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Week 7: Medical Terminology

Module 3: Medical Terminology 5: Medical Suffixes

Lesson: How Do Word Endings Tell You What's Happening in the Body?

Lesson Overview

Students learn how medical suffixes provide important clues about conditions and procedures. They use evidence from the module to interpret medical terms and explain what is happening in the body.

Learning Targets

Identify and interpret common medical suffixes.

Use suffixes to determine what is happening in the body.

Use suffix meaning to decide what type of care is needed.

Vocabulary

Suffix
the ending that tells what is happening or being done

-itis
inflammation

-algia
pain

-ectomy / -tomy
medical procedures

Materials

Module
Student response sheets
Whiteboard or chart paper

Instructional Notes

This lesson builds on students' understanding that words often contain meaningful parts. Students investigate how suffixes provide clues to the meaning of medical terms and learn that health science professionals use these clues to understand conditions and procedures. Students gather evidence from the module and apply that evidence to interpret unfamiliar terms. The conceptual focus is that suffixes communicate important information about what is happening in the body or what action is being performed. Students shift from seeing medical terms as complex vocabulary to recognizing that word endings can provide evidence for meaning. Students may believe medical terms must be memorized individually or may focus only on the beginning of a word. Through the module, students discover that starting with the suffix helps identify conditions, symptoms, and procedures.



Learning Experience

8 min	Opening	Display the following words: Careless, Helpful, Washable, and Fearless. Ask, "What do you notice about these words?" Allow students time to identify patterns and discuss observations with a partner. Then ask, "How do the endings help you understand the meaning of each word?" After discussion, display the medical terms: Gastritis, Myalgia, and Hysterectomy. Ask, "If endings help us understand everyday words, could endings also help us understand medical words?" Tell students they will investigate that idea during the module. Students observe familiar words and identify patterns. They discuss how word endings contribute to meaning, make a prediction about whether medical word endings might also provide meaning, and share ideas and reasoning with a partner and the class. Sentence Frames: "I think the ending helps show ____." "I predict medical word endings can help us understand ____ because ____."
15 min	Module	Focus: How suffixes help identify conditions, procedures, and meaning in medical terms. Guiding Questions: • What does a suffix tell us? • What is the difference between a condition and a procedure? • How do health science professionals use suffixes to understand health information? Quick Checks: • What does the suffix -itis mean? • What does the suffix -algia mean? • What does the suffix -ectomy mean? • What does the suffix -tomy mean? • Why should you begin with the suffix when analyzing a medical term?
15 min	Application	Display the following medical terms from the module: Gastritis, Arthralgia, Myalgia, Hysterectomy, Laparotomy, and Colostomy. Remind students to use evidence from the module and begin with the suffix. Students first identify the suffix. They locate the suffix in each medical term and record the meaning of the suffix using evidence from the module. Next, students determine the meaning. They use the suffix to identify what is happening or what procedure is being performed and match each term to its correct description. Students then sort the terms into two groups: Conditions and Procedures. They should be prepared to explain their reasoning. Finally, students compare and revise. They compare their classifications with a partner, discuss any differences, and revise their work if new evidence changes their thinking. Sentence Frames: "The suffix ____ means ____." "This term belongs in the ____ group because ____." "One piece of evidence from the module is ____."



		Answer Key: Gastritis • Suffix: -itis • Meaning of suffix: inflammation • Meaning of term: inflammation of the stomach • Category: Condition Arthralgia • Suffix: -algia • Meaning of suffix: pain • Meaning of term: joint pain • Category: Condition Myalgia • Suffix: -algia • Meaning of suffix: pain • Meaning of term: muscle pain • Category: Condition Hysterectomy • Suffix: -ectomy • Meaning of suffix: surgical removal • Meaning of term: removal of the uterus • Category: Procedure Laparotomy • Suffix: -tomy • Meaning of suffix: surgical incision • Meaning of term: surgical incision into the abdominal cavity • Category: Procedure Colostomy • Suffix: -stomy • Meaning of suffix: creation of an opening to the outside of the body • Meaning of term: opening from the colon to the outside of the body • Category: Procedure Conditions: • Gastritis • Arthralgia • Myalgia Procedures: • Hysterectomy • Laparotomy • Colostomy
2 min	Reflection	How do suffixes help you understand health problems and medical procedures?
2 min	Career Connections	Health science professionals use suffixes to understand medical records, communicate with colleagues, and interpret health information. A suffix can help identify whether a term describes a disease, symptom, condition, or procedure. Understanding medical suffixes helps healthcare workers make informed decisions and communicate clearly about patient care.