ANATOMY
Anterior  Front teeth.
Crown of Tooth  The part of the tooth covered with enamel, the part that is normally visible above the gum line.
Deciduous teeth  Decay, cavities.
Dentin  The hard bonelike connective tissue making up the root of the tooth and the crown under the shell of enamel. Dentin has feeling through a series of tubules that act like nerves.
Enamel  The extremely hard outer shell of the tooth. Enamel, like hair and fingernails, has no feeling.
Posterior  Back teeth.
Pulp  The soft tissue in the center of the tooth that holds the nerves and blood supply.
Root  The part of the tooth below the gum line that anchors the tooth into the jawbone.

PREVENTIVE
Prophylaxis (prophy)  Tooth cleaning and polishing in the absence of gum disease.
Scaling  The removal of hard debris (tarter or calculus) from the tooth surface.
Topical Fluoride  Liquid or gel placed on teeth to help prevent caries.
Radiographs  X-ray films that help the dentist to detect beginning caries and gum disease that is not easily visible to the eye.

CROWNS
Cast Post and Core  An anchoring pin or post that is cemented into the root of the tooth (after a root canal) when there is not enough remaining tooth to support a crown.
Fixed Bridge  One or more false teeth (pontics) attached to the adjacent tooth or teeth by a crown or crowns.
Full Crown  A metal, plastic or porcelain restoration that covers the whole crown of the tooth. Sometimes called a cap.
3/4 Crown  A crown, usually metal, that leaves part of the visible surface of the tooth intact.
Non-precious Metal  Metal that contains no gold or platinum.
Pin Build-up  Pins and support material placed into the tooth structure under crowns or fillings for strength.
Pontic  The false tooth on a fixed bridge, usually metal, porcelain, or a combination of the two.
Porcelain  Tooth colored ceramic material fired in a high temperature oven. Used to make crowns, bridges and veneers when esthetics is important.

PROSTHETICS
Full Denture  Plastic or porcelain teeth on a plastic base replacing all of the upper and/or lower natural teeth.
Partial Denture  Replacement of missing teeth on a plastic base or metal bar.
Staplate  Plastic plate with teeth and clasps (usually temporary).
Reline  New plastic bonded into the denture to reestablish the fit since the underlying bone and gum tissue shrink over time.

RESTORATIVE
Composite/Plastic Resin  White or tooth-colored filling material.
Amalgam  Metal filling material, a mixture primarily of mercury and silver with small amounts of tin, zinc and copper. Usually called a silver filling.
Inlay  Cast metal, ceramic or lab cured composite filling cemented to the tooth but not completely covering the chewing surface.
Onlay  Like an inlay, but covering the chewing surface.
Sedative Base  Medication placed on top of pulp to help restore vitality of tooth.

ENDODONTICS
Apicoectomy  Amputation of the tip of the root.
Pulpectomy/Pulpotomy  Removal of all or part of the nerve of the tooth.
Pulp Cap  Medication placed over the exposed area of a live pulp (nerve) to promote healing of the pulp.
Root Canal Filling  Reshaping and filling the nerve space in the root of the tooth after the death of the nerve.

ORAL SURGERY
Extraction  Removal of a tooth.
Surgical Extraction  Extraction of a tooth that requires opening a gum tissue flap, removal of bone and placing sutures (stitches).
Impaction  Unerupted tooth that is tipped or blocked so that it cannot come in normally.
Impaction (soft tissue)  Impacted tooth just under gum line.
Impaction (partially bony)  Impacted tooth partly covered by bone.
Impaction (completely bony)  Impacted tooth completely covered by bone.
Frenectomy  Removal of connective tissue between the front teeth to allow spaces to close, restore proper shape of gum tissue or free the tongue for normal function.

PERIODONTICS
Gingiva  Gum tissue.
Gingivitis  Beginning gum disease, inflammation of the gingiva.
Gingivectomy  Removal of gum tissue to promote proper maintenance.
Osseous and Mucogingival Surgery  Removal and reshaping of bone and gum tissue.
Periodontitis  A advanced gum disease, inflammation of the ligament that attaches the tooth to the bone.
Root Planing  Removal of calculus, reshaping and smoothing the surface of the root, the basic treatment for periodontitis.
Subgingival Curettage  Removal of calculus and diseased tissue from the root and the cuff of soft tissue around the root.