

# The American Senior Citizen

*Medical terms can often feel like an entirely different language. Many of them are misunderstood due to their technical nature or because they sound similar to other medical terms.*

**Abscess** - A collection of pus that forms in response to an infection.

**Acute** - A sudden onset of a condition, as opposed to chronic, which refers to a long-lasting condition.

**Anaphylaxis** - A severe, potentially life-threatening allergic reaction that requires immediate medical attention.

**Antibiotic** - A medication used to treat bacterial infections. It is not effective against viruses.

**Antiviral** - Medication used to treat viral infections, such as the flu or COVID-19.

**Arrhythmia** - An irregular heartbeat, which may be too fast, too slow, or erratic.

**Autopsy** – A postmortem examination performed to determine the cause of death.

**Benign** - Non-cancerous and generally not harmful in effect.

**Biopsy** - A sample of tissue is taken from the body to be examined for signs of disease.

**Bradycardia** - An abnormally slow heart rate, typically below 60 beats per minute.

**Chronic** - A condition that persists over a long period, such as diabetes.

**COPD (Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease)**—A progressive lung disease that causes breathing difficulties, often linked to smoking or long-term exposure to lung irritants.

**Corticosteroid** - A type of medication that reduces inflammation, commonly used in conditions like asthma, arthritis, or autoimmune diseases.

**CT Scan** - An imaging test that uses X-rays to create detailed pictures of the inside of the body.

**Delirium** - Sudden confusion or disorientation, often triggered by illness, infection, or medications.

**Dementia** - A group of symptoms affecting memory, thinking, and social abilities severely enough to interfere with daily life.

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**Dialysis** - A treatment that filters and purifies the blood for people whose kidneys are not functioning correctly.

**Edema** - Swelling caused by fluid buildup trapped in the body's tissues.

s in higher out-of-pocket costs and sometimes limited coverage.

**Endoscopy** - A procedure that uses a flexible tube with a tiny camera to look inside the digestive tract.

**Embolism** - A blockage caused by a blood clot or another substance that travels through the bloodstream and obstructs a vessel.

**Hemorrhage** - Severe or uncontrolled bleeding, which may occur internally or externally.

**Hyperglycemia** - High blood sugar levels, often associated with diabetes.

**Hypoglycemia** - Low blood sugar levels can lead to confusion, weakness, or fainting if untreated

**Hypertension** - High blood pressure can lead to serious health complications, including heart disease and stroke.

**Hypotension** - Low blood pressure may cause dizziness, weakness, or fainting.

**Incontinence** - The inability to control bladder or bowel movements.

**Infarction** - Tissue death caused by an inadequate blood supply, such as what occurs during a heart attack.

**Intubation** - Inserting a tube into the airway to assist with breathing, often during emergencies or surgeries.

**Ischemia** - A lack of blood flow to a specific area can lead to tissue damage.

**IV (Intravenous)** - A method of delivering fluids or medications directly into a vein.

**Laparoscopy** - A minimally invasive surgical procedure that uses small incisions and a camera to view inside the abdomen.

**Lesion** - Any abnormal tissue, such as a sore, wound, or tumor.

**Malignant** - Cancerous and potentially life-threatening.

**Metastasis** - The spread of cancer from one part of the body to another.

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**MRI (Magnetic Resonance Imaging)** - A scan that uses magnets and radio waves to produce highly detailed images of the body's organs and tissues.

**Oncologist** - A doctor who specializes in diagnosing and treating cancer.

**Osteoporosis** - A condition where bones become weak and brittle, increasing the risk of fractures

**Palliative Care** - A type of care focused on relieving symptoms and improving quality of life, rather than curing the disease.

**PICC Line** - A long, thin catheter inserted into a vein to deliver medication or nutrition over an extended period.

**Placebo** - A harmless pill, treatment, or procedure given to a patient for psychological benefits or as part of a clinical trial.

**Prognosis** - The predicted course or likely outcome of a disease.

**Prophylactic** - A treatment, medication, or device used to prevent disease.

**Remission** - A period when symptoms of a disease are reduced or completely disappear.

**Relapse** - The return of a disease or its symptoms after a period of improvement.

**Stenosis** - The narrowing of a body passage, such as a blood vessel.

**Sepsis** - A life-threatening reaction to a severe infection in the body.

**Tachycardia** - An abnormally fast heart rate, typically over 100 beats per minute.

**Triage** - The process of prioritizing patients based on the severity of their condition.

**Ultrasound** - A test that uses high-frequency sound waves to create images of structures inside the body, such as during pregnancy or to check organ health.