

GLOSSARY

Abdomen: The part of the body that contains the pancreas, stomach, intestines, liver, gallbladder, and other organs.

Abdominal: Having to do with the abdomen, which is the part of the body between the chest and the hips that contains the pancreas, stomach, intestines, liver, gallbladder, and other organs.

Alimentary: Pertaining to food or nutritive material, or to the organs of digestion.

Ataxia: Loss of muscle coordination.

Atypical: Irregular; not conformable to the type; in microbiology, applied specifically to strains of unusual type.

Bile: A fluid made by the liver and stored in the gallbladder. Bile is excreted into the small intestine where it helps digest fat.

Biliary: Having to do with the liver, bile ducts, and/or gallbladder.

Biological therapy: Treatment to stimulate or restore the ability of the immune system to fight infection and disease. Also used to lessen side effects that may be caused by some cancer treatments. Also known as immunotherapy, biotherapy, or biological response modifier (BRM) therapy.

Biopsy: The removal of cells or tissues for examination under a microscope. When only a sample of tissue is removed, the procedure is called an incisional biopsy or core biopsy. When an entire tumor or lesion is removed, the procedure is called an excisional biopsy. When a sample of tissue or fluid is removed with a needle, the procedure is called a needle biopsy or fineneedle aspiration.

Bypass: A surgical procedure in which the doctor creates a new pathway for the flow of body fluids.

Carcinoma: Cancer that begins in the skin or in tissues that line or cover internal organs.

Catheter: A flexible tube used to deliver fluids into or withdraw fluids from the body.

Cell: The individual unit that makes up all of the tissues of the body. All living things are made up of one or more cells.

Chemotherapy: Treatment with anticancer drugs.

Cholangiography: Roentgenography of the biliary ducts after administration or injection of a contrast medium, orally, intravenously or percutaneously.

Chronic: A disease or condition that persists or progresses over a long period of time.

Colon: The long, coiled, tubelike organ that removes water from digested food. The remaining material, solid waste called stool, moves through the colon to the rectum and leaves the body through the anus.

Distal: Remote; farther from any point of reference; opposed to proximal. In dentistry, used to designate a position on the dental arch farther from the median line of the jaw.

Endocrine (system): in charge of body processes that happen slowly, such as cell growth.

Endoscope: A thin, lighted tube used to look at tissues inside the body.

Enzyme: A protein that speeds up chemical reactions in the body.

ERCP: Endoscopic retrograde cholangiopancreatography. A procedure to x-ray the bile and pancreatic ducts. In this procedure, a thin, lighted tube (endoscope) is passed through the mouth and down into the first part of the small intestine (duodenum). A smaller tube (catheter) is then inserted through the endoscope into the bile and pancreatic ducts. A dye is injected through the catheter into the ducts, and an x-ray is taken.

Esophagus: The muscular tube through which food passes from the throat to the stomach.

Exocrine: secreting outwardly, via a duct.

Fatigue: The state of weariness following a period of exertion, mental or physical, characterized by a decreased capacity for work and reduced efficiency to respond to stimuli.

Gallbladder: The pear-shaped organ that sits below the liver. Bile is concentrated and stored in the gallbladder.

Gastric: Having to do with the stomach.

Gland: An organ that produces and releases one or more substances for use in the body. Some glands produce fluids that affect tissues or organs. Others produce hormones or participate in blood production.

Glucose: Sugar.

Heredity: 1. the genetic transmission of a particular quality or trait from parent to offspring. 2. the genetic constitution of an individual.

Hormones: Chemicals produced by glands in the body and circulated in the bloodstream. Hormones control the actions of certain cells or organs.

Immunotherapy: Treatment to stimulate or restore the ability of the immune system to fight infection and disease. Also used to lessen side effects that may be caused by some cancer treatments. Also called biological therapy or biological response modifier (BRM) therapy.

Incision: A cut made in the body during surgery.

Insulin: A hormone made by the islet cells of the pancreas. Insulin controls the amount of sugar in the blood by moving it into the cells, where it can be used by the body for energy.

Intestine: A long, tube-shaped organ in the abdomen that completes the process of digestion. There is both a large intestine and a small intestine. Also called the bowel.

Intravenous: (IV) Into a vein.

Jaundice: A condition in which the skin and the whites of the eyes become yellow, urine darkens, and stool becomes clay colored. Jaundice occurs when the liver is not working properly or when a bile duct is blocked.

Laparoscopy: The insertion of a thin, lighted tube (called a laparoscope) through the abdominal wall to inspect the inside of the abdomen and remove tissue samples.

Liver: A large, glandular organ located in the upper abdomen. The liver cleanses the blood and aids in digestion by secreting bile.

Lymph: The almost colorless fluid that travels through the lymphatic system and carries cells that help fight infection and disease.

Malignant: Cancerous; a growth with a tendency to invade and destroy nearby tissue and spread to other parts of the body.

Melanoma: A form of skin cancer that arises in melanocytes, the cells that produce pigment. Melanoma usually begins in a mole.

MRI: Magnetic resonance imaging. A procedure in which a magnet linked to a computer is used to create detailed pictures of areas inside the body.

Neoplasia: Abnormal and uncontrolled cell growth.

Oncology: The study of cancer.

Palliative: 1. affording relief, but not cure. 2. an alleviating medicine.

Pancreas: A glandular organ located in the abdomen. It makes pancreatic juices, which contain enzymes that aid in digestion, and it produces several hormones, including insulin. The pancreas is surrounded by the stomach, intestines, and other organs.

Pancreatectomy: Surgery to remove the pancreas. In a total pancreatectomy, a portion of the stomach, the duodenum, common bile duct, gallbladder, spleen, and nearby lymph nodes also are removed.

Pancreatic: Having to do with the pancreas.

Pancreatitis: Acute or chronic inflammation of the pancreas, which may be asymptomatic or symptomatic, and which is due to autodigestion of a pancreatic tissue by its own enzymes. It is caused most often by alcoholism or biliary tract disease; less commonly it may be associated with hyperlipaemia, hyperparathyroidism, abdominal trauma (accidental or operative injury), vasculitis, or uraemia.

Percutaneous: Performed through the skin, as injection of radiopaque material in radiological examination, or the removal of tissue for biopsy accomplished by a needle.

PTC: Percutaneous transhepatic cholangiography. A procedure to x-ray the bile ducts. In this procedure, a dye is injected through a thin needle inserted through the skin into the liver or the gallbladder, and an x-ray picture is taken.

Radiation therapy: The use of high-energy radiation from x-rays, gamma rays, neutrons, and other sources to kill cancer cells and shrink tumors. Radiation may come from a machine outside the body (external-beam radiation therapy), or it may come from radioactive material placed in the body in the area near cancer cells (internal radiation therapy, implant radiation, or brachytherapy). Systemic radiation therapy uses a radioactive substance, such as a radio labeled monoclonal antibody that circulates throughout the body. Also called radiotherapy.

Radioisotope: An unstable element that releases radiation as it breaks down. Radioisotopes can be used in imaging tests or as a treatment for cancer.

Radiosensitizers: Drugs that make tumor cells more sensitive to radiation.

Retrograde: 1. moving backward or against the usual direction of flow. 2. degenerating, deteriorating, or catabolic.

Sonogram: A computer picture of areas inside the body created by bouncing sound waves off organs and other tissues. Also called ultrasonogram or ultrasound.

Spleen: An organ that is part of the lymphatic system. The spleen produces lymphocytes, filters the blood, stores blood cells, and destroys old blood cells. It is located on the left side of the abdomen near the stomach.

Staging: Performing exams and tests to learn the extent of the cancer within the body, especially whether the disease has spread from the original site to other parts of the body.

Stent: A device placed in a body structure (such as a blood vessel or the gastrointestinal tract) to provide support and keep the structure open.

Stomach: An organ that is part of the digestive system. It helps in the digestion of food by mixing it with digestive juices and churning it into a thin liquid.

Systemic: Affecting the entire body.

Tomography: A series of detailed pictures of areas inside the body; the pictures are created by a computer linked to an x-ray machine.