

WORDS-TO-KNOW REPRODUCTIVE SYSTEM

Acrosome Tip of the head of a sperm cell that contains enzymes to digest the membrane of an ovum.

Amnion Fluid-filled sac that surrounds a developing embryo/fetus.

Areola Circular, darkened area surrounding the nipple of each breast.

Alveolar glands Glands within the lobes of mammary glands that produce milk.

Bulbourethral glands Glands located underneath on either side of the prostate gland in males that secrete fluid that becomes part of semen.

Cervix Lower necklike portion of the uterus leading into the vagina.

Chromosomes Threadlike structures found in the nucleus of cells that carry the genetic material or genes that determine heredity.

Circumcision Surgical removal of the prepuce or foreskin of the penis.

Clitoris Small protruding mass of erectile tissue at the top of the labia minora.

Corpus luteum Yellowish remains of a burst ovarian follicle that secretes progesterone.

Ductus deferens Passageway that carries sperm from the epididymis to the ejaculatory duct.

Ejaculation Sudden ejection of semen from the penis.

Ejaculatory duct Duct formed by the union of the ductus deferens and the duct of the seminal vesicle.

Endometrium Inner layer of the uterus that provides nourishment for a developing embryo and fetus and that sloughs off during the regular menstrual cycle.

Epididymis Portion of the male reproductive duct system in which sperm mature or fully develop.

Estrogens Female steroid hormones secreted by the ovaries that bring about the secondary sex characteristics and regulate the female reproductive cycle.

Fallopian tube Tube connecting an ovary to the uterus and through which an ovum is transported.

Fimbriae Fingerlike projections at the end of a fallopian tube that partially surround an ovary.

Flagellum Long, whiplike tail that helps provide locomotion in certain cells, such as sperm cells.

Follicle-stimulating hormone Gonadotropic hormone produced by the anterior pituitary gland that stimulates the development of follicles in the ovaries of females and sperm in the testes of males.

Gamete Female or male reproductive or sex cell (egg or sperm).

Genitalia External organs of the reproductive system.

Gonad Sex organ in which reproductive cells develop.

Greater vestibular glands Pair of mucus-secreting glands that lubricate the lower portion of the vagina.

Hymen Thin membrane partially covering the external opening of the vagina.

Hysterectomy Surgical removal of the uterus.

Labia majora Outer skin folds of the vagina.

Labia minora Inner skin folds of the vagina.

Lactiferous ducts Ducts that carry milk from the alveolar glands to the surface of the nipple of a breast.

Luteinizing hormone Gonadotropic hormone secreted by the anterior pituitary that stimulates, in women, ovulation and the release of estrogens and progesterone by the ovaries and, in men, the secretion of testosterone by the testes.

Mammary glands Milk-producing glands in female breasts.

Menopause Period in a woman's life when menstrual activity ceases.

Menstruation Also known as menses, periodic (monthly) discharge of blood, secretions, tissue, and mucus from the female uterus in the absence of pregnancy.

Mons pubis Fatty, rounded area at the top of the vulva.

Myometrium Outer layer of the uterus composed of interwoven smooth muscle cells.

Oocyte Immature or developing egg cell.

Ova Female gametes or eggs (singular: ovum).

Ovarian follicles Structures within an ovary consisting of a developing egg surrounded by follicle cells.

Ovaries Female gonads in which ova (eggs) are produced and that secrete estrogens and progesterone.

Ovulation Release of a mature ovum from an ovary.

Oxytocin Hormone produced by the hypothalamus and stored in the posterior pituitary that stimulates contraction of the uterus during childbirth and secretion of milk during nursing.

Penis Male organ of reproduction and urination.

Placenta Temporary organ that provides nutrients and oxygen to a developing fetus, carries away wastes, and produces hormones such as estrogens and progesterone.

Prepuce Also called foreskin, the fold of skin over the glans or tip of the penis.

Progesterone Female steroid hormone secreted by the ovaries that makes the uterus more ready to receive a fertilized ovum or egg.

Prolactin Gonadotropic hormone secreted by the anterior pituitary that stimulates the mammary glands to produce milk.

Prostate gland Muscular gland in males that surrounds the first inch of the urethra and secretes a fluid that becomes part of semen.

Scrotum External sac enclosing the testes.

Semen Thick, whitish, somewhat sticky fluid composed of sperm and glandular secretions that is propelled out of a male's reproductive tract during ejaculation.

Seminal vesicles Glands in males located at the base of the bladder that secrete fluid that becomes part of semen.

Seminiferous tubules Tightly coiled tubes within the testes that produce sperm.

Sperm Mature male sex or reproductive cell.

Testes Male gonads that produce sperm cells and secrete testosterone.

Testosterone Hormone secreted by the testes that spurs the growth of the male reproductive organs and secondary sex characteristics.

Umbilical cord Structure that connects the embryo/fetus to the placenta.

Uterus Also known as the womb, the hollow organ in females that receives, retains, and nourishes a fertilized ovum or egg.

Vagina Muscular tube in women that extends from the cervix of the uterus to the vaginal opening.

Vulva Female external genital organs.

Zygote Fertilized ovum.