

Glossary

The glossary includes terms that medical staff may use when talking to you, as well as terms used in this book. A guide to pronunciation is given in square brackets.

activities of daily living (ADL): the basic elements of personal care such as eating, washing and showering, grooming, walking, standing up from a chair, using the toilet

agraphia [*ay-graf-ee-ah*]: inability to write

alexia [*ay-lek-see-ah*]: inability to read

amnesia [*am-nee-zhee-ah*]: failure in part of the memory system

aneurysm [*an-yoo-ris-im*]: the ballooning out of the wall of an artery. This stretches and thins the wall further and finally it may break, with severe bleeding

angiogram [*an-jee-o-gram*]: an x-ray to examine the inside of an artery

angiography [*an-jee-og-rah-fee*]: examination by angiogram

anomia [*an-oh-mee-ah*]: difficulty in choosing the correct word

aphasia [*a-fay-zhee-ah*]: inability to speak or to understand spoken language

apraxia [*a-prak-see-ah*]: inability to carry out a purposeful act even though the person is physically able to do it

arteriogram [*ar-teh-ree-o-gram*]: x-ray of an artery

arteriole [*ar-teh-ree-ole*]: a small artery

arteriosclerosis [*ar-teh-ree-o-skleh-ro-sis*]: hardening of artery walls caused by atherosclerosis

artery [*ar-teh-ree*]: a blood vessel that carries blood from the heart to other parts of the body

ataxia [a-tak-see-ah]: lack of coordination, unsteadiness

atherosclerosis [ath-er-o-skleh-ro-sis]: a disease where fats and other deposits build up on the inner lining of an artery

atrial fibrillation [at-ree-al fib-rill-ay-shun]: rapid, irregular contractions of the heart – the walls of the atrium (a chamber in the heart) ‘quiver’ rather than contract strongly, and this makes the blood in the heart more likely to clot

bilateral [by-/at-er-al]: both sides of the body

body image: the idea or image a person has of the shape and appearance of their own body

brainstem: the narrowed, lower part of the brain at the back, just above the spinal cord – controls survival functions such as breathing, blood pressure, consciousness

capillary [kah-pill-ah-ree]: a tiny blood vessel. Capillaries form a network that joins an artery and a vein

cardiac [kah-dee-ak]: relating to the heart

cardiovascular [kah-dee-o-vass-kew-lah]: relating to the heart and blood vessels

carotid artery [kah-rot-id ah-ter-ee]: one of a pair of important arteries running up the side of the neck and carrying blood to the brain

carotid endarterectomy [kah-rot-id en-dar-teh-rec-tom-ee]: an operation to remove deposits from the walls of a carotid artery

catheter [kath-et-er]: a small tube inserted into the bladder which drains urine into a collecting device such as a bag

cerebellum [seh-reh-bell-um]: the part of the brain at the back, underneath the main part of the brain – controls coordination of movements

cerebral [seh-reh-bral]: relating to the brain

cerebral cortex [*seh-reh-bral kor-tekts*]: the outer layer of the main, upper part of the brain

cerebral haemorrhage [*seh-reh-bral hem-orr-aj*]: bleeding from a burst artery into the substance of the brain or into surrounding areas

cerebral hemisphere [*seh-reh-bral hem-iss-fear*]: one of the two halves of the brain, which are joined together by large bundles of nerve fibres

cerebral infarct [*seh-reh-bral in-farkt*]: an area where brain cells have died

cerebral oedema [*seh-reh-bral ee-dee-mah*]: swelling of the brain

cerebral thrombosis [*seh-reh-bral throm-bo-sis*]: the closing off of an artery by blood clotting

cerebrovascular accident (CVA) [*seh-reh-bro-vass-kew-lah...*]: a term sometimes used for stroke

cerebrum [*seh-reh-brum*]: the main, upper part of the brain

cholesterol [*koh-less-teh-rol*]: a fat which is normally found in the body, but which can cause disease if too much is present. Also found in some foods such as animal fats and eggs

circulatory system [*ser-kew-lah-torr-ee...*]: the body system, including heart and blood vessels, which circulates the blood

cognition (or cognitive function) [*kog-nish-un*]: higher intellectual functioning such as awareness, perception, learning, reasoning, memory, problem solving

colour agnosia [...*ag-no-zhee-ah*]: difficulty in recognising colours

coma [*ko-mah*]: a state of deep unconsciousness

confabulation [*kon-fab-yoo-lay-shun*]: filling gaps in memory with imagined events

contraction of muscle: shortening of fibres, pulling tight

contracture: shortening and tightening of tissue around a joint so that the muscle cannot be lengthened and loss of available movement occurs

contralateral [kon-trah-/at-er-al]: the opposite side of the body

coordination: a process of the brain which directs various parts of the body to function smoothly together

CT (computerised tomography) scan: a brain x-ray which can help find out the type of stroke and provide detailed information on changes caused to the brain

CVA: see cerebrovascular accident

disability: a defect in normal performance of an activity or action of mind or body

disinhibition [diss-in-hib-*ish*-un]: a lack of self-control

drop-foot: a foot that dangles when the leg is lifted because ankle muscles are weak

dysarthria [diss-*ar*-three-ah]: difficulty producing speech because of weakness of the tongue, mouth, jaw or voice-box

dyslipidaemia [diss-lip-id-*eem*-ee-ah]: abnormality in blood fats

dyslexia [diss-*lek*-see-ah]: difficulty with reading

dysphagia [diss-*fay*-jee-ah]: difficulty with swallowing

dysphasia [diss-*fay*-zhee-ah]: reduced ability to communicate

dysphonia [diss-*fo*-nee-ah]: impairment of the voice

dyspraxia [diss-*prak*-see-ah]: reduced ability to carry out purposeful movement

echocardiogram [ek-o-*kar*-dee-o-gram]: ultrasound scan to test heart function

electrocardiogram (ECG) [ee-*lek*-tro-*kar*-dee-o-gram]: a test that measures the rhythm and activity of the heart

embolism [*em*-bol-iz-im]: blockage of a blood vessel by an embolus

embolus [*em-bol-us*]: a clot of blood (or some other substance) that travels in the bloodstream

emotional lability [...*la-bil-it-ee*]: a condition in which the mood of the person swings rapidly from one state to another

enteral feeding [*en-teh-ral...*]: feeding using a tube connecting with the stomach

flaccidity [*flass-id-it-ee*]: absence of muscle tone, resulting in floppy muscles

gait [*gayt*]: manner of walking

haemorrhage [*hem-orr-aj*]: bleeding

haemorrhagic [*hem-orr-ah-jik*]: relating to bleeding

handicap: relates to the social implications of having a disability or impairment

hemianopia [*hem-ee-ah-nop-ee-ah*]: loss of half the field of vision in each eye

hemiparesis [*hem-ee-pah-ree-sis*]: weakness in one half (side) of the body

hemiplegia [*hem-ee-plee-jah*]: loss of movement in one half (side) of the body

hemisphere of brain [*hem-iss-fear...*]: one half (side) of brain

hypertension [*hy-per-ten-shun*]: abnormally high blood pressure

hypotension [*hy-po-ten-shun*]: abnormally low blood pressure

impairment: a defect in organ function or in a whole body system

impotence: loss of ability to obtain or maintain penile erection

incontinence: loss of control over bladder or bowel functions

infarction [*in-fark-shun*]: area of damaged or dead tissue

intracerebral haemorrhage [*in-tra-seh-reh-bral hem-orr-aj*]: bleeding within the brain

intravenous [in-tra-veen-us]: in a vein

involuntary action: one that happens without being willed or intended

ipsilateral [ip-see-lat-er-al]: the same side

ischaemia [iss-kee-mee-ah]: the state of a tissue whose blood supply has been reduced or cut off

ischaemic stroke [iss-kee-mik...]: a stroke caused by part of the brain not receiving sufficient blood

ligament [lig-ah-ment]: a band of tissue that connects and strengthens bone joints

motor: relating to movement

motor nerve: a nerve connected to a muscle – carries messages *from* the brain

MRI (magnetic resonance imaging) scan: a medical imaging technique used to visualise internal structures of the body in detail

neglect, one-sided: a term sometimes used for lack of awareness to one side

nerve: a bundle of fibres which carry messages between the brain and other parts of the body

oedema [ee-dee-mah]: swelling

orthosis [or-tho-sis]: device to support part of the body, eg, a leg brace

paraesthesia [pah-res-thee-zhee-ah]: abnormal skin sensations, eg, 'pins and needles'

paralysis [pah-ral-ee-sis]: loss of movement

paraphasia [pah-rah-fay-zhee-ah]: producing unintended phrases, words or syllables during speech

paresis [pah-ree-sis]: muscle weakness

perception: the ability to receive, interpret and use information

perceptual disorder: impairment of perception

rehabilitation: restoration of the disabled person to the greatest possible independence

sensory nerve: a nerve carrying information about touch, pain, temperature, etc. *to* the brain

spasm [*spaz-im*]: involuntary contraction of a muscle

spastic paralysis: loss of voluntary movement, but with the muscles sometimes acting on their own

spasticity [*spass-tiss-it-ee*]: a state of increased muscle tone resulting in the muscle being continuously tight

spinal cord: a hollow structure that extends from the brainstem to the lower back and carries the main motor nerves and sensory nerves

stroke: sudden damage to nerve cells in the brain

subarachnoid haemorrhage [*sub-ah-rak-noid hem-orr-aj*]: bleeding between the brain surface and one of the thin layers of tissue that cover the brain

tactile: relating to touch

thromboembolus [*throm-bo-em-bol-us*]: a clot which has travelled in an artery or vein

thrombolysis [*throm-bo-lie-sis*] intravenous drug treatment to break down clots causing an ischaemic stroke; sometimes written as tPA

thrombus [*throm-bus*]: a clot formed within the heart or a blood vessel

tone: the degree of tension in a muscle at rest

transient ischaemic attack (TIA) [*tran-zhee-ent iss-kee-mik...*]: a temporary stroke with symptoms lasting less than 24 hours (usually less than 1-2 hours)

vascular [*vass-kew-lah*]: relating to the blood supply or blood vessels

venule: a small vein

vein [vayn]: a blood vessel that carries blood back to the heart

vertebral artery [*ver-teh-bral...*]: one of a pair of important arteries running up the back of the neck within the bones of the spine and carrying blood to the brain

videofluoroscopy (computerised tomography) [*vid-ee-o-flew-o-ros-co-pee*]: a video x-ray of swallowing mechanisms

visuospatial disorder/disturbance [*viz-yoo-o-spay-shal...*]: inability to recognise or perceive time, distance, areas of space, etc.

voluntary movement or action: a movement that arises as a result of wishing or intending to move, eg, putting out the hand to take food

whanau: the extended family.