Human Anatomy

University Medicine · Vocabulary in context

Word	Example
human anatomy	**Human anatomy** studies the parts of the body.
superior/inferior	In **superior/inferior**, superior means above and inferior means below.
anterior/posterior	In **anterior/posterior**, anterior means in front and posterior means behind.
proximal/distal	In **proximal/distal**, proximal means closer to the body and distal means further away.
sagittal plane	The **sagittal plane** divides the body into left and right.
coronal plane	The **coronal plane** divides the body into front and back.
transverse plane	The **transverse plane** cuts across the body, like slicing bread.
musculocutaneous nerve	The **musculocutaneous nerve** serves the muscles that bend the elbow.
axillary nerve	The **axillary nerve** serves the shoulder muscle.
radial nerve	The **radial nerve** controls the muscles that bend the wrist back.
median nerve	The **median nerve** controls several muscles that move the thumb.

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ulnar nerve	The **ulnar nerve** is the “funny bone” nerve at the elbow. “funny bone”
dermatome	Each **dermatome** is the area of skin served by one spinal nerve.
femoral nerve	The **femoral nerve** controls the muscles that straighten the knee.
obturator nerve	The **obturator nerve** controls the muscles that pull the leg inwards.
sciatic nerve	The **sciatic nerve** runs down the back of the thigh.
compartment syndrome	In **compartment syndrome**, swollen muscle is squeezed inside a tight covering.
mediastinum	The **mediastinum** is the space between the lungs.
pericardium	The **pericardium** is the bag around the heart.
phrenic nerve	The **phrenic nerve** controls the diaphragm.
vagus nerve	The **vagus nerve** slows the heart and controls the gut.
referred pain	In **referred pain**, a problem in an organ is felt in the skin somewhere else.
coeliac trunk	The **coeliac trunk** brings blood to the stomach and liver.
superior mesenteric artery	The **superior mesenteric artery** brings blood to the small intestine.

Word	Example
inferior mesenteric artery	The **inferior mesenteric artery** brings blood to the end of the large intestine.
pectinate line	The **pectinate line** divides the anal canal into an upper and a lower part.
pelvic floor	The **pelvic floor** holds up the bladder and bowel.
levator ani	The **levator ani** is the main muscle of the pelvic floor.
pudendal nerve	The **pudendal nerve** serves the area between the legs.
cranial nerve	A **cranial nerve** comes straight out of the brain, not the spinal cord.
cauda equina	Below the end of the spinal cord, the nerve roots form the **cauda equina**.
conus medullaris	The **conus medullaris** is the pointed end of the spinal cord.

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