Medical language

VOCABULARY PRACTICE
UPPER-INTERMEDIATE | B2

Name: _____ Date: _____

1 Match each precise term with its definition.

1 contraindication ____	**a** a specific reason a treatment should not be used, due to potential harm
2 dosage ____	**b** the amount and frequency of medicine to be taken
3 prognosis ____	**c** a prediction of how a disease is likely to develop
4 pathology ____	**d** the study of the causes and effects of disease
5 anomaly ____	**e** something unusual or unexpected found during examination
6 benign ____	**f** not cancerous or harmful
7 malignant ____	**g** cancerous, tending to spread and worsen
8 remission ____	**h** a period when symptoms of a disease decrease or disappear
9 relapse ____	**i** the return of a disease or its symptoms after a period of improvement
10 invasive procedure ____	**j** a medical procedure that enters the body, such as through surgery

2 Choose the word with the most suitable connotation.

1 For a reason a treatment should not be used: contraindication / a general benefit.
2 For the amount and frequency of medicine: dosage / total supply.
3 For a prediction of how a disease will develop: prognosis / a past diagnosis.
4 For something unusual found during examination: anomaly / a normal finding.
5 For not cancerous or harmful: benign / malignant.
6 For cancerous and tending to spread: malignant / benign.
7 For a period when symptoms decrease or disappear: remission / worsening.
8 For a procedure that enters the body: invasive procedure / external examination.

3 Complete the medical collocations with one word.

Medical language

1 a _____ (= reason not to use a treatment)

2 the recommended _____ (= amount and frequency of medicine)

3 a favourable _____ (= a positive disease outlook)

4 a _____ finding (= unusual, unexpected result)

5 a _____ tumour (= not cancerous)

6 a _____ tumour (= cancerous, spreading)

7 achieve _____ (= symptoms decreasing or disappearing)

8 an _____ procedure (= entering the body)

Medical language

4 Complete the case notes with words and phrases from the box.

anomaly | benign | contraindication | dosage | invasive procedure | malignant | pathology | prognosis | relapse | remission

Case A: The scan revealed a small 1 _____, prompting further investigation.
Case B: Tests confirmed the tumour was 2 _____, requiring no further treatment, unlike a 3 _____ growth that would have needed immediate intervention.
Case C: The doctor adjusted the 4 _____ after identifying a possible 5 _____ with another medication the patient was taking.
Case D: Following successful treatment, the patient entered 6 _____, though doctors warned of the risk of 7 _____ within the following year.
Case E: The 8 _____ report confirmed the diagnosis after laboratory analysis.
Case F: Given the mild presentation, doctors avoided an unnecessary 9 _____, opting for observation instead. The overall 10 _____ remained encouraging.

5 Read the text and answer the questions briefly.

The language of uncertainty in prognosis

Communicating prognosis presents a persistent challenge for clinicians, since patients often seek definitive answers while medical evidence typically supports only probabilistic estimates. Describing a prognosis as favourable does not guarantee a particular outcome for an individual patient, since population-level statistics inevitably obscure considerable variation between individual cases. Clinicians must balance honest acknowledgement of this uncertainty against the risk of causing unnecessary distress through excessive hedging, a tension that shapes how medical language is used in sensitive conversations. Research suggests that patients generally prefer honest, clearly explained uncertainty over false reassurance, even when the news itself is difficult to receive.

1 What persistent challenge does communicating prognosis present? _____
2 What does medical evidence typically support, according to the text? _____
3 What does describing a prognosis as favourable not guarantee? _____
4 What must clinicians balance honest acknowledgement of uncertainty against? _____
5 What tension does this shape? _____
6 What do patients generally prefer, according to research? _____

Medical language

6 **Rewrite each sentence using the word in capitals. Do not change the meaning.**

1 Doctors predicted how the disease was likely to develop. PROGNOSIS _____

2 The tumour was found to be not cancerous. BENIGN _____

3 The disease's symptoms decreased and disappeared for a period. REMISSION _____

4 There was a specific reason the treatment should not be used. CONTRAINDICATION _____

OVER TO YOU

Write a 120-150 word account analysing how doctors communicate uncertain prognosis to patients, distinguishing observation from ethical evaluation.

[ ] Use at least twelve target expressions. [ ] Control connotation carefully. [ ] Avoid unsupported assumptions.

Medical language

VOCABULARY PRACTICE
UPPER-INTERMEDIATE | B2

ANSWER KEY

1 Precise terms

1 a 2 b 3 c 4 d 5 e 6 f 7 g 8 h 9 i 10 j

2 Connotation

1 contraindication 2 dosage 3 prognosis 4 anomaly 5 benign 6 malignant 7 remission 8 invasive procedure

3 Collocations

1 contraindication 2 dosage 3 prognosis 4 anomalous 5 benign 6 malignant 7 remission 8 invasive

4 Case notes

1 anomaly 2 benign 3 malignant 4 dosage 5 contraindication 6 remission
7 relapse 8 pathology 9 invasive procedure 10 prognosis

5 Reading - suggested answers

1 Communicating prognosis.
2 Only probabilistic estimates.
3 A particular outcome for an individual patient.
4 The risk of causing unnecessary distress through excessive hedging.
5 How medical language is used in sensitive conversations.
6 Honest, clearly explained uncertainty over false reassurance.

6 Rewriting - possible answers

1 Doctors gave a prognosis. 2 The tumour was benign.
3 The disease entered remission. 4 There was a contraindication.

Over to you

Answers will vary. Check lexical precision, appropriate connotation and separation of fact from inference.