

Appendix A: Glossary of Anatomical Terms

Not all the terms in this list appear in the dissector. However, they may be encountered in supplementary reading.

abduction	drawing away from midline
adduction	drawing toward the midline
adherent	sticking or clinging (< adhere)
alveolus	pouch in lung air sac
anterior	situated before or in front of (also ventral)
aorta	the large artery carrying oxygenated blood away from the heart
aponeurosis	a dense shiny fascia with all the fibers running in the same direction, forming a tendon
apposition	a fitting together
artery	vessel carrying blood away from the heart
articulation	connection between bones
autonomic nervous system	innervation of smooth muscle, heart muscle and glands
belly	central part of a muscle
body (of bone)	broadest or longest mass of bone
brachium	arm or branch
brainstem	base of the brain joining the spinal cord, includes the medulla oblongata, pons, and the midbrain
bronchus	one of two branches of the trachea entering the lungs
buccal	belonging to the cheek
cartilage	substance from which some bone ossifies; gristle
caudal below;	farther from the head (also inferior)
central nervous system	the brain and spinal cord (abbreviated CNS)
cervical (vertebrae)	pertaining to the neck
clavicle	the collarbone; a long bone articulating the sternum medially and the scapula laterally
cornu	a small, horn-shaped projection of a bone (pl. cornua, adj. corniculate)
coronal	vertical; at right angles to sagittal (also frontal)
cortex	the outer portion of an organ, particularly the brain; gray matter
costal	pertaining to the ribs
cranial	upper; nearer to the head (also superior, rostral)
cranium	the skull; the portion of the skull containing the brain
deep	farther from the surface
depressor	that which lowers
dilator	that which regulates the opening of an aperture; a muscle that expands or enlarges an opening
distal	farther from a point of attachment
dorsal	toward the rear, back (also posterior); used esp. for the brain
eminence	a projection or prominence (of bone)
esophagus	muscular tube through which food is carried from the pharynx to

	the stomach
extension	straightening
fascia	a sheet of fibrous connective tissue that covers muscle
flexion	bending or angulation
foramen	hole, e.g. the foramen magnum is the hole in the skull through which the spinal cord connects to the brain stem (pl.
foramina)	
fossa	shallow depression (pl. fossae)
frontal	vertical; at right angles to sagittal (also coronal)
ganglion	group of nerve cells outside the CNS (pl. ganglia)
genioid (process)	pertaining to the chin (adj. genial; < Gk. gena 'chin'; see also mental)
gland	an organ or group of cells which secrete fluid
gyrus	a "hill" on the surface of the brain (pl. gyri)
head (of bone)	enlarged around end of a long bone; knob
in situ	in position
inferior	below; farther from the head (also caudal)\
innervate	to provide nerves (to muscles)
innervation	the distribution of nerves to an area
insertion	the area of attachment of a muscle to bone
interdigitate	to join finger-like branches
jugular notch	a "valley" or depression at the top of the sternum where the clavicles attach
jugular	pertaining to the neck
lamina	plate or layer (of bone)
lateral	farther from the midline
levator	that which raises
ligament	fibrous tissue binding bones together or holding tendons and muscles in place
lingual	belonging to the tongue
lumbar (vertebrae)	pertaining to the base of the torso; any of five vertebrae near the bottom of the spinal column
malar	belonging to the cheek
mandible	the jaw bone
manubrium	platelike bone forming the superior part of the sternum
margin	border
maxilla	bone forming the upper jaw
meatus	an opening to the body
medial	nearer to midline
(osseus) membrane	a thin layer of tissue; the osseous membrane covers bone; the thyrohyoid membrane connects the thyroid cartilage and hyoid bone
midline	line dividing the body into left and right sides
mucosa	mucous membrane
neck (of bone)	constriction of bone near head

nerve	group of fibers outside the CNS
nucleus	group of nerve cell bodies inside the CNS
oblique	slanting
occiput	the back part of the head or skull
origin	fixed part of a muscle
palpate	to examine by touch
parietal brane	on the side or top; the parietal pleura is the pleural mem- facing the outside (cf. visceral)
pericardium	the membrane (actually an extension of the visceral pleura) covering and containing the heart (adj. pericardial)
pleura	the membrane(s) covering the lungs and inside of the thorax (cf. parietal, visceral; pl. pleurae)
plexus	a collection of nerve fibers
pons	structure of the brainstem connecting the medulla oblongata, midbrain and cerebrum
process (of bone)	projection
proximal	nearer to a point of attachment
pterygoid	wing-shaped; pertaining to the pterygoid bone, inferior to the sphenoid bone of the skull
pulmonary trunk	the region of the bronchus as it enters the lung
ramus	plate-like branch of bone; branch of a vessel or nerve
raphe	union of two parts (in a line)
reflect	pull or bend back
rostral	upper; nearer to the head (also cranial, superior)
sagittal	vertical plane or section dividing body into right and left
scapula	the shoulder blade
septum	a membrane or other structure separating two related structures (pl. septa)
serous	watery
sphincter	a circular band of muscle fibers that constrict an opening
sternum	the breastbone
subcutaneous	deep to the skin
sulcus	a "valley" on the surface of the brain (pl. sulci)
superficial	nearer to the surface
superior	upper; nearer to the head (also rostral, cranial)
tendon	fibrous tissue securing a muscle to its attachment (adj. tendinous)
tensor	that which draws tight
thoracic cavity	the inside of the rib cage; region of the heart and lungs
trachea	tube connecting the pharynx with the lungs
transverse	at right angles to long axis (also horizontal)
tubercle	small bump (can be felt with finger)
umbilicus	the navel
vascular	pertaining to the circulatory system, particularly arteries and veins
vein	vessel returning blood to the heart

viscera
visceral

soft organs of the body
pertaining to the viscera; the visceral pleura is the layer of the
pleura that faces the lungs (cf. parietal)

Notes on terminology

1. Muscles are often identified by where they originate and where they terminate. For example, the sternohyoid muscle originates at the sternum and terminates at the hyoid bone.
2. The nerve roots that exit from the spinal cord are often abbreviated by the section of the spinal cord from which they emerge and their number (i.e. how far down the cord they are at that particular level). For example, C1 is the first (most superior) nerve root which exits the cord at the cervical level (the most superior).