

# **Rules for English pronunciation**

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# Introduction

As a nurse, being able to communicate clearly with patients and hospital staff is very important. This video with the three easy rules for the pronunciation of English words will help you to say the medical terms correctly.

# First Rule

## The **VCCV** rule

The first two syllables of many words in English are formed with a pattern of

First syllable: **V**owel and **C**onsonant

Second syllable: **C**onsonant and **V**owel

For example:

Occur – oc/cur (2 syllables)

Enter – en/ter (2 syllables)

Occasion - oc/ca/sion (3 syllables)...

# Explanation

## Vowels and Consonants

- In English there are only 5 vowels: **a e i o u**
- All the other letters of the alphabet are consonants, such as **b c d**
- Special case of the letter **y**: Sometimes it is pronounced as a vowel, e.g., **energy**.  
But sometimes it is pronounced as a consonant, e.g., **yellow ...**

# Second Rule

## The **VCV** rule

Another pattern for the first two syllables of many words is the VCV rule. In this rule

The first syllable: **V**owel

The second syllable: **C**onsonant and **V**owel

For example:

Avoid – a/void (2 syllables)

Academic – a/ca/de/mic (4 syllables)

Obey – o/bey (2 syllables)

Ovary – o/va/ry (3 syllables) ...

# Third Rule

In English, often two consonants are combined to create one sound.

For example:

Photo – **ph**o/to (2 syllables)

Thesis – **th**e/sis (2 syllables)

Technology – **ch**/no/lo/gy (4 syllables)

Children – **ch**il/dren (2 syllables) ...

# Prefixes and suffixes

It is important to recognise the prefixes and suffixes used in medical terms.

- **A prefix** is a letter or a group of letters added to the beginning of a word to make a new word.
  - Example of a prefix **un**: Diagnosed, **Undiagnosed**.
- **A suffix** is a group of letters which occur at the end of a word.
  - Example of a suffix **ology**: neuro**ology**
  - Example of a suffix **osis**: diagnosis ...

# Patterns of pronunciation

## Suffixes

-itis (disease)

- Adenitis
- Arthritis
- Cystitis
- Dermatitis
- Enteritis
- Hepatitis
- Nephritis
- Osteitis
- Osteoarthritis
- Rhinitis ...



# Patterns of pronunciation

## Suffixes (continued)

-ology (study of)

- Biology
- Cardiology
- Cytology
- Dermatology
- Endocrinology
- Gastroenterology
- Gynaecology
- Haematology
- Nephrology
- Neurology
- Oncology
- Pathology
- Psychology
- Radiology
- Urology ...

# Patterns of pronunciation

## Suffixes (continued)

-scope: Medical equipment for viewing

-scopy : Using medical equipment for viewing

- Endoscope
- Endoscopy
- Cystoscope
- Cystoscopy
- Ophthalmoscope ...

## Patterns of pronunciation: Suffixes (Continued)

### -gist (professions)

- Cardiologist
- Dermatologist
- Endocrinologist
- Gynaecologist
- Neurologist
- Oncologist
- Ophthalmologist
- Pathologist
- Urologist ...

## Patterns of pronunciation: Suffixes (Continued)

-pathy (study of)

- Adenopathy
- Enteropathy
- Neuropathy

-osis (condition of)

- Diagnosis
- Leukocytosis
- Nephrosis
- Prognosis
- Thrombosis ...

# Patterns of pronunciation

## Suffixes (Continued)

-osis (condition of)

- Diagnosis
- Leukocytosis
- Nephrosis
- Prognosis
- Thrombosis ...

# Patterns of pronunciation

## Family Groups

- Neural
- Neuralgia
- Neurological
- Neurology
- Psychiatrist
- Psychiatry
- Psychiatric
- Psychology
- Hyperglycaemic
- Hypoglycaemic
- Endocrine glands
- Endocrinologist
- Endocrinology ...

# Conclusion

In this session, we have used three basic rules of English pronunciation:

1. The CVVC rule
2. The VCV rule
3. Two consonants are used to create one sound

It is important to know that there can be exceptions to these rules. Therefore you will need to do a lot of pronunciation practice until you can say these terms easily.

**Thank you**