Consumer Health Information Resources

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http://nnlm.gov/pnr
Why Is Health Information Unique?

Medical Terminology

Highly Emotional

Scary!
The Nature of the Problem

“Conversations with doctors are often confusing for me. They might well have warned me about the [procedure], but I didn’t catch it. They carefully explain things to me, and I make like the intelligent, deeply comprehending person I wish I could be. I nod and furrow my brow. The doctors’ words run down one of my deep furrows and keep right on running, out to the foggy sunset…I just can’t focus on all the variables.”

Jack Slater

Seattle Times, December 3, 2003
Health information-seeking

- Physician’s query: “I need information on the management of hypomagnesemia.”

- Patient’s query: “I had diarrhea and I was in the hospital for 18 days and now I’m supposed to have transfusions. The doctor says it’s to fix my muscles and nerves. Can you look this up?”
## Health information-seeking

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Actual Reference Question</th>
<th>What the patron meant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sick lick vomiting</td>
<td>Cyclic vomiting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vascular urethral reflux</td>
<td>Vesicoureteral reflux</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dropped bladder</td>
<td>Cystocele</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fireballs in the eucharist</td>
<td>Fibroids in the uterus</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Don’t guess! There’s a big difference between multiple myeloma and malignant melanoma. Refer them back to their doctor or pharmacist if there is uncertainty.
Medical Terminology
Deciphering “Medspeak”

- Mostly Greek or Latin origins
  - Diagnosis and Surgery – Greek
  - Anatomical terms – Latin

- Medical terms are formed from word:
  - Roots
  - Prefixes
  - Suffixes
  - Combining vowels/forms
Medical Terminology
Deciphering “Medspeak”

- Root – the foundation of the word, can be combined with a prefix or suffix
- Prefix – place before the root to modify its meaning
- Suffix – placed after the root to modify and give essential meaning to the root
- Combining form – root with a combining vowel attached (e.g. lip/o-); o is the most common combining vowel
Medical Terminology
Deciphering “Medspeak”

- In deciphering medical terms, it is best to look first at the meaning of the suffix, then at the meaning of the root and prefix.

Example:
hyperlipoproteinemia
hyper- (prefix) – excessive
lip- (root) – fat
o (vowel used to create a combining form, lipo-)
protein (root) – protein
-emia (suffix) – blood condition

Hyperlipoproteinemia – a blood condition, characterized by an excessive amount of fat and protein.
Medical Terminology
Deciphering “Medspeak”

**Example:**

**pericarditis**
peri- (prefix) – around
cardi (root) – heart
-itis (suffix) – inflammation

Pericarditis literally means “inflammation around the heart” but the dictionary states that this term means inflammation of the pericardium (-ium is a suffix meaning tissue), the sac that encloses the heart.
Medical Terminology
Deciphering “Medspeak”

- Using a medical dictionary
  When the exact word for which you need a definition is not in the dictionary, look up the root word. Medical dictionaries use sub-entries heavily. You may find the exact word you are looking for listed under its root.
Medical Terminology
Deciphering “Medspeak”

Example from *Dorland’s Illustrated Medical Dictionary*. Note the sub-entries.

**Kidney** (kid´ ne) [L. *ren*; Gr. *nephros*] [MeSH: Kidney] either of the two organs in the lumbar region that filter the blood...The kidney consists of a *cortex* and a *medulla*

**abdominal k.**, an ectopic kidney situated above the iliac crest with the hilus adjacent to the second lumbar vertebra

**flea-bitten k.**, a kidney which has a small, randomly scattered petechiae on its surface, sometimes seen in bacterial endocarditis.
Medical Terminology
Deciphering “Medspeak”

- If the exact word you were looking for isn’t a sub-entry, look up the word’s prefixes and suffixes. Common medical prefixes and suffixes will have main entries.
Pop Quiz

- On page 2 of your Medical Terminology handout, there are some exercises.

- Using the tables of prefixes, suffixes, and roots on the following pages find the meanings of the words on the bottom of page 2.
Health information-seeking

Frequently Asked Questions:

- Descriptions of particular procedures
- Latest treatment for...
- “Everything” about...
- “The best” doctor or hospital
- Drug information
- Herbal information
- Others that you’ve encountered?
The patron’s path to you

Who do consumers ask for health information?

By the time the patron (who may or may not be the patient) gets to the library, the information is already second- or third-hand.

Physician → Patient → Friend/relative → Library
MedlinePlus

- Why is it one of the best?
  - The National Library of Medicine produces it
  - The information is reviewed and reliable. It links to governmental and non-profit organizations’ web sites.
  - Continually updated
  - No advertising or links to commercial sites
  - Top-ranked government web site in the American Customer Satisfaction Index
Let’s take a look!

Medlineplus.gov
Other Consumer Health Sites

See the list in your handouts

- Doctor Finders – Directories
- Drug and Herbal Information
- Cancer-specific sites
- Directories of associations
- Lab test information
- Household products and other toxicology resources
So, where does resource sharing fit in?

- From MedlinePlus to PubMed
  - Pre-formatted searches – somebody has already done the work!
  - Reasonable number of results
  - Finding the full journal titles
  - Finding what consumer health journals are indexed in PubMed
  - The power of setting limits!
Okay, I’ve found the perfect article – now what?

- Is it available full-text for free?
- Does your library subscribe to a database that might contain the journal?
  - ProQuest
  - Gale Health & Wellness Center
  - EbscoHost
  - Others…
I really can’t get my hands on the article – where do I turn?

https://docline.gov/loansome/login.cfm
What is Loansome Doc?

- Loansome Doc is the National Library of Medicine's (NLM) program that enables PubMed users to electronically order photocopies of documents. PubMed is the NLM web program that provides health professionals access via personal computer to MEDLINE and other databases.
How do I order documents using Loansome Doc?

1. Do a PubMed search.
2. Locate and select citations from PubMed.
3. Tag the specific citations on the screen for which you would like to receive photocopies.
4. Submit your order.
How will my request be processed?

- Your message with the tagged citations will be sent to your primary library for copying.
- Articles will be photocopied and returned by mail or as specified.
- Requests for items not owned or unavailable at your primary library will be returned to the user unfilled or referred to another library as specified by the user.
What are the charges for Loansome Doc?

- Each Loansome Doc library has its own policies regarding fees for articles.
- In choosing your primary library you should consider the cost of articles.
- During the Loansome Doc sign-up process there will be an opportunity to review the fees for participating libraries, or a phone number to call to inquire about fees.
Loansome Doc Registration

Using Loansome Doc through PubMed:

http://www.pubmed.gov/
Find out more

- Frequently Asked Questions
- Loansome Doc Fact Sheet
- NN/LM Online Tutorial: Using Loansome Doc
- NN/LM PNR Loansome Doc
DOCLINE is the National Library of Medicine's automated interlibrary loan (ILL) request routing and referral system. DOCLINE links journal holdings to efficiently route the requests to potential lending libraries on behalf of the borrower. There are currently over 3,200 libraries from the U.S., Canada, and Mexico participating in DOCLINE.
http://nnlm.gov/pnr

Resources for Members of the National Network of Libraries of Medicine (NN/LM) Pacific Northwest Region


The NN/LM's goal is to enhance access to health information for health professionals and the public. If your institution is not a member and you would like more information about joining the network, please click here.

Quick Links:
- Health Information on the Web
  - MedlinePlus*
  - PubMed
- Network Member Directory
- NN/LM
- Especially for
  - American Indians & Alaska Natives
  - Community-based Organizations
  - Health Professionals
  - Public Health Workforce
  - Public Libraries
- NN/LM Evaluation Resource Center (CERC)

NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS:
- Regional Calendar
- Dragony, our newsletter
- HUB-NW Discussion List
- PNR News Announcement List
- NLM Technical Bulletin
Thank you!

Questions?

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