

PARTS OF THE BODY

Most external parts of the body have ordinary English names as well as anatomical names. Doctors normally use the English names, even when talking to each other. There are a few exceptions where doctors use the anatomical name.

Jaw (mandible)	Calf
Neck	Leg
Shoulder	Chest (thorax)
Armpit (axilla)	Breast
Upper arm	Stomach, tummy (abdomen)
Elbow	Navel (umbilicus)
Back	Hip
Buttock	Groin (inguinal region)
Wrist	Knee (patella = kneecap)
Thigh	Shin

Limb means arm (upper limb) or leg (lower limb). The trunk is the body excluding the head and limbs.

Referring to parts of the body

When patients speak about their problem they often refer to a part of the body.

I'm having trouble with my hip/shoulder/knee.

The doctor often needs to ask about a part of the body.

Do you get any pain in the/your chest/stomach/back?

Describing radiation of pain

A patient is telling the doctor about his back pain and the parts of the body it radiates to.

It starts in the back. Then it seems to go into the right buttock and down the back of the right thigh to the knee.

Complete the sentences using ordinary English words.

A male patient describing angina pectoris:

It's like a tightness across my _____, and it goes up _____ my _____ and into my left _____ and _____ the left _____.

A male patient describing renal colic:

It starts _____ the loin and goes into the _____ and _____ into the testicle.

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Complete the sentences

Anatomical term

Inguinal swelling

Abdominal pain

Periumbilical rash

Thoracic pain

Enlarged axillary node

Mandibular pain

Patient's statement

I've got a lump in the _____.

My little boy's got a _____ ache.

I've got some spots around my _____.

I've got a pain in the middle of the _____.

There's painful swelling in my _____.

I've got a pain in my _____.

The abdomen

The main organs of the body have ordinary English names and doctors use these words. But when an adjective is needed they often use an anatomical word. For example, we can say disease of the liver or hepatic disease. Some abdominal organs, for example the pancreas, have no ordinary name.

When doctors talk about the main parts of the digestive system, they use the words bowel or intestine; the small intestine or the small bowel, the large intestine or the large bowel. When speaking to patients, doctors may refer to the anus and rectum as the back passage.

The chest

The chest (thorax) contains the organs of respiration and the heart. The main parts of the respiratory system are airways and the lungs. The left lung is divided into two lobes, and the right into three. The airways consist of the larynx, the trachea (or windpipe), the right and left bronchus, and the bronchioles. The chest is separated from the abdomen by the diaphragm.

The pelvis

A doctor is explaining the function of the bladder to a patient:

The bladder is situated in the pelvis, as you know, and it is connected to each kidney by a long tube called the ureter – one on each side. The ureters carry the urine from the kidneys to the bladder, where it is stored until you decide to empty your bladder. When that happens, the urine passes down another tube, called the urethra, to the outside.

Complete the paragraph.

To examine the patient for enlarged abdominal _____, first feel for the _____ and the _____ on the right side. To do this, ask the patient to take a deep breath, while pressing with the fingers upwards and inwards. Next, feel for the right _____ and then cross over to the other side for the left _____. Still on the left side, palpate for an enlarged _____. Finally, moving to the lower abdomen, feel for the _____, which is only felt if it is full.