Chapter 6
Medical Terminology Review

Learning Objectives

- Explain why using correct medical terminology in medical settings is important
- Identify, describe three word parts that make up medical terms
- State why understanding how each word part functions is important
- Pronounce various medical terms correctly by applying appropriate pronunciation guidelines

Learning Objectives (Cont’d)

- Correctly change various medical terms from singular to plural form
- Define & give example of homonym, antonym, synonym
- Describe impact on patient care when paramedics have solid grasp of correct medical terminology
Introduction

- Medical terminology
  - Language used in medicine & health care
  - Records every aspect of patient care
  - Understanding origins, components, guidelines for use can use medical terms correctly

Introduction (Cont’d)

- Use of incorrect medical terminology
  - Ineffective, harmful treatment
  - Loss of trust in paramedic
  - Lawsuit

Origins of Medical Words

- Majority come from Greek, Latin words
  - Greek
    - Refer to disease
  - Latin
    - Anatomic structures
- Medical language combination of Greek, Latin, eponyms
  - Words named for specific person, place, thing
Origins of Medical Words (Cont’d)

- Medical eponyms
  - Specific people
  - Specific things

Components of Words

- Break longer medical terms into smaller parts
  - Prefix
  - Root
  - Suffix

Components of Words (Cont’d)

- Word roots
  - Establish basic meaning of word
  - Compound roots
    - Words with more than one root
      - Each word root keeps basic meaning
Components of Words (Cont’d)

- Prefixes
  - Introduces another thought, explains word root
  - Added before word root
  - Does not change meaning of root
  - Changes meaning of medical term
  - Describe what, how, why, when of root

Components of Words (Cont’d)

- Suffixes
  - Added at end of word root
  - Changes, adds to word’s meaning, provides further definition
  - Able to change medical term to noun or adjective as needed

Components of Words (Cont’d)

- Combining forms & vowels
  - Some word roots cannot combine with other roots
  - Combining form
    - Word root with added vowel
    - Combining vowel
  - Guidelines for use
    - Use before suffix that begins with consonant
    - Use to join other root words
    - Do not use before suffix beginning with vowel
Using a Medical Dictionary

- Pronunciation & spelling
  - Vowels
    - If followed by another vowel, first vowel receives long pronunciation, macron (¯) is placed over vowel
    - If followed by consonant, short pronunciation

Using a Medical Dictionary (Cont'd)

- Pronunciation & spelling
  - Consonants
    - Some soft, hard sounding
  - Unusual pronunciation
    - Two consonants together or x as first letter
      - Ch in chromosome pronounced as k
      - Ph in pharynx pronounced as f

Plurals

- Forming plural words from English nouns
  - Formed by adding s to singular form
  - Nouns ending in s, ch, sh add es to singular form
  - Nouns ending in y preceded by consonant, change y to i, add es
  - Nouns ending in o, add s or es
  - Nouns ending in f or fe, drop the f or fe, add ves
Plurals (Cont’d)

• Forming plural words from Latin & Greek nouns
  ➢ Nouns ending in a, add e
  ➢ Nouns ending in ax or ix, change x to c, add es
  ➢ Nouns ending in en, drop en, add ina
  ➢ Nouns ending in ex, change to ices
  ➢ Nouns ending in is, change to es or ides
  ➢ Nouns ending in ma, change to mata

Plurals (Cont’d)

• Forming plural words from Latin & Greek nouns
  ➢ Nouns ending in nx, anx, inx, ynx, change to nges
  ➢ Nouns ending in on, change to a
  ➢ Nouns ending in um, change to a
  ➢ Nouns ending in us, change to i
  ➢ Nouns ending in y preceded by consonant, change y to i, add es

Plurals (Cont’d)

• Forming plural words from Latin & Greek nouns
  ➢ Spelling
    ➢ Incorrect can cause confusion, misdiagnosis
  ➢ Homonyms
    ➢ Medical terms sound alike, spelled differently with different meanings
Antonyms
- Root words, prefixes, suffixes have opposite meaning of another word

Synonyms
- Can be root words, prefixes, suffixes
- Same or similar meaning as another word

Abbreviations
- Some standard, used universally
- Check with local EMS provider/hospital for approved list
- When in doubt, write word out fully
Practice

- Break down complex words into separate parts
- Look up new terms in glossary, dictionary when studying
- Spelling, pronunciation essential elements of effective communication

Practice (Cont’d)

- Errors endanger patient’s health & paramedic’s reputation
- Proficient use demonstrates professionalism to patients, families, health care providers
  - Establishes credibility

Chapter Summary

- Paramedics use medical terminology daily, must know how to determine meaning of term
- Word parts used to build medical words are root words, prefixes, suffixes
- Understanding function of word parts helps determine meaning of unfamiliar medical terms
Chapter Summary (Cont’d)

- Practice makes perfect
  - Use flashcard, practice writing, saying word, look up in medical dictionary
- Practice pronouncing difficult medical terms
- Know guidelines for changing English, Greek, Latin words from singular to plural

Chapter Summary (Cont’d)

- Homonym, word with same pronunciation as another word, but different spelling, meaning
- Antonym, word with opposite meaning of another word
- Synonym, root word, suffix, prefix with same, almost same meaning as another

Chapter Summary (Cont’d)

- Correct use of medical terminology creates good impression, builds credibility with patients, families
Questions?