

11.1 Correct and Preferred Usage of Common Words and Phrases

cadaver, donor: When describing the source of human organs and tissues used for transplantation, avoid *cadaver* (or *dead body*). Correct usage is *deceased donor* (or *recovered from deceased organ and tissue donors*).

When referring to a deceased person whose body is to be used for anatomical dissection, *cadaver* is correct (*cadaveric* as adjective).

chief complaint, chief concern: *Chief complaint* has been traditionally used by physicians when taking a patient's history. However, *chief concern* may be a better description because *complaint* may be construed as pejorative and confrontational.

glycated hemoglobin, glycosylated hemoglobin: The preferred term is *glycated hemoglobin*. *Glycohemoglobin* is also acceptable¹³ (David E. Bruns, MD, e-mail communication, May 17, 2006). See also 15.10.2, Nomenclature, Molecular Medicine, Molecular Terms: Considerations and Examples.

impaired, intoxicated: These related terms are used in the United States to define impairment in driving performance attributable to the use of alcohol or other drugs. For instance, in some jurisdictions, a blood or breath ethanol concentration of 0.08 g/dL is considered to be legal evidence of impairment for driving. By extension, some injury prevention researchers have considered this concentration of alcohol to be scientific evidence of impairment in other potentially hazardous activities. However, cognitive and other functions may be impaired at even lower concentrations of alcohol, particularly if other psychoactive drugs, including prescription drugs, have been taken. No specific blood or breath concentration of alcohol may be considered to be scientific evidence of intoxication or impairment for all persons in all settings and activities. Authors should explain, justify, and define the use of these terms, preferably in the “Methods” section of the manuscript.

survivor, victim: In scientific publications, use of the word *victim*—when describing persons who survive physical, domestic, sexual, or psychological violence or a natural disaster—should be avoided. Similarly, avoid labeling (and thus equating) people with a disability or disease as victims (eg, AIDS victim, stroke victim; see 11.10.4, Inclusive Language, Disabilities).

Victim may imply a state of helplessness.¹⁶ Characterizing a person who has experienced abuse or other violence as a victim perpetuates the stereotype of a passive person who cannot recover from the effects of the malady. In such cases *survivor* may be more appropriate (eg, rape survivor, tsunami survivor, survivor of torture).

If a person who experienced such trauma has died, referring to him or her as *victim* may be appropriate (victim of a land mine explosion). *Victim* may also be used in the vernacular (victim of his own success).
