

Practice using “living room” language (plain, non-medical language)

Medical terms that patients may not understand	
Medical Term	Plain language explanation
Absorb	
Accompany	
Adverse	
Analgesic	
Anti-inflammatory	
Avoid	
Cease	
Cellulitis	
Contraception	
Demonstrate	
Determine	
Diet	
Enable	
Enlarge	
Generic	
Impeded	
Intermittent	
Internist	
Lateral	
Lesion	
Lipids	
Menses	
Monitor	
Normal Range	
Obstruct	
Onset	
Oral	
Osteoporosis	
Referral	
Terminal	
Toxic	

Medical terms that patients may not understand

Medical Term	Plain language explanation
Absorb	Take in fluids, soak up
Accompany	Go with, come with
Adverse	Bad
Analgesic	Pain killer
Anti-inflammatory	Helps swelling and irritation go away
Avoid	Stay away from, do not use/eat
Cease	Stop
Cellulitis	Skin infection
Contraception	Birth control
Demonstrate	Prove, show
Determine	Decide, find, learn
Diet	Food, what you eat
Enable	Allow, let
Enlarge	Get bigger
Generic	Not specific, plain, non-branded
Impeded	Slow, make it harder to
Intermittent	Off and on
Internist	Doctor of internal (inside the body) medicine
Lateral	Side, on the side
Lesion	Sore, wound
Lipids	Fats in the blood
Menses	Period
Monitor	Keep track of, keep an eye on
Normal Range	Where it should be, provide the range
Obstruct	Block or close
Onset	Start
Oral	By mouth, eat/drink/swallow
Osteoporosis	Soft, brittle bones
Referral	Ask to see another doctor
Terminal	Going to die, not going to live
Toxic	Poisonous