SECTION 10 DIGESTIVE SYSTEM

The digestive system is also known as the alimentary (al ih men’ tar e) canal and/or gastrointestinal tract, which is abbreviated GI. It is responsible for the intake and digestion of food, absorption of nutrients, and elimination of solid waste products. The mouth or oral cavity, pharynx (throat), esophagus, stomach, small intestine, appendix, and large intestine are the major parts of this system.

Word Elements (We will first look at some of the word elements that might be used in this system. Listen as each word element is being pronounced. Practice these word elements several times before going on to the next section.)

aliment/o (al’ i men to) means nourish
alimento

angi/o (an’ je o) means blood vessel
angio

an/o (a no) means anus or ring
ano

anti- (an ti) means against
anti

bili/o (bil e o) means bile or gall
bilio
bucc/o (buk ko) means cheek

bucco

carcin/o (kar’ si no’) means cancerous
carcino

cec/o (se ko) means blind gut (cecum)
ceco

cheil/o (ki lo) means lip
cheilo

chole (ko le) means bile or gall
chole

cholecyst/o (ko le sis to) means gallbladder
cholecysto

choledoch/o (ko led o ko) means common bile duct
choledocho

chol/o (ko lo) means bile or gall
cholo
cirrh/o (si ro) means orange-yellow or tawny

cirrho

col/o (ko lo), colon (ko lon) means large intestine or colon

colo, colon

cyst/o (sis to) means sac of fluid or bladder

cysto

denti- (den ti), dent/o (den to) means teeth

denti, dento

dia- (di ah) means through or complete

dia

dys- (dis) means bad, labored, painful, difficult

dys

enter/o (en ter o) means intestine, usually small intestine

tero

epi- (ep i) means upon or over

epi
esophag/o (e sof a go) means esophagus (carries food from mouth to stomach)
esophago

gastr/o (gas tro) means stomach
gastro

gingiv/o (jin ji vo) means gum
gingivo

gloss/o (glos o, glos so) means tongue
glosso

glottis (glot’ is) means the space between vocal folds
glottis

-gram means record or image
gram

-graphy (graf e) means the procedure of recording or writing
graphy

hem/o (he mo) means blood
hemo
hepat/o (hep a to) means liver

hepato

hydr/o (hi dro) means fluid or water

hydro

ile/o (il e o) means ileum which is the last and lowest part of the small intestine. It should not to be confused with ili/o pronounced the same way but spelled ilio, which is the word element for ilium pronounced the same way but spelled ilium, a part of the hipbone

ileo

intra- (in tra) means within or inside

intra

-it is (i’ tis) means inflammation

itis

labi/o (lab e o) means lip

labio

lapar/o (lap a ro) means abdomen or abdominal wall

laparo

lingu/o (ling gwo) means tongue
linguo

lithiasis (lith i’ a sis) means the formation or presence of stones

lithiasis

mandibul/o (man dib u lo) means lower jaw bone (mandible)

mandibulo

maxill/o (mak sil o) means upper jaw bone (maxilla)

maxillo

-megaly (meg a le) means to enlarge

megaly

meta- (met’ a) means to change, beyond

meta

odont/o (o don to) means teeth

odonto

or/o (or o) means mouth

oro

-oscopy (os ko pe) means the procedure of visual examination
oscopy

-osis (o sis) means condition
osis

-ostomy (os’ to me) means creating a mouth or opening
ostomy

-otomy (ot o me) means to cut into, incision
otomy

pancreat/o (pan kre a to) means pancreas
pancreato

parotid (pa rot’ id) means located near the ear (parotid gland)
parotid

peps/o (pep so) means digestion or digest
pepsso

peri- (per e) means around or about
peri

-pexy (peks e) means surgical fixation
pexy

-phia (faj e a), phag/o (fag o) means to eat or swallow
phagia, phago

pharyng/o (far in go) means throat
pharyngo

polyp/o (pol e po) means a tumor on a stem, called a polyp
polypo

proct/o (prok to) means anus and rectum
procto

pylor/o (pi lo ro) means pylorus or pyloric sphincter or gate keeper
pyloro

pyr/o (pi ro) means fever or fire
pyro

rect/o (rek to) means rectum or straight
recto

-rrhea (re ah) means flow or discharge
rrhea

rug/o (ru go) means wrinkle or fold
rug o

sigmoid/o (sig moy do) means sigmoid colon
sigmoid o

splen/o (sple no) means spleen
spleno

-stalsis (stal sis) means contraction
stalsis

stom/o, stomat/o (sto mo, sto ma to) means mouth
stomo, stomato

sub- (sub) means under, below, beneath, less
sub

syn- (sin) means together or union
syn

trache/o (tra ke o) means the windpipe; it is medically called the trachea
tracheo

trans- (trans) means through or across
trans

uvul/o (u vu lo) means uvula or little grape
uvulo

ven/o (ve no, ven o) means vein
veno

Digestive System Words
abdominal ultrasonography (ab dom’ i nal ul tra son og’ ra fe) is the procedure of making a record of sound waves as they bounce off the abdominal viscera

abdominal pertaining to the abdomen
son/o means sound
-graphy means the procedure to record
abdominal ultrasonography

absorption (ab sorp’ shun) is the process that transfers nutrients into the bloodstream and body
absorption
alimentary canal (al i men’ tar e) is another name for the digestive tract; also called the gastrointestinal tract

aliment/o means to nourish

alimentary canal

ampulla of Vater (am pul’ la fa ter) is the duodenal end of the drainage systems of the pancreatic and common bile ducts; now called Vater’s (fa terz) papilla

ampulla of Vater

anus (a’ nus) is the outlet of the rectum that lies in the fold between the buttocks

an/o means anus

anus

ascites (a si’ tez) means the accumulation of serous fluid in the peritoneal cavity

ascites

barium enema (ba’ re um en’ e ma) —abbreviated BE—is the use of barium sulfate as an enema to help x-ray and perform a fluoroscopic examination of the colon

barium enema

biliary tree (bil’ e ar e) consists of the hepatic duct, cystic duct, and common bile duct

bili/o means bile

biliary tree
carcinoembryonic antigen (kar’ si no em’ bre on’ ik an’ ti jen) —abbreviated CEA— means antigens normally present in the fetus

carcin/o means cancer

embryonic means pertaining to the embryo

anti- means against

gen means to originate or produce

carcinoembryonic antigen

cecum (se’ kum) is a blind pouch or cul-de-sac that forms the first portion of the large intestine on one side and connects to the ileum on the other side

cec/o means blind gut or cecum

cecum

cholecystogram (ko” le sis’ to gram) is an x-ray of the gallbladder

cholecyst/o means gallbladder

-gram means record or image

cholecystogram

choledocholithotomy (ko led” o ko lith ot’ o me) is the removal of gallstone(s) through an incision in the bile duct

chole means bile

doeh/o means duct

lith/o means stone

-otomy means to cut into or incision
choledocholithotomy

cirrhosis (si ro’ sis) is a chronic disease of the liver

   cirrh means orange yellow

   -osis means condition

cirrhosis

colonoscopy (ko” lon os’ ko pe) means to examine the upper portion of the rectum with an elongated speculum

   colon means large intestine

   -oscopy means procedure to visually exam

colonoscopy

colostomy (ko los’ to me) is the opening of some portion of the colon through the abdominal wall

   col/o means large intestine

   -ostomy means creating an opening

colostomy

diarrhea (di a re’ a) means frequent passage of unformed watery bowel movements

   dia- means through

   -rrhea means flow

diarrhea
diverticulum (di” ver tik’ u lum) is a sac or pouch in the walls of a canal or organ

diverticulum

duodenum (du” o de’ num, du od’ e num) is the first part of the small intestine connecting with the pylorus of the stomach

duodenum

dyspepsia (dis pep’ se a) means imperfect or painful digestion

dys- means bad

-pepsia means digestion

dyspepsia

esophagogastrectomy (e sof’ a go gas trek’ to me) is the surgical removal of all or part of the stomach and esophagus

esophag/o means esophagus

gastr/o means stomach

-ectomy means surgical removal

esophagogastrectomy

esophagoscope (e sof’ a go skop) is the type of endoscope used for examination of the esophagus

esophag/o means esophagus

-scop means visual examination

-e means instrument and also noun suffix

esophagoscope
feces (fe’ sez) means stools, excrement, body waste

fissure (fish’ ur) is a groove or natural division

fistula (fis’ tu la) is an abnormal tubelike passage from a normal cavity or tube to a free surface or to another cavity

gastric analysis (gas’ trik) is the analysis of gastric contents of the stomach to determine the quality of the secretions

gastrostomy (gas tros’ to me) is the surgical creation of a gastric fistula through the abdominal wall

greater omentum (o men’ tum) is the portion of the omentum that is suspended from the greater curvature of the stomach and covers the intestines like an apron
guaiac stool test (gwi’ ak) is the alcoholic solution of guaiac that is used in testing for occult blood in feces

guaiac stool test

hemorrhoidal veins (hem o roy’ dal) means pertaining to certain anal arteries called hemorrhoids

hemorrh means blood

-oid means like or resembling

al means pertaining to

hemorrhoidal veins

hepatitis (hep” a ti’ tis) is the inflammation of the liver

hepat/o means liver

-itis means inflammation

hepatitis

hydrochloric acid (hi” dro klo’ ik) is the gastric juice produced by the parietal cells of the gastric glands

hydr/o means fluid

hydrochloric acid

ileitis (il” e i’ tis) means inflammation of the ileum

ile/o (spelled ileo) means ileum
-itis means inflammation

ileitis

ileocecal valve (il’ e o se’ kal) is made up of sphincter muscles that serve to close the ileum at the point where the small intestines open into the ascending colon

ile/o (spelled ileo) means ileum
-ecal means pertaining to the cecum

ileocecal valve

ileostomy (il’ e os’ to me) is the creation of a surgical passage through the abdominal wall into the ileum

ile/o (spelled ileo) means ileum
-ostomy means creating an opening

ileostomy

ileum (il’ e um) spelled ileum is the lower three-fifths of the small intestine

ileum

intravenous cholangiogram (in tra ve’ nus  ko lan” je o gram) —abbreviated IVC—is an x-ray of the bile ducts

intra- means within
venous means pertaining to veins
chol/o means bile
angio means vessels
-gram means to record

intravenous cholangiogram

irritable bowel syndrome—abbreviated IBS—is the abnormally increased motility of the large and small intestines. It is also called spastic colon

irritable bowel syndrome

jejunum (je ju’ num) is the portion of the small intestine between the duodenum and the ileum; it is approximately two-fifths of the small intestine

jejunum

liver scan is the test performed by injecting a radioactive substance intravenously which then circulates through the blood to the liver

liver scan

lower esophageal sphincter--abbreviated LES--is located at the lower end of the esophagus; it is also called the cardiac valve

lower esophageal sphincter

mesentery (mes’ en ter” e) is the fold of peritoneum that encircles the small intestine and connects it to the posterior wall of the abdomen

mesentery
pancreas (pan’ kre as) is a gland located under the stomach that produces secretions that aid in the digestion of food and helps to neutralize stomach acid.

Pancreas

parotid salivary gland (pa rot’ id) is one of three salivary glands that aid in the digestive process.

Parotid salivary gland

pepsin (pep’ sin) is the chief enzyme of gastric juice; it converts proteins into proteoses and peptones.

Pepsin

peristalsis (per i stal’ sis) is the progressive wavelike movement that occurs involuntarily in the alimentary canal.

Peristalsis

peritoneum (per” i to ne’ um) is the abdominal cavity lining.

Peritoneum

pharynx (far’ inks) is the passageway for air from the nasal cavity to the larynx and for food from the mouth to the esophagus.

Pharynx

polyp (pol’ ip) is a tumor on a stem commonly found in the nose, uterus, colon, and rectum.

Polyp
polyp

proctoscopy (prok tos' ko pe) means visual examination of the rectum with a proctoscope

proct/o means anus and rectum

-scopy means procedure to examine

proctoscopy

pyloric sphincter (pi lor' ik sfingk' ter) is a smooth muscle that surrounds the opening of the stomach into the duodenum

pyloric sphincter

rectosigmoid colon (rek” to sig’ moyd) is the upper part of the rectum and adjoining portion of the sigmoid colon

rectosigmoid colon

rectum (rek’ tum) is the lower part of the large intestine; it is about 5 inches long

rectum

reflux esophagitis (re’ fluks e sof a ji’ tis) means inflammation of the esophagus due to a return or backward flow into the esophagus

esophag/o means esophagus

-itis means inflammation

reflux esophagitis
rugae (roo’ je) is the plural for ruga (roo’ ga). Rugae (spelled rugae) are the folds that form in the stomach lining when the stomach is empty

rugae

small bowel follow-through—abbreviated SBFT—is an x-ray procedure using barium to examine the small intestine at timed intervals

small bowel follow-through

sublingual salivary gland (sub ling’ gwal) helps aid in the digestive process

sub- means under, below

lingual means pertaining to the tongue

sublingual salivary glands

submandibular salivary gland (sub” man dib’ u lar) helps aid in the digestive process. It is also called the submaxillary salivary gland (sub” mak’ si ler” e)

sub- means under, below

mandibular means jaw bone

submandibular salivary glands

transverse colon is the section of the colon between the ascending and descending colon

trans- means through or across

transverse colon

upper gastrointestinal series is commonly called upper GI
upper gastrointestinal series

vermiform appendix (ver’ mi form) is a blind tube that is attached to the cecum
vermiform appendix

villi (vil’ i) is the plural form of villus (vil’ us), which is a small fold or projection of some mucous membranes
villi

This ends the section on the Digestive System. If you have any questions, please ask your instructor for further clarification or refer to your textbook. You should repeat this section as many times as you feel is necessary to feel comfortable with the meaning and pronunciation of the words presented.