Glossary

Anterior cerebral artery	One of the main pairs of arteries supplying the front of the brain.
Arachnoid (mater)	The middle of the three membranes that cover the brain and spinal cord. The arachnoid mater is itself separated into two layers, between which (called the subarachnoid space) is cerebrospinal fluid.
Arachnoid granulations (arachnoid villae)	Structures that absorb cerebrospinal fluid back into the bloodstream.
Basal ganglia (basal nuclei)	Clumps or groupings of nerve cells (nuclei) in the middle of the brain which control certain movements.
Basilar artery	One of the main arteries supplying the back of the brain.
Brainstem	The deepest part of the brain where the brain connects with the spinal cord. Controls wakefulness/consciousness. Divided into midbrain, pons and medulla oblongata.
Brocca's area	An area of the left frontal lobe, one of the primary areas for speech and language.
CSF	Cerebrospinal fluid.
CNS	Central nervous system. Includes the brain and spinal cord.
Carotid arteries	Part of the blood supply to the brain, in the front of the neck.
Caudate nucleus	One of the nuclei of the basal ganglia.
Central nervous system	The brain and spinal cord.
Cerebellum	A part of the brain attached to the back of the brainstem, involved in the smoothing and coordination of movement.
Cerebral cortex	The convoluted outer surface of the brain composed of billions of interconnected nerve cells or neurons.

Cerebral hemispheres	The two halves of the cerebrum.
Cerebrospinal fluid	A clear fluid in the center of and around the brain and spinal cord.
Cerebrum	The largest part of the brain, the outside, divided into two cerebral hemispheres.
Choroid plexus	The structure in the brain that produces cerebrospinal fluid.
Circle of Willis	An arterial circle at the base of the brain, supplied by the carotid and basilar arteries, from which the arteries that supply the brain arise.
Corona radiata	Part of the cerebrum, sheets of white matter tracts under the cerebral cortex that connect the cells of the cerebral cortex with themselves and all other parts of the brain.
Corpus callosum	A large band of white matter running between and connecting the two cerebral hemispheres.
Cranial nerves	The twelve pairs of nerves of the head and neck that come from (and go to) the brainstem.
Cranium	The bone that encases the brain.
Dura (mater)	The outer most of the three membranes that cover the brain and spinal cord.
Dural venous sinuses	Large veins on the surface of the brain that run within the dura.
Fourth ventricle	One of the fluid chambers of the brain, containing cerebrospinal fluid. The fourth ventricle is in the brainstem/cerebellum region.
Frontal lobe	One of the four paired lobes of the cerebral hemispheres (frontal, temporal, parietal, occipital).
Glia	Cells that support and insulate the neurons (nerve cells) of the brain.
Globus pallidus	One of the nuclei of the basal ganglia.

Grey matter	The part of the central nervous system that contains the cell bodies of neurons (as opposed to the white matter which is the connecting fibers). The cerebral cortex, basal ganglia, thalamus and other areas of the brain are grey matter.
Hypothalamus	Group of brain nuclei with involvement in endocrine (hormone) function, hunger, thirst, satiation, temperature regulation, sweating, water balance, short-term memory, sexual function and emotion.
Jugular veins	Large veins in the neck that drain blood from the brain back to the heart.
Lateral fissure	Also known as the Sylvian fissure. Separates the frontal and temporal lobes.
Lateral ventricles	Two of the fluid chambers of the brain, containing cerebrospinal fluid. The lateral ventricles are in the cerebrum.
Medulla oblongata	One of the parts of the brainstem.
Meninges	The three membranes that surround the brain, including the pia mater, arachnoid mater and dura mater.
Midbrain	One of the parts of the brainstem.
Middle cerebral artery	One of the main pairs of arteries supplying the front of the brain.
Motor strip	Also known as the precentral gyrus or primary motor area. Portion of the frontal lobe which controls movement of the opposite side of the body.
Nasal sinuses	Air cavities in the skull that communicate with the nasal cavity.
Neuron	Nerve cell
Nucleus	A grouping or clump of nerve cells.
Occipital lobe	One of the four paired lobes of the cerebral hemispheres (frontal, temporal, parietal,

	occipital).
Orbits	The bony part of the skull that contains the eyes.
Parietal lobe	One of the four paired lobes of the cerebral hemispheres (frontal, temporal, parietal, occipital).
Parkinson's Disease	A degenerative brain disease characterized by loss of neurons from some of the deep nuclei of the brain, notably the substantia nigra.
Peripheral nerves	The nerves coming off (and going to) the spinal cord to provide control for all parts of the body. One pair of motor nerves goes out and one pair of sensory nerves comes in at each vertebral segment/level.
Peripheral nervous system	The nerves outside of the spinal cord and brain (central nervous system).
Pia (mater)	The inner most of the three membranes that cover the brain and spinal cord.
Pineal body (gland)	A small structure attached to the back of the thalamus. The pineal body has no apparent function in humans.
Pituitary gland	A small structure attached to the base of the hypothalamus that secretes many different hormones.
Pons	One of the parts of the brainstem.
Posterior cerebral artery	One of the main pairs of arteries supplying the back of the brain.
Postcentral gyrus	Also known as the sensory strip or primary sensory area. Portion of the parietal lobe which controls sensations of the opposite side of the body.
Precentral gyrus	Also known as the motor strip or primary motor area. Portion of the frontal lobe which controls movement of the opposite side of the body.
Putamen	One of the nuclei of the basal ganglia.

Primary motor area	Also known as the motor strip or precentral gyrus. Portion of the frontal lobe which controls movement of the opposite side of the body.
Primary sensory area	Also known as the postcentral gyrus or sensory strip. Portion of the parietal lobe which controls sensations of the opposite side of the body.
Red nucleus	One of the nuclei of the brainstem.
Regenerate	The ability of peripheral nerves to grow back if cut or injured.
Scalp	The scalp is the skin and connective tissue overlying the top of the head.
Sensory strip	Also known as the postcentral gyrus or primary sensory area. Portion of the parietal lobe which controls sensations of the opposite side of the body.
Skull	The bone that encases the brain.
Skull base	The bone that encases the brain on its undersurface. The skull base has openings through which arteries, veins and nerves pass, and contains the structures of the inner and middle ear, the orbits and the nasal sinuses.
Spinal cord	The elongated nerve cord that runs down the central canal of the spine. An extension of the brain, part of the central nervous system.
Subarachnoid space	The space between the layers of the arachnoid mater, containing cerebrospinal fluid.
Substantia nigra	One of the nuclei of the brainstem.
Subthalamic nucleus	One of the nuclei of the brainstem.
Sylvian fissure	Also known as the lateral fissure. Separates the frontal and temporal lobes.
Temporal lobe	One of the four paired lobes of the cerebral hemispheres (frontal, temporal, parietal, occipital).

Thalamus	Clumps or groupings of nerve cells (nuclei) in the middle of the brain which control certain movements. Divided into numerous sub-nuclei. Involved in maintaining levels of consciousness and controlling relays for vision, hearing, language and movement.
Third ventricle	One of the fluid chambers of the brain, containing cerebrospinal fluid. The third ventricle is in the region of the hypothalamus, thalamus and basal ganglia.
Tract	A sheet or cable-like grouping of nerve fibers connecting nerve cells from one area of the central nervous system to another.
Ventricles	The four fluid chambers of the brain, including the lateral, third and fourth ventricles.
Vertebral arteries	Part of the blood supply to the brain, in the back of the neck.
Wernicke's area	An area of the left temporal lobe, one of the primary areas for speech and language.
White matter	The tracts and sheets of fibers that connect nerve cells to one another.