

A cheat sheet to cure “Doctor Speak”

Simplifying medical terminology isn’t always easy, but using plain language with patients pays off. Patients who better understand their conditions and your recommendations are more likely to ask questions, follow recommendations, and feel less intimidated, making for a better overall experience in your ED. Need help trading complex terms for simple ones?

Here’s a list of common replacements to get you started.

COMPLEX	SIMPLE
Acetaminophen	Tylenol
Analgesic	Pain killer
Attempt	Try
Authorize	Allow, approve
Bacteria	Germs
Benign	Not cancer
Bronchodilator	Drug that helps you breathe better
Carcinoma	Cancer
Cardiologist	Heart doctor
Cellulitis	Skin infection
Cerebral Hemorrhage	Stroke, bleeding in brain
Contusion	Bruise
Demonstrate	Show
Dermatologist	Skin doctor
Economical	Cheap, low cost
Embolism	Blood clot
Facilitate	Help
Gradually	Slowly, over time
Herpes Zoster	Shingles
Hypertension	High blood pressure
Immediately	Right away
Influenza	Flu
Injection	Shot
Jaundice	Skin and eyes turn yellow
Menses	Period
Monitor	Keep track of
Oral or PO	By mouth
Referral	Send to another doctor
Toxic	Poisonous