



Glossary of Terms

A

Achilles Tendonitis – Inflammation of the Achilles tendon (heel cord) caused by increased activity, improper footwear, or tight hamstrings.

ACL – (Anterior Cruciate Ligament) Ligament located in the center of the knee that controls rotation and forward movement of the tibia (shin bone).

Acute – A condition or disease with a sudden onset, severe symptoms, and a brief duration.

Adhesive Capsulitis – Self-limiting condition resulting from any inflammatory process about the shoulder in which capsular scar tissue is produced, resulting in pain and limited range of motion; also called frozen shoulder.

Allograft – Biologic material from another source of the same species that is used to surgically replace damaged tissue.

Anterior – Front side of the body.

Ankylosing Spondylitis – An inflammatory disorder that affects the low back and pelvis and produces stiffness and pain.

Arthritis – Inflammation of a joint usually accompanied by pain, swelling, and sometimes change in structure.

Arthrocentesis – Aspiration (removal of fluid) of a joint.

Arthrodesis (fusion) – A procedure that permanently joins two or more bony segments.

Arthroscope – The surgical, fiber optic tool a physician uses to perform an arthroscopy.

Arthroscopy – A surgical procedure used to visualize, diagnose, and treat problems inside a joint using a minimally invasive arthroscope.

Arthropathy – Any disease or disorder that involves a joint.

Arthroplasty – Reconstructive surgery of a joint to restore motion.

Articular – Pertaining to a joint.

Atrophy – Reduction in size of an anatomic structure; frequently related to disuse or decreased blood supply.

Autograft – Biologic tissue from the patient's own body that is used to surgically replace damaged tissue.

Avulsion Fracture – Fracture that occurs when a ligament or tendon pulls off a sliver of the bone.

B

Bankhart Lesion – Avulsion of the anterior glenoid labrum in the shoulder, usually associated with anterior shoulder dislocations.

Bennett Lesion – Posterior glenoid defect in the shoulder usually associated with overhead throwing injuries.

Biceps Tendinitis – Inflammation of the biceps tendon in the subacromial location.

Bunion – An inflammation and thickening of the bursa in the joint of the big toe.

Bursa – A sac filled with fluid located between a bone and a tendon or muscle.

Bursitis – Inflammation of a bursa.

Burst Fracture – A compression-type fracture of a vertebra that involves posterior displacement of the fragments, often into the spinal canal.

C

CT (Computed Tomography) Scan – A specialized X-ray study that allows careful evaluation of the bone and spinal canal by producing cross-sectional images (referred to as slices) both horizontally and vertically.

Carpal Tunnel Syndrome (CTS) – Loss of sensation and sometimes motor control when the median nerve in the wrist is compressed at the carpal ligament.

Cartilage – The hard, thin layer of white glossy tissue that covers the end of a bone at a joint. This tissue allows a motion to take place with a minimum amount of friction.

Cast – A stabilizing device used to hold a broken bone in place as it heals, prevents or decreases muscle contractures, or provides immobilization, especially after surgery. Casts prevent the joint above and below the area from moving and keep it straight.

Cervical – The neck region of the spine containing the first seven vertebrae.

Chronic – A condition that is prolonged, long lasting, and generally lasts three months or longer.

Closed Fracture – A fracture where the bone is broken but is not visible; the integrity of the surrounding skin is not disrupted.

Club Feet – Turning of the heel inward with increased plantar flexion (the toe-down motion of the foot at the ankle).

Coccyx – The region of the spine below the sacrum; also known as the tailbone.

Comminuted Fracture – A fracture where the bone is broken into more than two pieces.

Compression Fracture – Bone that is compressed onto itself or other bone, resulting in fracture.

Condyle – Knuckle-like, rounded areas at the joint. Congenital – Present at birth.

Contusion – A bruise.

Crepitus – Grating or grinding sound.

D

Degenerative Disc Disease – Gradual or rapid deterioration of the chemical composition and physical properties of the disc space.

Degenerative Joint Disease – Deterioration of the articular cartilage that lines a joint, which results in narrowing of the joint space and pain; also known as osteoarthritis.

Disc – See Disk.

Discography – A test to determine whether the discs in the spine are the source of back pain by injecting contrast dye into the discs to identify which disc is the problem.

Disk (Disc) – The tough, elastic structure that is between the bodies of the spinal vertebrae. The disk consists of an outer annulus fibrosus enclosing an inner nucleus pulposus.

Discectomy – Surgical decompression procedure where an intervertebral disk is removed.

Dislocation – The separation of the two bone ends after extreme force is placed on a ligament; or in a joint where two more bones come together.

Distal – Situated away from the center of the body.

Dupuytren's Contracture – A hereditary thickening of the tough tissue called fascia, which lies just below the skin of the palm resulting in flexion deformities of the finger.

Dystrophy – Condition resulting from defective or faulty nutrition; broadly construed to include nourishment of tissue by all essential substances, including those normally manufactured by the body itself.

E

Edema – Condition where fluid escapes into the tissues from vascular or lymphatic spaces and causes local or generalized swelling.

Effusion – Presence of fluid within a joint.

EMG (electromyogram) – A test to evaluate nerve and muscle function.

Epidural – Situated outside the thin, tough dural membrane that surrounds the brain and spinal cord.

Epidural Injection – Procedure where medication is injected into the epidural space.

Excision – Remove by cutting away material.

Exostosis – Spur or bony overgrowth.

F

Facet – Posterior structure of a vertebra which articulates (joins) with a facet of an adjacent vertebra to form a facet joint that allows motion of the spinal column. Each vertebra has two superior (upper) and two inferior (lower) facets.

Facetectomy – Excision of a facet.

Flat Foot – Condition where the arch of the foot flattens out.

Fluoroscopy – Special type of radiograph that shows continuous motion of the structure, such as wrist motion.

Fracture – Disruption of the normal continuity of a bone; a break in a bone.

Frozen Shoulder – Condition characterized by restricted shoulder movement.

Fusion – A procedure that permanently joins two or more bony segments.

G

Gamekeeper's Thumb – Rupture of the ulnar collateral ligament.

Ganglion Cyst – Non-cancerous, fluid-filled cysts usually found on the back of the wrist.

Glenoid Labrum – Soft fibrous rim surrounding the glenoid fossa that deepens the socket and provides stability for the humeral head.

Gout – Inflammatory arthritis associated with deposition of urate in the joint.

Greater Trochanter – Broad, flat process at the upper end of the lateral surface of the femur to which several muscles are attached.

Greenstick Fracture – Bone that is fractured but not completely broken through; partially broken or bent.

H

Hallux Valgus – See Bunion.

Hammertoe – Permanent sideways bend of the middle toe joint.

Heel Spur – A bone growth on the heel bone.

Herniated Disc – Rupture of the tissue that separates the vertebral bones of the spinal column.

I

Idiopathic – Occurring without known cause; self originated.

Immobilization – Limitation of motion or fixation of a body part usually to promote healing.

Impingement Syndrome – Shoulder pain caused when the rotator cuff tendons rub against the roof of the shoulder, the acromion.

Incision – Cutting into.

Inflammation – A normal reaction to injury or disease, which results in swelling, pain, and stiffness.

Instability – Looseness, unsteadiness, or an inability to withstand normal physiologic loading without mechanical deformation.

Interspace – Area between two vertebral bodies that contains the disc.

Intramedullary Nailing or Rodding – Procedure for the fixation of fractures in which a nail or rod is inserted into the intramedullary canal of the bone from one of its two ends.

Iontophoresis – The administration of medication through the skin by direct electrical current.

J

Joint – Where the ends of two or more bones meet.

K

Kyphosis – Any forward-bending area or deformity in the spine.

L

Lamina – An anatomical portion of a vertebra. Each vertebra has two lamina that connects the pedicles to the spinous process as part of the neural arch.

Laminectomy – Procedure that removes all or part of the lamina.

Lateral Collateral Ligament (LCL) – The ligament that gives stability to the outer knee.

Lateral Epicondylitis (Tennis Elbow) – Pain caused by damage to the tendons that bend the wrist backward away from the palm.

Ligaments – White, shiny, flexible bands of connective tissue that binds joints together and connects various bones and cartilage.

Little Leaguer's Elbow – Overuse injury to the lateral aspect of the elbow.

Little Leaguer's Shoulder – Separation of the proximal humeral growth plate.

Lordosis – An abnormal increase in the normal curvature of the lumbar spine.

Lumbar – The lower portion of the spine between the thoracic region and the sacrum consisting of five vertebrae.

M

Mallet Finger – Rupture of the extensor tendon at or near its insertion on the terminal phalanx caused by a sudden flexion force on the distal interphalangeal joint while the finger is actively extended, also known as Baseball Finger.

Malunion – State of healing of the bone in which bones unites but in abnormal position and/or alignment.

Manipulation – The process of restoring a bone or joint to its proper alignment.

Medial – Situated closer to the midline of the body.

Medial Collateral Ligament (MCL) – Ligament that gives stability to the inner knee. Meniscus – Soft-tissue structure that lines some joints and provides load distribution, shock absorption, and lubrication.

Morton's Neuroma – A pinched nerve usually causing pain between the third and fourth toes.

MRI (Magnetic Resonance Imaging) – A diagnostic procedure that uses a combination of large magnets, radiofrequencies, and a computer to produce detailed images of organs and structures within the body.

Muscle – Contractile connective tissues that affect movement; a component of nearly all organs and body systems.

Musculoskeletal System – The complex system involving the body's muscles and skeleton; includes the joints, muscles, and nerves.

Myelogram – Specific x-ray study that uses an injection of a dye or contrast material into the spinal canal to allow careful evaluation of the spinal canal and nerve roots.

N

Nerve Conduction Study – A study that tests the speed by which motor, sensory, or a combination of both nerves, transmit impulses to determine if a nerve is functioning normally.

Nerve Root – The portion of a spinal nerve in close proximity to its origin from the spinal cord.

Neuralgia – Pain along the course of a nerve.

Neuritis – Inflammation or irritation of a nerve.

Non-union – State of healing of the bone in which there is no healing.

O

Olecranon Bursa – Bursa in the elbow.

Open Fracture – A compound fracture where the broken bone is visible; there is an open wound.

Open Reduction Internal Fixation (ORIF) – Procedure that involves incising the skin and soft tissue to repair a fracture under direction visualization which includes the utilization of internal hardware to repair the fracture.

Orthopaedic (Orthopedic) Surgeon – The physician who diagnosis, treats, manages the rehabilitation process, and provides prevention protocols for patients who suffer from injury or disease in any of the components of the musculoskeletal system.

Orthopaedic (Orthopedic) Surgery – The medical specialty devoted to the diagnosis, treatment, rehabilitation, and prevention of injuries and diseases of the body's musculoskeletal system.

Osteoarthritis – Generally, a condition caused by wear and tear that causes inflammation of the joint resulting in pain, swelling, and stiffness.

Osteomyelitis – Inflammation of bone marrow, cortex, tissue, and periosteum due to infection.

Osteoporosis – A condition that develops when bone is no longer replaced as quickly as it is removed. Bone is abnormally brittle and less dense.

Osteotomy – A surgical procedure that changes the alignment of bone with or without removing a portion of that bone.

P

Patella Tendinitis – Condition that results in pain and inflammation of the patella tendon; common in jumping sports.

Patellofemoral Joint – Space between the patella and the femur.

Pathological Fracture – Fracture caused by a normal load on an abnormal bone, which is often weak-

ened by tumor, infection, or metabolic bone disease. Posterior Cruciate Ligament (PCL) – The ligament located in the center of the knees that controls backward movement of the tibia (shin bone.)

Phalanges – Individual bones that make up the fingers and toes.

Phonophoresis – Therapeutic application of ultrasound with a topical drug, most commonly corticosteroid.

Physical Therapy – The treatment consisting of exercising specific parts of the body, such as legs, arms, hands, or neck in an effort to strengthen, repair range of motion, relearn movement and/or rehabilitate the musculoskeletal system to improve function.

Plantar Fasciitis – Irritation of the plantar fascia – the long band of connecting tissue running from the heel to the ball of the foot. Posterior – Located behind a structure, such as relating to the back side of the human body.

Proximal – Situated closer to the trunk of the body.

Q

R

Radiculopathy – Disease of the nerve roots.

Range of Motion (ROM) – Amount of movement in a joint.

Resection – The surgical removal of part of a structure, such as bone.

R.I.C.E. Treatment – The method of treatment of an acute injury using “Rest, Ice, Compression, and Elevation.”

Rotator Cuff – Area of the shoulder that is comprised of four muscles and their tendons which combine to form a “cuff over the head of the humerus.

Rotator Cuff Tear – Tear of the one or more of the rotator cuff tendons.

Rotator Cuff Tendinitis – Inflammation of the rotator cuff and associated bursal sac.

S

Scoliosis – Sideways curvature of the spine; a lateral and rotational deviation of the spine.

Shin Splints – Damage to one of the two groups of muscles along the shin bone, causing pain.

SLAP Lesion – An injury to the biceps tendon and/or superior labrum. (Superior Labral, Anterior to Posterior)

Spinal Canal – Bony channel that is formed by the intervertebral foramen of the vertebrae and in which

the spinal cord and nerve roots are contained.

Spinal Column – Flexible bone column extending from the base of the skull to the tailbone, and is made up of 33 bones known as vertebrae. (vertebral column, spine, backbone)

Spinal Cord – Extension of the brain composed of virtually all the nerves carrying messages between the brain and the rest of the body. It lies inside of and is protected by the vertebrae and the spinal column.

Spinal Decompression – A procedure carried out to relieve the pressure on the spinal cord or nerve roots. This may be accomplished by removing some bone from the vertebra or by removing the disc.

Spinal Stenosis – Narrowing of the canal housing the spinal cord.

Spondylitis – Inflammation of vertebrae.

Spondylolisthesis – Displacement of a vertebral body on the one below.

Spondylolysis – Defect in the neural arch between the superior and inferior facets of vertebrae without separation at the defect, and therefore no displacement of the vertebrae.

Sports Medicine – The practice of medicine that physicians and other health professionals provide to athletes.

Sprain – A partial or complete tear of a ligament.

Stenosis – Reduction in the diameter of the spinal canal due to new bone formation which may result in pressure on the spinal cord or nerve roots.

Stinger – Neurapraxia (temporary loss of neural function) from a strength injury to the brachial plexus, most commonly seen in football players; also called a Burner.

Strain – A partial or complete tear of a muscle or tendon.

Stress fracture – A bone injury caused by overuse.

Synovial Fluid – A fluid that is released by the synovial membrane and acts as a lubricant for joints and tendons.

Synovitis – Condition characterized by inflammation of the synovial lining.

Synovium – A fibrous envelope that produces a fluid to help reduce friction and wear in a joint.

T

Tendon – Extension of muscle into a firm, fibrous cord that attaches into a bone or other firm structure.

Tendonitis – Inflammation of a tendon.

Tennis Elbow – Pain caused by damage to the tendons that bend the wrist backward away from the palm.

Thoracic – The 12 vertebra located between the cervical and lumbar vertebra.

Total Joint Replacement – Replacement of a joint involving an internal prosthesis by removing the diseased joint and replacing it with metal or plastic components.

Trigger Finger – Catching or locking of a finger.

Tuberosity – Prominence on a bone where tendon.

Turf Toe – A hyper-extension injury of the first metatarsophalangeal joint associated with athletic activity of hard surfaces.

U

Ultrasound – A diagnostic procedure that utilized high-frequency sound waves to create an image of the internal organs.

V

Vertebra – One of the 33 bones of the spinal column. There are 7 cervical vertebra forming the neck; 12 thoracic vertebra in the middle back and 5 lumbar vertebra in the lower back.

W

X

X-ray – A diagnostic test which uses invisible electromagnetic energy beams to produce images of internal tissues, bones and organs on film.

Y

Z