

# The Respiratory System: Words to Know

**Alveoli:**

Air sacs of the lungs.

**Breathing**

Process of inhaling and exhaling air.

**Bronchi:**

Largest branch of the bronchial tree between the trachea and bronchioles.

**Bronchial tree:**

Entire system of air passageways within the lungs formed by the branching of bronchial tubes.

**Bronchioles :**

Smallest of the air passageways within the lungs.

**Epiglottis :**

Flaplike piece of tissue at the top of the larynx that covers its opening when swallowing is occurring.

**Esophagus:**

Muscular tube connecting the pharynx and stomach.

**Exhalation :**

Also known as expiration, the movement of air out of the lungs.

**Glottis:**

Opening of the larynx between the vocal cords.

**Hemoglobin:**

Iron-containing protein pigment in red blood cells that can combine with oxygen and carbon dioxide.

**Inhalation:**

Also known as inspiration, the movement of air into the lungs.

**Larynx:**

Organ between the pharynx and trachea that contains the vocal cords.

**Lungs:**

Paired breathing organs.

**Nasal cavity:**

Air cavity in the skull through which air passes from the nostrils to the upper part of the pharynx.

**Nasal septum:**

Vertical plate made of bone and cartilage that divides the nasal cavity.

**Nose:**

Part of the human face that contains the nostrils and organs of smell and forms the beginning of the respiratory tract.

**Nostril:**

Either of the two external openings of the nose.

**Pharynx:**

Short, muscular tube extending from the mouth and nasal cavities to the trachea and esophagus.

**Pleura:**

Membrane sac covering and protecting each lung.

**Respiration:**

Exchange of gases (oxygen and carbon dioxide) between living cells and the environment.

**Trachea:**

Also known as the windpipe, the respiratory tube extending from the larynx to the bronchi.