on a culture plate. (46)
- qualitative test response** (kwŏl'ī-tā'tiv tĕst rī-spŏns') A test result that indicates the substance tested for is either present or absent. (45)
- quality assurance program** (kwŏl'ī-tĕ ə-shŏŏr'əns prŏ'grām') A required program for clinical laboratories designed to monitor the quality of patient care, including quality control, instrument and equipment maintenance, proficiency testing, training and continuing education, and standard operating procedures documentation. (45)
- quality control (QC)** (kwŏl'ī-tĕ kən-trŏl') An ongoing system, required in every physician's office, to evaluate the quality of medical care provided. (46)
- quality control program** (kwŏl'ī-tĕ kən-trŏl' prŏ'grām') A component of a quality assurance program that focuses on ensuring accuracy in laboratory test results through careful monitoring of test procedures. (45)
- quantitative analysis** (kwŏntī-tā'tiv ə-nāl'ī-sis) In microbiology, a determination of the number of bacteria present in a specimen by direct count of colonies grown on a culture plate. (46)
- quantitative test results** (kwŏntī-tā'tiv tĕst rī-zŭltz') The concentration of a test substance in a specimen. (45)
- quarterly return** (kwŏr'tar-lĕ rī-tŭrn') The Employer's Quarterly Federal Tax Return, a form submitted to the IRS every 3 months that summarizes the federal income and employment taxes withheld from employees' paychecks. (18)
- radial artery** (rādĕ-əl ār'tə-rĕ) An artery located in the groove on the thumb side of the inner wrist, where the pulse is taken on adults. (37)

- radiation therapy** (rādē-āshən thēr' ə-pē) The use of x-rays and radioactive substances to treat cancer. (53)
- radiologist** (rādē-ōl' ə-jist) A physician who specializes in taking and reading x-rays. (2)
- radius** (rā-dā-əs) The lateral bone of the forearm. (25)
- random access memory (RAM)** (rāndəm āksēs mēm'ə-rē) The temporary, or programmable, memory in a computer. (6)
- random urine specimen** (rāndəm yoor' in spēs ə-mən) A single urine specimen taken at any time of the day; the most common type of sample collected. (47)
- range of motion (ROM)** (rānj mōshən) The degree to which a joint is able to move. (43)
- rapport** (rā-pōr') A harmonious, positive relationship. (4)
- read only memory (ROM)** (rēd ōnlē mēm'ə-rē) A computer's permanent memory, which can be read by the computer but not changed. It provides the computer with the basic operating instructions it needs to function. (6)
- reagent** (rē-ājənt) A chemical or chemically treated substance used in test procedures and formulated to react in specific ways when exposed under specific conditions. (45)
- reconciliation** (rēkən-sil'ē-āshən) A comparison of the office's financial records with bank records to ensure that they are consistent and accurate; usually done when the monthly checking account statement is received from the bank. (18)
- records management system** (rī-kōrdz mānj-mənt sistəm) How patient records are created, filed, and maintained. (10)
- recovery position** (rī-kūvər-ē pə-zishən) The position a person is placed in after receiving first aid for choking or cardiopulmonary resuscitation. (44)
- rectum** (rēktəm) The last section of the sigmoid colon that straightens out and becomes the anal canal. (31)
- reference** (rēfər-əns) A recommendation for employment from a facility or a preceptor. (54)
- reference laboratory** (rēfər-əns lābrə-tōr'ē) A laboratory owned and operated by an organization outside the physician's practice. (45)
- referral** (rī-fūrəl) An authorization from a medical practice for a patient to have specialized services performed by another practice; often required for insurance purposes. (15)
- reflex** (rēflēks') A predictable automatic response to stimuli. (27)
- refraction examination** (rī-frākshən ig-zām'ə-nāshən) An eye examination in which the patient looks through a succession of different lenses to find out which ones create the clearest image. (41)
- refractometer** (rē-frac-tom'ē-ter) (†) An optical instrument that measures the refraction, or bending, of light as it passes through a liquid. (47)
- Registered Medical Assistant (RMA)** (rēj'ī-stərd mēd'ī-kəl ə-sis'tənt) A medical assistant who has met the educational requirements and taken and passed the certification examination for medical assisting given by the American Medical Technologists (AMT). (1)
- relaxin** (rē-lak'sin) (†) A hormone that comes from the corpus luteum. It inhibits uterine contractions and relaxes the ligaments of the pelvis in preparation for childbirth. (35)
- remittance advice (RA)** (rī-mit'ns ād-viz') A form that the patient and the practice receive for each encounter that outlines the amount billed by the practice, the amount allowed, the amount of subscriber liability, the amount paid, and notations of any service not covered, including an explanation of why that service is not covered; also called an explanation of benefits. (15)
- renal calculi** (rēnəl kāl'kyə-lī') Kidney stones. (34)
- renal column** (rēnəl kōl'əm) The portion of the renal cortex between the renal pyramids. (34)
- renal corpuscle** (rēnəl kōr'pə-səl) Corpuscle that is composed of the glomerulus and the glomerular capsule. The filtration of blood occurs here. (34)
- renal cortex** (rēnəl kōr'tēks') The outermost layer of the kidney. (34)
- renal medulla** (rēnəl mī-dū'lə) The middle portion of the kidney. (34)
- renal pelvis** (rēnəl pēl'vīs) The internal structure of the kidney. Urine flows from the renal pelvis down the ureter. (34)
- renal pyramids** (rēnəl pīr'ə-mīdz) Triangular-shaped areas in the medulla of the kidney. (34)
- renal sinus** (rēnəl sīnəs) The medial depression of a kidney. (34)
- renal tubule** (rēnəl tū'byūl) Structure that extends from the glomerular capsule of a nephron and is comprised of the proximal convoluted tubule, the loop of Henle, and the distal convoluted tubule. (34)
- renin** (ren'in) (†) A hormone secreted by the kidney that helps to regulate blood pressure. (34)
- repolarization** (rēpō-lār-i-zā'shūn) (†) The process of returning to the original polar (resting) state. (27)
- reputable** (rēpyə-tə-bəl) Having a good reputation. (8)
- requisition** (rēkwī-zishən) A formal request from a staff member or doctor for the purchase of equipment or supplies. (8)
- reservoir host** (rēzər-vwār' hōst) An animal, insect, or human whose body is susceptible to growth of a pathogen. (19)
- respiratory volume** (rēspər-ə-tōr'ē vōl'yōōm) The different volumes of air that move in and out of the lungs during different intensities of breathing. These volumes can be measured to assess the healthiness of the respiratory system. (30)
- resource-based relative value scale (RBRVS)** (rēsōrs bāst rēl'ə-tiv vāl'yōō skāl) The payment system used by Medicare. It establishes the relative value units for services, replacing the providers' consensus on usual fees. (15)
- résumé** (rēzōō-mā) A typewritten document summarizing one's employment and educational history. (1)
- retention schedule** (rī-tēn'shən skěj'ōōl) A schedule that details how long to keep different types of patient records in the office after they have become inactive or closed and how long the records should be stored. (10)
- retina** (rēt'n-ə) The inner layer of the eye; contains light-sensing nerve cells. (33)
- retraction** (rī-trāk'shən) Moving a body part posteriorly. (26)
- retrograde pyelography** (rēt'rə-grād' pī'ē-log'rā-fē) (†) A radiologic procedure in which the doctor injects a contrast medium through a urethral catheter and takes a series of x-rays to evaluate function of the ureters, bladder, and urethra. (53)
- retroperitoneal** (re-trō-per-ə-ə-nē'-əl) An anatomical term that means behind the peritoneal cavity. It is where the kidneys lie. (34)
- return demonstration** (rī-tūrn' dēm'ən-strāshən) Participatory teaching method in which the

- technique is first described to the patient and then demonstrated to the patient; the patient is then asked to repeat the demonstration. (14)
- rhabdomyolysis (rab'dō-mī-ol'i-sis) (†)** A condition in which the kidneys have been damaged due to toxins released from muscle cells. (26)
- Rh antigen (ār'ach an'ti-jən)** A protein first discovered on the red blood cells of rhesus monkeys, hence the name Rh. (28)
- RhoGAM (rōgām)** A medication that prevents an Rh-negative mother from making antibodies against the Rh antigen. (28)
- RNA (ār'ēn-ā')** A nucleic acid used to make protein. (23)
- rods (rōdz)** Light-sensing nerve cells in the eye, at the posterior of the retina, that function in dim light but do not provide sharp images or detect color. (33)
- rosacea (rō-zā'shē-ā) (†)** A condition characterized by chronic redness and acne over the nose and cheeks. (24)
- rotation (rō-tā'shən)** Twisting a body part. (26)
- route (rōot)** The way a drug is introduced into the body. (51)
- sacrum (sa'-krəm)** A triangular-shaped bone that consists of five fused vertebra. (25)
- sagittal (saj'i-tāl) (†)** An anatomical term that refers to the plane that divides the body into left and right portions. (23)
- salutation (sāl'yə-tā'shən)** A written greeting, such as "Dear," used at the beginning of a letter. (7)
- sanitization (sān'i-ti-zā'shən) (†)** A reduction of the number of microorganisms on an object or a surface to a fairly safe level. (19)
- sarcolemma (sar'kō-lem'ā)** The cell membrane of a muscle fiber. (26)
- sarcoplasm** The cytoplasm of a muscle fiber. (26)
- sarcoplasmic reticulum (sar-kō-plaz'mik re-tik'yū-lūm)** The endoplasmic reticulum of a muscle fiber. (26)
- SARS (severe acute respiratory syndrome) (särz)** A severe and acute respiratory illness characterized by fever and a nonproductive cough that progresses to the point at which insufficient oxygen is present in the blood. (38)
- saturated fat (sächə-rā'tid fāt)** Fats, derived primarily from animal sources, that are usually solid at room temperature and that tend to raise blood cholesterol levels. (49)
- scabies (skā'bēz)** Skin lesions that are very itchy and caused by a burrowing mite. Scabies is most commonly found between the fingers and on the genitalia. (24)
- scanner (skā'nər)** An optical device that converts printed matter into a format that can be read by the computer and inputs the converted information. (6)
- scapula (sk'a-pyə-la)** Thin, triangular-shaped, flat bones located on the dorsal surface of the rib cage; also called shoulder blades. (25)
- Schwann cell (shwahn səl) (†)** A neuroglial cell whose cell membrane coats the axons. (27)
- sciatica (sī-āt'i-kə)** Pain in the low back and hip radiating down the back of the leg along the sciatic nerve. (27)
- sclera (sklir'ə)** The tough, outermost layer, or "white," of the eye, through which light cannot pass; covers all except the front of the eye. (33)
- scoliosis (skō'lē-ō'sis)** A lateral curvature of the spine, which is normally straight when viewed from behind. (25)
- scratch test (skräch tēst)** An allergy test in which extracts of suspected allergens are applied to the patient's skin and the skin is then scratched to allow the extracts to penetrate. (41)
- screening (skrēn'ing)** Performing a diagnostic test on a person who is typically free of symptoms. (14)
- screen saver (skrēn sāvər)** A program that automatically changes the monitor display at short intervals or constantly shows moving images to prevent burn-in of images on the computer screen. (6)
- scrotum (skrōtəm)** In a male, the sac of skin below the pelvic cavity that contains the testes. (35)
- sebaceous (sī-bā'shəs)** A type of oil gland found in the dermis. (24)
- sebum (sē'būm) (†)** An oily substance produced by sebaceous glands. (24)
- Security Rule (sī-kyōōr'i-tē rōol)** The technical safeguards that protect the confidentiality, integrity, and availability of health information covered by HIPAA. The Security Rule specifies how patient information is protected on computer networks, the Internet, disks, and other storage media. (3)
- seizure (sēzhər)** A series of violent and involuntary contractions of the muscles; also called a convulsion. (27)
- sella turcica (sel'ə tür'sē-kä) (†)** A deep depression in the sphenoid bone where the pituitary gland sits. (25)
- semen (sēmən)** Sperm and the various substances that nourish and transport them. (35)
- semicircular canals (sēmē-sūr'kyə-lər kə-nāl'z)** Structures in the inner ear that help a person maintain balance; each of the three canals is positioned at right angles to the other two. (33)
- seminal vesicles (sem'nāl ves'i-klz) (†)** A pair of convoluted tubes that lie behind the bladder. These tubes secrete a fluid that provides nutrition for the sperm. (35)
- seminiferous tubules (sem'i-nifer-ūs tū'byūlz) (†)** These tubes contain spermatogenic cells and are located in the lobules of the testes. (35)
- sensorineural hearing loss (sensōr-i-nūrāl hīr'ing lōs)** This type of hearing loss occurs when neural structures associated with the ear are damaged. Neural structures include hearing receptors and the auditory nerve. (33)
- sensory (sēnsə-rē)** Afferent neurons that carry sensory information from the periphery to the central nervous system. (27)
- sensory adaptation (sēnsə-rē ād'āp-tā'shən)** A process in which the same chemical can stimulate receptors only for a limited amount of time until the receptors eventually no longer respond to the chemical. (33)
- septic shock (sēptik shōk)** A state of shock resulting from massive, widespread infection that affects the blood vessels' ability to circulate blood. (44)
- sequential order (sī'kwēn'shəl ōr'dər)** One after another in a predictable pattern or sequence. (10)
- serosa (se-rō'sā) (†)** The outermost layer of the alimentary canal; also known as the visceral peritoneum. (31)
- serous cells (sēr'ūs sēlz) (†)** One of two types of cells that make up the salivary glands. These cells secrete a watery fluid that contains amylase. (31)
- serum (sēr'ūm) (†)** The clear, yellow liquid that remains after a blood clot forms; it is separated from the clotting elements by centrifugation. (48)
- service contract (sūr'vīs kōn'trākt')** A contract that covers services for equipment that are not included in a standard maintenance contract. (5)
- sex chromosome (sēks krō'mə-sōm')** Chromosome of the 23rd pair. (23)
- sex-linked trait (sēks līngk trāt)** Traits that are carried on the sex chromosomes, or X and Y chromosomes. (23)