

Recording vocabulary

There are many different ways of recording vocabulary. Below are some examples that might help you.

Recording Patient Speak

Acquaint yourself with the language spoken by your patients – colloquialisms, drug-culture jargon, childhood expressions, etc. Using a split table like the one below can be a useful system to record these.

What the doctor might say	Patient Speak
vomit	(be) sick / puke / throw up / spew
urinate	(have a /go for a) pee / piss / wee
gastro-enteritis	(have an) upset tummy / stomach

Recording sub-technical words

Sub-technical words have a more general meaning in English usage in addition to their specialised medical meaning. It may help to record these words in the following format:

Meaning in General English	WORD	Meaning in Medical English
the process of broadcasting something by radio, television, etc.	transmission	the process of passing something (e.g. a disease) from one person to another
if the police arrest someone they take them into custody	arrest	as in cardiac arrest: heart failure
actors in a play or film	cast	protective casing made of plaster and bandage to protect broken limb during the healing process

Recording medical terminology

Prefixes (beginning of a word) and suffixes (end of a word) can often help you determine the meaning of a word. Try guessing the meaning of a word by detaching the prefix or suffix and seeing if you can find a recognisable root word.

WORD	Prefix	Root word	Suffix	Meaning in medical english
transplant	trans (move from one place to another)	plant (put seeds in the ground to grow)		replace one human organ with another
antenatal	ante (before)	natal (related to birth)		related to medical care given to pregnant women
arthritis*		arth (joint)	itis (inflammation)	inflamed joints
cardiopathy		cardio (related to the heart)	pathy (disease)	heart disease

* 'r' is added to facilitate pronunciation

Recording collocations

- 1 *An important part of developing your vocabulary is learning and recording collocations, i.e. words commonly found together. However, many grammatically correct combinations of words are not used in everyday language and it is important to be aware of those.*

Collocation	and NOT ...
blood sample	<i>sample of blood</i>
hay fever	<i>hay cold</i>
funny turn	<i>strange turn</i>

Collocation	and NOT ...
maternity leave	<i>maternity holiday</i>
pluses and minuses	<i>pluses and negatives</i>
on the pill	<i>on a pill</i>

- 2 *Look at how the key word is used in different contexts and the additional words around the key word; this will develop your understanding of how the word is used in English.*

	KEY WORD	
I'm not	quite	sure.
It gets		painful when I bend my arm.
The news came as		a shock, I think.
I'm afraid it's going to take		a bit of time to heal.

Recording spoken examples

Transcribe a sentence or part of speech that you hear making a note of who says it and the context.

I had my tonsils out when I was a little kid, I remember that.

Speaker: (Patient) / Doctor / Carer (*circle*)

Listener: Patient / (Doctor) / Carer (*circle*)

Context: Patient describing her medical history.

Add intonation indicators and stress markers to help you remember how to use the expression.

Rising intonation ↗

Falling intonation ↘

Markers to indicate the stress •••••