

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ENGLISH AND LATIN LANGUAGES IN MEDICINE

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Latin (Lingua Latina) is an ancient language. The Latin language still has popularity and importance in the creation of new words in modern languages such as English and biological taxonomy.

English includes words from virtually every other language on the planet! As we know from the history of Latin, it arose in the 4th century AD (anno domini). It is much older than the English language which arose in England about 1500 years ago. So, before that time or even afterwards all medical terms were written in Latin and were widely used.

A survey made by Joseph M. Williams concerning the origin of 10,000 English words which were taken from several thousand business letters gave statistics that 15 percent of them were borrowed from Latin.

Another computerised survey made by Thomas Finkenstaedt and Dieter Wolff (1973) of about 80,000 words in the old Shorter Oxford Dictionary (3rd ed.) was published in *Ordered Profusion* that estimated the origin of English from Latin as 28.3%.

In the end, we can say that one of the principle uses of the Latin language today is in medical terminology, as medical terminology is basically a game of building blocks. You take a root (or two) and add prefixes and suffixes and put them together to create a new word. Latin and Greek are great languages for building words because the various parts go together so well. For example: ortho (straight) + dont (teeth) + -ic (pertaining to) = orthodontic (pertaining to the straightening of teeth, or simply teeth straightening; -ic just makes the word an adjective).

Thus, Latin has a great influence on the English language so that almost all medical terms in English come from this great language. I can't imagine the existence of medical terms without Latin.

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