

FACTSHEET 3: ORTHOPAEDIC TERMINOLOGY

Abduction:	To move away from the midline of the body or (digits) from the axial line of a limb.
Adduction:	To move towards the mid line of the body or (digits) towards the axial line of a limb.
Anaesthesia:	Loss of feeling or sensation in all or part of the body.
Achilles tendon:	The Tendon of the muscles of the calf of the leg (the gastrocnemius and soleus muscles), situated at the back of the ankle and attached to the calcaneus (heel bone).
Anterior:	Describing or relating to the front (ventral) portion of the limbs.
Axilla:	The armpit.
Biceps:	A muscle with two heads. The biceps brachii extends from the shoulder joint to the elbow. It flexes the arm and forearm and supinates the forearm and hand. The biceps femoris is situated at the back of thigh and is responsible for flexing the knee, extending the thigh, and rotating the leg outwards.
Brachial Plexus:	A network of nerves, arising from the spine at the base of the neck that gives rise to the nerves supplying the arm, forearm, hand and parts of the shoulder girdle.
Bursa:	A small fibrous tissue sac filled with fluid formed as a result of prolonged pressure or friction.
Calcaneum/ Calcaneus:	The large bone in the tarsus of the foot that forms the projection of the heel behind the foot. It articulates with the cuboid bone in front and with the talus above.
Cerebral Palsy:	Persisting, qualitative motor disorder appearing before the age of three, due to non-progressive damage to the brain.
Chopart:	Amputation at mid-tarsal level.
Clonus:	Alternative involuntary muscular contraction and relaxation in rapid succession.
Comminuted:	A fracture in which the bone is broken into more than two pieces. A crushing force fracture is usually responsible and there is often extensive injury to surrounding soft tissues.
Crepitus:	A crackling sound or grating feeling produced by bone grating on bone or cartilage indicative of osteoarthritis.

Distal:	Situated away from the origin or median line of the body
Disarticulation:	Separation of two bones at a joint. This may be the result of an injury or it may be done by the surgeon at operation in the course of amputation.
Dropfoot:	A decent or falling below the usual position.
Dorsal:	Relating to or situated at or close to the back of the body or to the posterior part of an organ.
Erythema:	Abnormal flushing of the skin caused by dilation of the blood capillaries. Erythema may be produced by various conditions. It is often a sign of inflammation and infection. For example erythema nodosum is a disease of sudden onset characterised by fever, joint pains, and an eruption of painful swellings on the legs.
Extension:	The movement of a joint so that the bones comprising of the joint move away from each other, e.g. in knee extension the tibia and femur move away from each other, increasing the angle at the back of the knee.
Femur:	A long bone between the hip and the knee.
Flexion:	The bending of a joint so that the bones comprising of the joint move towards each other, e.g. in hip flexion the femur and pelvis move closer together.
Fibula:	The long thin outer bone of the lower leg. The head of the fibula articulates with the tibia just below the knee: the lower end projects laterally as the lateral malleolus, which articulates with one side of the talus.
Gastrocnemius:	Calf-muscle: planter flexes foot, flexes knee joint.
Hemiplegia:	Paralysis of one side of the body.
Humerus:	The bone of the upper arm.
Hyperextension:	Extreme or excessive extension of a limb part.
Idiopathic:	Self originated: occurring without known cause.
Ischial:	A bone forming the lower part of each side of the hip bone.
Lateral:	Relating to the region or part of the body most distant to the midline of the body.
Laxity:	That which slackens or relaxes.
Lesion:	A zone of tissue with impaired function as a result of damage by disease or wounding.
Malleolus:	Either of the two protuberances on each side of the ankle
Medial:	Relating to the region or part of the body closest to the midline of the body.
Metacarpal:	Relating to the bones of the hand.
Metatarsals:	Relating to the bones of the foot.

Monoplegia:	Paralysis of a single part of the body.
Motoneuron:	Motor neuron a motor having a motor function; an efferent neuron conveying motor impulses.
Multiple Sclerosis:	Symptoms of lesions of the white matter are weakness, malco-ordination, parathesias, speech disturbances and visual complaints.
Neuropathy:	Any disease of the peripheral nerves, usually causing weakness and numbness.
Oedema:	Excessive accumulation of fluid in the body tissues: popularly known as dropsy. The resultant swelling may be local, as with an injury or inflammation, or more general, as with heart or kidney failure.
Olecranon:	The large process of the ulna that project behind the elbow joint.
Palmar:	Pertaining to or corresponding to the palm of the hand.
Palpation:	The process of examining part of the body by careful feeling with the hands and fingertips.
Patella:	The lens-shaped bone that forms the kneecap. It is situated in front of the knee in the tendon of the quadriceps muscle of the thigh.
Phalanx/Phalanges:	The bones of the fingers and toes (digits). The first digit (thumb/big toe) has two phalanges. Each of the remaining digits has three phalanges.
Plantar:	Relating to the sole of the foot i.e. plantar flexion is the bending of the toes (or fingers) downwards, towards the sole (or palm).
Plantigrade:	Walking on the entire sole of the foot.
Popliteus:	The area at the back of the knee.
Posterior:	Situated at or near the back of the body.
Proximal:	Situated close to the origin or close to the median line of the body.
Quadraplegia:	Paralysis of all four limbs.
Ramus:	A thin process projecting from a bone.
Scoliosis:	Lateral curvature of the vertebral column.
Spasticity:	A state of increased muscle tone with heightened deep tendon reflexes.
Sineal Braces:	Scoliosis, Idiopathic and Trauma.
Sub-epidermoidal Cyst:	An abnormal sac or closed tract lined with epithelium and filled with liquid or semisolid matter that lies beneath the epidermis.
Sulcus:	Infolding of soft tissue - groove.
Talus:	The ankle bone. It forms part of the tarsus, articulating with the tibia above, with the fibula to the lateral (outer) side, and with the calcaneus below.

Tendo-achilles:	Achilles Tendon.
Tetraplegia:	As Quadraplegia.
Tibia:	The shin bone: the inner and larger bone of the lower leg.
Transmetatarsal:	Amputation of bones of the foot i.e. toes.
Transphalangeal:	Amputation of bones of the hand i.e. fingers.
Transverse:	Situated at right angles to the long axis of the body.
Triceps:	A muscle with three heads of origin, particularly the triceps brachii, which is situated on the back of the upper arm and contracts to extend the forearm.
Trochanter:	Either of the two protuberances that occur below the neck of femur.
Tuberosity:	A large rounded protuberance on a bone.
Ulna:	The inner and longer bone of the forearm. It articulates with the humerus and radius above and with the radius and indirectly with the wrist bones below. At its upper end is the olecranon process and oronoid process; at the lower end is a cone-shaped styloid process.
Valgus:	Bent out twisted denoting a deformity in which the angulation is away from the midline of the body, as in Talipes Valgus.
Varus:	Describing any deformity that displaces the hand or foot towards the midline i.e. bowleg, club foot.

This information has been kindly supplied by Dorset Orthopaedic Company Ltd.