

Glossary of Terms

arthritis - inflammation of joints due to infectious, metabolic, or constitutional causes

biofeedback - the technique of making unconscious or involuntary bodily processes perceptible to the senses in order to help patients adjust their thinking and other mental processes in order to control bodily functions

bladder - a hollow organ that urine drains into from the kidneys

bowel - large and small intestines

carpal tunnel syndrome - a condition caused by compression of the median nerve in the carpal tunnel and characterized especially by weakness, pain, and disturbances of sensation in the hand and fingers

cesarean section - surgical incision of the walls of the abdomen and uterus for delivery of offspring

coccydynia - pain in the region of the coccyx (tailbone); the coccyx is made up of 3-5 vertebrae and list the lowest part of the spinal column

constipation - abnormally delayed or infrequent passage of feces

diastasis recti - separation of normally joined parts, such as the separation of certain abdominal muscles during pregnancy.

dyspareunia - pain in the vagina or pelvis experienced during sexual intercourse.

endometriosis - the presence and growth of functioning endometrial tissue in places other than the uterus that often results in severe pain and infertility

fibroids - a benign tumor especially of the uterine wall that consists of fibrous and muscular tissue

fibromyalgia - a chronic condition characterized by fatigue, widespread pain in your muscles, ligaments and tendons, and multiple tender points — places on your body where slight pressure causes pain

hemorrhoids - a mass of dilated veins in swollen tissue at the margin of the anus or nearby within the rectum

incontinence - the inability to control excretory functions

interstitial cystitis - a chronic inflammatory condition involving the mucosa and muscular tissue of the bladder and resulting in irregular bladder capacity

irritable bowel syndrome - a chronic functional disorder of the colon that is of unknown etiology is characterized by the secretion and passage of large amounts of mucus, by

constipation alternating with diarrhea, and by cramping abdominal pain -- abbreviation IBS

lichen planus - a skin condition characterized by small itchy pink or purple spots on the arms or legs; occurs characteristically on the wrists, shins, lower back and genitalia

menopause - the time in a woman's life when her menstrual period permanently stops

neuralgia - severe pain extending along a nerve or group of nerves

osteoporosis - condition that is characterized by decrease in bone mass with decreased density and enlargement of bone spaces producing porosity and brittleness

pelvic inflammatory disease - infection of the female reproductive tract; abbreviated PID

perineal - of the perineum, the skin between the pelvis and anus

perineum - the portion of the body in the pelvis occupied by urogenital passages and the rectum, bounded by the front by the pubic arch, in the back by the coccyx, and laterally by part of the hipbone

plantar fasciitis - (plantar) relating to, or occurring on the sole. (fasciitis) inflammation in a fascia; fascia, a sheet or band of fibrous connective tissue enveloping, separating, or binding together muscles, organs, and other soft structures of the body

postpartum - occurring, existing, or performed after birth

prenatal - occurring, existing, or performed before birth

prolapse - to fall or slip out of place

prostatitis - inflammation of the prostate gland

pudendal nerve - a nerve that arises from the second, third, and fourth sacral nerves and that supplies the external genitalia, the skin of the perineum, and the anal sphincters

sacroiliac - the joint or articulation between the sacrum and ilium

scar tissue adhesions - the abnormal union of surfaces normally separate by the formation of new fibrous tissue resulting from an inflammatory process

sclerosis - the hardening of a tissue or part due to chronic inflammation

stenosis - a narrowing or constriction of the diameter of a bodily passage or orifice

stress incontinence - involuntary leakage of urine from the bladder accompanying intense muscular activity (as in laughing, coughing, sneezing, or physical exercise)

tendonitis - inflammation of a tendon

tennis elbow - inflammation and pain over the outer side of the elbow involving the lateral epicondyle of the humerus and usually resulting from excessive strain on and twisting of the forearm

thoracic inlet/outlet syndrome - compression of the brachial plexus and subclavian artery by attached muscles in the region of the first rib and the clavicle, characterized by pain in the arm, numbness in the fingers, and weakness in the hand muscles

TMJ disorder or TMD - temporomandibular joint syndrome

urge incontinence - involuntary leakage of urine from the bladder when a need to urinate is felt

vaginismus - a usually prolonged and painful contraction or spasm of the vagina

vulvar vestibulitis or vestibulodynia - inflammation around the "vestibule," or opening to the vagina, and may include sensations of burning, dry, raw, or tight skin ranging from mild to severe

vulvodynia - chronic vulvar pain