

What is Anatomical Terminology?

Worksheet

Anatomical terminology is a universal system of standardized terms - directional words, regions, and planes - used to describe body structures relative to the anatomical position, avoiding ambiguity between observers.

Questions

1. In the anatomical position, which way do the palms face?

- A) Backward
- B) Forward
- C) Inward
- D) Downward

2. Which term means 'closer to the midline of the body'?

- A) Lateral
- B) Distal
- C) Medial
- D) Superior

3. The wrist is _____ to the elbow.

- A) Proximal
- B) Distal
- C) Superior
- D) Medial

4. Why is anatomical terminology always described from anatomical position, not the patient's current posture?

- A) It's tradition only
- B) To keep terms consistent regardless of how the body is actually positioned
- C) Because patients are always standing
- D) It only applies to cadavers

5. Describe the position of the sternum relative to the ribs using anatomical terms.

6. A patient has a wound on the forearm, closer to the wrist than the elbow. Describe its location.

7. Describe the position of the lungs relative to the diaphragm.

8. Define: What is the anatomical position?

9. Define: Why use standardized anatomical terminology?

10. Define: Medial vs lateral?

Answer Key

1. B) Forward - In standard anatomical position the palms face forward (anteriorly).
2. C) Medial - Medial describes structures nearer the body's midline.
3. B) Distal - The wrist is farther from the trunk than the elbow, so it is distal.
4. B) To keep terms consistent regardless of how the body is actually positioned - Using a fixed reference position keeps directional terms consistent no matter how the body is actually oriented.
5. Identify the reference structure: the ribs. The sternum lies at the center of the chest, closer to the midline than the ribs. Therefore the sternum is medial to the ribs.
6. The elbow is proximal (closer to the trunk); the wrist is distal (farther from the trunk). The wound is nearer the wrist than the elbow. Therefore the wound is distal to the elbow.
7. The diaphragm sits below the lungs, separating thorax from abdomen. Superior means toward the head; inferior means toward the feet. Therefore the lungs are superior to the diaphragm, and the diaphragm is inferior to the lungs.
8. Standing upright, facing forward, arms at the sides, palms facing forward, feet flat and parallel.
9. To eliminate ambiguity so any clinician, anywhere, describes the same location the same way.
10. Medial = closer to the midline; lateral = farther from the midline.

Bounlu

All cards, step-by-step solutions and an AI tutor are in the Notek app.
Promy turns exam dates into automatic reminders.