Lesson Plan Five: Medical Talk

Overview
Students will discuss medical language, learn common medical terms and apply the terms in their own skits that they will perform. Additional activities include, sharing an article and assigning articles for next time, learning more medical terms, Inspiring Stories, and journal writing.

Outcomes
• Students will increase their medical vocabulary
• Students will identify possible communication barriers that may exist between the doctor and the patient
• Students will apply terms they learn from this lesson and create a skit demonstrating their knowledge and understanding
• Students will learn that doctors need to have both medical knowledge and the ability to communicate their knowledge to patients in a way that patients and their families can understand

Discussion
Have you ever been to a doctor’s appointment or hospital or watched a TV show with doctors and felt like everyone was speaking in another language?
Facilitator: Play the clip of some doctors speaking a few times. Have students write what they think has been said in their own words.
• Ask for three or four volunteers to give their opinion on what was said.
• What’s a CBC? What’s STAT mean?
  o Stat is actually a Latin word, statim, that means immediately. A CBC is the initials that stand for Complete Blood Count. A CBC is used to count the number of white blood cells to see if they are too low or too high.

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Discussion (continued)

- Why do doctors use these specific terms?
  Example: Doctors need a common, shared language to talk to each other. It takes a lot less time to use abbreviations, and if the doctor is writing out an order, it takes less time to write. They can spend more time with the patient instead of writing out the order.

- When may it not be a good idea to use this kind of language?
  Example: Patients and their families may not understand what the doctor is saying. Difficult-sounding unfamiliar words may be intimidating, or might sound frightening.

- Have you ever been confused or intimidated when health care professionals spoke in medical terms to you? What would you do in the future if you don’t understand what is being said?

Tip! If this seems too intrusive, have students talk about television shows or movies they may have seen.
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Activity
Divide students into small groups to write and perform a short skit using words from the word bank. They will be given specific scenarios to apply these words to. Example: A group can be given the words BP, O Positive and Scrubs and told to apply it to someone needing a blood transfusion. It can be funny or serious! Be creative but you must use all of the words. Be prepared to perform your skits in your small groups. Tell students to keep the skits to 2-5 minutes.

Tip!
First read over the words and definitions with your students to make sure they know how to pronounce the words and what they mean.

Word Bank
- Physician: doctor
- BP: blood pressure
- Invasive: requiring the entry of a needle, or other instrument into a part of the body
- Biopsy: removing a piece of tissue from the body to be studied, perhaps under a microscope
- O Positive: type O positive blood; also called universal donor blood since any human can receive O positive blood without complication
- Epidermis: the outer layer of the skin
- Scrubs: simple cotton clothes worn by doctors
- STAT: immediately (urgent)
- Productive Cough: a cough that helps to rid the body of phlegm
- Antibiotics: medicine that kills bacteria
- Stethoscope: tool used to listen inside the body to hear or lungs

Wrap Up
Groups perform their skits.
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Additional Activities

• **Students share article with the group**
  Have the students assigned to bring in articles share the story with the group. Have the student tell why they chose the article. Ask the group for their thoughts about the topic.

• **Learn more about medical terms from Medical Terms for Dummies cheat sheet:**
  www.dummies.com/how-to/content/medical-terminology-for-dummies-cheat-sheet.html

• **Inspiring Story of the week**
  Jasmine Johnson: www.aamc.org/students/aspiring/inspiring-stories/280738/jasmine_johnson.html

• **Journal writing**
  Have the students write about their favorite medical TV show or movie. Does the way the doctors talk seem realistic? Do you always understand what they’re saying when they use medical terms?

• **Article to share with group next time**
  Assign one or two students to find an interesting article having to do with medicine or being a physician. Tell the students to be prepared to share what they’ve read at the next club session and facilitate a short discussion with the group about the article or topic.