

# 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-*o*-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-*lat*-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*-teks]: 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-lat-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-ra-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

**whānau**: the extended family.