A&P Directional Vocabulary

1 superficial - Pertaining to the surface of the body, or near the surface

2. deep - Away from the surface

3. anterior - Pertaining to the front of the body, or toward the belly of the body

4. posterior - Pertaining to the back of the body

5. ventral - Of or pertaining to a position toward the belly of the body; front=ward; anterior

6. dorsal - Pertaining to the back or posterior

7. dorsum - The back or posterior surface of a part; in the foot, the top of the foot

8. frontal plane - Any of the vertical planes passing through the body from the head to the feet, perpendicular to the sagittal planes dividing the body into front and back portions

9. medial - Toward the midline of the body

10. lateral - Toward the side of the body, away from the midline of the body

11. mediolateral - Pertaining to the middle and side of a structure

12. midline of the body - The imaginary “line” that is created when the body is divided into equal right and left halves.

13. midsagittal plane - The plane that divides the body or a structure into right and left equal portions

14. transverse plane - Any of the planes cutting across the body perpendicular to the sagittal and the frontal planes, dividing the body into superior (upper) and inferior (lower) portions

15. superior - Above or upward toward the head

16. inferior - Below or downward toward the tail or feet

17. cranial - pertaining to the head

18. caudal - pertaining to the tail

19. distal - Away from or farthest from the trunk of the body, or farthest from the point of origin of a body part

20. proximal - Toward or nearest to the trunk of the body, or nearest to the point of origin of a body part

21. supine - lying horizontally on the back, face-up

22. prone - lying face down on the abdomen

23. anatomical position - The standard reference position for the body as a whole; The person is standing with arms at the sides and palms turned forward; the individual’s head and feet are also pointing forward