

**Prosthetics & Orthotics**

# **Common Terms and Abbreviations Guidebook**



Term	Definition / Description
<b>Abduction</b>	A movement of your limb away from the middle of the body
<b>Adduction</b>	A movement of your limb towards the middle of your body
<b>Alignment</b>	The position / orientation of prosthetic componentry, like the socket and prosthetic device, and how it aligns with other prosthetic units as well as the human anatomy
<b>Anterior</b>	Towards the front of the body
<b>Bilateral</b>	Referring to both sides of the body
<b>Biomechanics</b>	The science of movement of a body, including how muscles, bones, tendons, and ligaments work to produce movement
<b>Cervical</b>	Referring to the area of the neck; 7 cervical vertebrae make up the cervical spine
<b>Check Socket</b>	A temporary socket made of transparent plastic that is used by the prosthetist to diagnose the fit of the socket; think of it as a clear version of the cast taken. Also called a Diagnostic Test Socket, or DTS
<b>Circumduction</b>	The circular motion of a limb that is created when the movements of flexion, extension, abduction, and adduction are sequentially performed
<b>Contracture</b>	Tightening of the muscles, tendons, or ligaments that prevents normal movement of a joint; these can occur from trauma or sitting still for too long. This should be prevented at all times
<b>Coronal plane</b>	Imaginary plane that divides the body into front and back halves
<b>Cosmesis</b>	The outer covering of a prosthesis serving the purpose of aesthetics; sometimes referred to as cosmetics
<b>Definitive Prosthesis</b>	A replacement for a missing limb after post-surgical swelling has subsided; likely the second prosthesis you will receive after your amputation. The device that is delivered after the year-long period of change your limb goes through post-amputation
<b>Disarticulation</b>	Amputation through a joint (i.e. ankle, knee, hip)
<b>Distal</b>	A reference point that is towards the end of your limb, away from your body (i.e. closer to the end of your limb than your knee for a transtibial amputee)

Term	Definition / Description
<b>Donning / Doffing</b>	The process of putting on (donning) and taking off (doffing) a prosthesis
<b>Dorsal Surface</b>	Describes the area on top of the foot and the back of the hand
<b>Dorsiflexion</b>	Pointing the toe or foot upwards
<b>Edema</b>	Swelling of the tissues; occurs with poor circulation, certain medications, and when your limb is hanging down
<b>Eversion</b>	The movement of the plantar surface, or sole, of the foot so that it faces away from the midline of the body
<b>Extension</b>	Increase in joint angle, straightening the knee, pulling your thigh behind your body
<b>External Rotation</b>	The rotation of a body part away from the midline of the body
<b>Flexion</b>	Decrease in joint angle, bending the knee, pulling your thigh towards your chest
<b>Gait</b>	How you walk; the pattern of movement in your limbs
<b>Gait Training</b>	Learning, usually from a physical therapist, how to walk safely and properly with a prosthesis
<b>Internal Rotation</b>	The rotation of a body part toward the midline, of the body. Palmar (Volar) Surface: Describes the area on the palm of the hand
<b>Inversion</b>	The movement of the plantar surface, or sole, of the foot so that it faces toward the midline of the body
<b>Lateral</b>	Away from the midline of the body to the outside
<b>Liner(s)</b>	A covering for the residual limb that is used for suspension, cushioning and protection, it goes on your limb and inside the socket
<b>Lumbar</b>	Referring to the area of the lower back; five vertebrae (bones) make up the lumbar spine
<b>Medial</b>	Towards the midline of the body, towards the inside

Term	Definition / Description
<b>Myodesis</b>	A process during an amputation where the muscles are attached to bone
<b>Myoplasty</b>	A process during an amputation where muscles are attached to opposing muscles
<b>Neuroma</b>	A nerve ending that is cut during an amputation and turns into a disorganized growth or lump of nerve cells; neuromas (also be identified as “pinched nerve” or “benign tumor of nerve tissue”) are extremely sensitive and can be painful
<b>Occupational Therapy</b>	Evaluation and training performed by a licensed occupational therapist which focuses on maximizing the activities of daily living
<b>Phantom Limb Pain</b>	Pain that appears to come from an area below where the amputation occurred, often a sharp, firey, or electrical feeling
<b>Phantom Limb Sensation</b>	The feeling that an amputated limb is still attached to the body, it may present as an itch in a part of your limb that is no longer there
<b>Plantar Flexion</b>	Moving the ankle so the toe or foot point downwards
<b>Plantar Surface</b>	Describes the bottom, or sole, of the foot
<b>Physical Therapy</b>	Evaluation and training performed by a licensed physical therapist, which focuses on exercise, reducing pain and regaining mobility
<b>Pronation</b>	Rotation of the forearm so that the palm of the hand faces downward or backward; opposite of supination
<b>Posterior</b>	Towards the back of the body, behind you
<b>Prosthesis</b>	An artificial body part
<b>Prosthetist</b>	Healthcare practitioner who evaluates, fabricates, fits and adjusts prosthetic devices
<b>Proximal</b>	Used for a reference point that is towards your body along your limb, (i.e. closer to your knee than the end of your limb for a below knee amputee)
<b>Residual Limb</b>	The portion of a limb that remains after amputation
<b>Rotation</b>	Circular/turning movement of body parts, like the back, around its long axis

Term	Definition / Description
<b>Sagittal Plane</b>	Imaginary plane that divides the body into left and right halves
<b>Sound Side Limb</b>	The limb that has not been amputated
<b>Supination</b>	The rotation of the forearm so that the palm of the hand faces upward or forward; opposite of pronation
<b>Thoracic</b>	Referring to the area of the mid and upper back; 12 thoracic vertebrae (bones) make up the thoracic spine
<b>Transfemoral</b>	Amputation that occurs at a level above the knee joint but below the hip joint; also known as “above knee”
<b>Transtibial</b>	Amputation that occurs at a level below the knee joint but above the ankle joint; also known as “below knee”
<b>Transverse Plane</b>	Imaginary plane that divides the body into top and bottom halves
<b>Unilateral</b>	Referring to one side of the body
<b>Valgus</b>	Bent or turned outward, used in deformities in which the most distal anatomical part is angled outward. Used commonly to describe the knee and elbow
<b>Varus</b>	Bent or turned inward, used especially of deformities in which the most distal anatomical part is angled inward. Used commonly to describe the knee and elbow

If you're living as an amputee or have a congenital limb difference, chances are you'll encounter many terms you may not be familiar with. We know that sometimes it's easier to avoid asking questions for clarity in the moment, but it's important to understand these terms to communicate with your practitioner and peers in the disability community.

**Here at Ottobock.care, we are dedicated to providing resources just like this one to support you through every step of your journey with us and beyond.**

