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tissue surrounding a bundle (fascicle) of nerve fibers within a nerve. — **peri-neurial** /ˈn(y)ðərəl/ **adj.** [19th C.: mod. L., from Gk. *peri-* 'around' + *neurōn* 'sineu']

peri-od /ˈp(ə)rēd/ **n.** 1 a length or portion of time. ■ a portion of time in the life of a person, nation, or civilization characterized by the same prevalent features or conditions: *the medieval period*. ■ one of the set divisions of the day in a school allocated to a lesson or other activity. ■ [with *adj.*] a set period of time during which a particular activity takes place: *the training period*. ■ each of the intervals into which the playing time of a sporting event is divided. ■ a major division of geological time that is a subdivision of an era and is itself subdivided into epochs, corresponding to a system in chronostratigraphy. 2 a punctuation mark (.) used at the end of a sentence or an abbreviation. ■ informal added to the end of a statement to indicate that no further discussion is possible or desirable: *he is the sole owner of the trademark, period*. 3 Physics the interval of time between successive occurrences of the same state in an oscillatory or cyclic phenomenon, such as a mechanical vibration, an alternating current, a variable star, or an electromagnetic wave. ■ Astron. the time taken by a celestial object to rotate around its axis, or to make one circuit of its orbit. ■ Math. the interval between successive equal values of a periodic function. 4 (also **menstrual period**) a flow of blood and other material from the lining of the uterus, lasting for several days and occurring in sexually mature women (who are not pregnant) at intervals of about one lunar month until the onset of menopause. 5 Chem. a set of elements occupying a horizontal row in the periodic table. 6 Rhet. a complex sentence, esp. one consisting of several clauses, constructed as part of a formal speech or oration. ■ Music a complete idea, typically consisting of two or four phrases. **adj.** [attrib.] belonging to, or characteristic of, a past historical time, esp. in style or design: *period furniture*. [ME: from OFr. *periode*, via L. from Gk. *peridos* 'orbit', from *peri-* 'around' + *hodos* 'course']

peri-odic /ˈp(ə)rēdɪk/ **adj.** 1 appearing or occurring at intervals. 2 Chem. relating to the periodic table of the elements or the pattern of chemical properties that underlies it. 3 of or relating to a rhetorical period. See **period** (sense 6).

peri-odic acid /ˈp(ə)rēdɪk/ **n.** Chem. a hygroscopic solid acid, H_4IO_6 , with strong oxidizing properties. — **peri-odate** /ˈp(ə)rēdɪt/ **n.** [19th C.: from *peri-* + *iodic acid*]

peri-od-ic-al /ˈp(ə)rēdɪkəl/ **n.** a magazine or newspaper published at regular intervals. **adj.** [attrib.] occurring or appearing at intervals; occasional. ■ (of a magazine or newspaper) published at regular intervals. — **peri-od-ic-al-ly** **adv.**

peri-od-ic-al ci-ca-da **n.** an American cicada (genus *Magicicada*) whose nymphs emerge from the soil in large numbers periodically. The nymphs of the northern species (**seventeen-year locust**) emerge every seventeen years; those of the southern species emerge every thirteen years.

peri-od-ic function /ˈp(ə)rēdɪk/ **n.** Math. a function returning to the same value at regular intervals.

peri-od-ic-ity /ˈp(ə)rēdɪsɪt/ **n.** esp. tech. the quality or character of being periodic; the tendency to recur at intervals: *the periodicity of the sunspot cycle*.

peri-od-ic ta-ble /ˈp(ə)rēdɪk/ **n.** Chem. a table of the chemical elements arranged in order of atomic number, usually in rows, so that elements with similar atomic structure (and hence similar chemical properties) appear in vertical columns.

peri-od-ize /ˈp(ə)rēdɪz/ **v.** [trans.] formal divide (a portion of time) into periods. — **peri-od-iza-tion** /ˈp(ə)rēdɪzəʃən/ **n.**

peri-o-don-tics /ˈp(ə)rēdɒntɪks/ (also **peri-o-don-tia** /ˈdʌnsə/ **n.** plural *n.* [treated as sing.]) the branch of dentistry concerned with the structures surrounding and supporting the teeth. — **peri-o-don-tal** /ˈdʌntəl/ **adj.** **peri-o-don-tist** /ˈdʌntɪst/ **n.** [1940s: from *peri-* + Gk. *odont-* 'tooth']

peri-o-don-ti-tis /ˈp(ə)rēdɒntɪtɪs/ **n.** Med. inflammation of the tissue around the teeth, often causing shrinkage of the gums and loosening of the teeth.

peri-o-don-tol-ogy /ˈp(ə)rēdɒntələʒi/ **n.** another term for **periodontics**. **peri-od piece** **n.** an object or work that is set in or strongly reminiscent of an earlier historical period.

peri-os-te-um /ˈp(ə)rēstēəm/ **n.** (pl. **-os-te-a** /ˈstēə/) Anat. a dense layer of vascular connective tissue enveloping the bones except at the surfaces of the joints. — **peri-os-te-al** /ˈstēəl/ **adj.** [16th C.: mod. L., from Gk. *periosteon*, from *peri-* 'around' + *osteon* 'bone']

peri-os-ti-tis /ˈp(ə)rēstɪtɪs/ **n.** Med. inflammation of the membrane enveloping a bone.

peri-pa-tet-ic /ˈp(ə)rɪpəteɪk/ **adj.** 1 traveling from place to place, esp. working or based in various places for relatively short periods. 2 (**Peripatetic**) Aristotelian. **n.** 1 a person who travels from place to place. 2 (**Peripatetic**) an Aristotelian philosopher. — **peri-pa-tet-i-cal-ly** **adv.** **peri-pa-tet-ic-ism** /ˈtɛtəslɪzəm/ **n.** [ME: ult. from Gk. *peripatētikos* 'walking up and down', from *peripatein*]

peri-pe-te-a /ˈp(ə)rɪpɛtē/ **n.** formal a sudden reversal of fortune or change in circumstances, esp. in reference to fictional narrative. [16th C.: from Gk., from *peri-* 'around' + stem of *piptein* 'to fall']

periph-er-al /ˈp(ə)rɪfərəl/ **adj.** of, relating to, or situated on the edge or periphery of something. ■ of secondary or minor importance; marginal. ■ [attrib.] (of a device) able to be attached to and used with a computer, although not an integral part of it. ■ Anat. near the surface of

the body, with special reference to the circulation and nervous system. **n.** Comput. a peripheral device. — **periph-er-al-iza-tion** /ˈp(ə)rɪfərəlɪzəʃən/ **n.** **periph-er-al-ize** **v.** **periph-er-al-ly** **adv.**

periph-er-al nerv-ous sys-tem **n.** Anat. the nervous system outside the brain and spinal cord.

periph-er-al vi-sion **n.** side vision; what is seen on the side by the eye when looking straight ahead.

periph-ery /ˈp(ə)rɪfəri/ **n.** (pl. **-eries**) the outer limits or edge of an area or object. ■ a marginal or secondary position in, or part or aspect of, a group, subject, or sphere of activity. [16th C.: via late L. from Gk. *periphēria* 'circumference', from *periphērēs* 'revolving around', from *peri-* + *pherein* 'to bear']

periph-ra-sis /ˈp(ə)rɪfrəsɪs/ **n.** (pl. **-ses** /-sɛz/) the use of indirect and circumlocutory speech or writing. ■ an indirect and circumlocutory phrase. ■ Gram. the use of separate words to express a grammatical relationship that is otherwise expressed by inflection, e.g., *did go* as opposed to *went* and *more intelligent* as opposed to *smarter*. [16th C.: via L. from Gk., from *periphrazein*, from *peri-* 'around' + *phrazein* 'declare']

periph-ras-tic /ˈp(ə)rɪfrastɪk/ **adj.** (of speech or writing) indirect and circumlocutory. ■ Gram. (of a case or tense) formed by a combination of words rather than by inflection (such as *did go* and *of the people* rather than *went* and *the people's*). — **periph-ras-tic-al-ly** **adv.**

periph-y-ton /ˈp(ə)rɪfɪtən/ **n.** Ecol. freshwater organisms attached to or sed-ling to plants and other objects projecting above the bottom sediments. — **periph-ytic** /ˈp(ə)rɪfɪtɪk/ **adj.** [1960s: from Gk. *peri-* 'around' + *phuton* 'plant']

per-ique /ˈp(ə)rɪk/ **n.** a strong dark tobacco from Louisiana. [19th C.: Louisiana Fr., appar. from the nickname of Pierre Chenet.]

per-i-scope /ˈp(ə)rɪskəp/ **n.** an apparatus consisting of a tube attached to a set of mirrors or prisms, by which an observer (typically in a submerged submarine or behind a high obstacle) can see things that are otherwise out of sight.

per-i-scop-ic /ˈp(ə)rɪskəpɪk/ **adj.** of or relating to a periscope. ■ (of a lens or an optical instrument) giving a wide field of view. — **per-i-scop-ic-al-ly** **adv.**

per-ish /ˈp(ə)rɪʃ/ **v.** [intrans.] suffer death, typically in a violent, sudden, or untimely way. ■ suffer complete ruin or destruction. ■ (of rubber, a foodstuff, or other organic substance) lose its normal qualities; rot or decay.

— **PHRASES** **perish the thought** informal used, often ironically, to show that one finds a suggestion or idea completely ridiculous or unwelcome. [ME: from OFr. *periss-*, stem of *perir*, from L. *perire* 'pass away', from *per-* + *ire* 'go']

per-ish-a-ble /ˈp(ə)rɪʃəbəl/ **adj.** (esp. of food) likely to decay or go bad quickly. ■ (of something abstract) having a brief life or significance; transitory. **n.** (**perishables**) things, esp. foodstuffs, likely to decay or go bad quickly. — **per-ish-a-bil-ity** /ˈp(ə)rɪʃəbɪlɪtɪ/ **n.**

Per-is-so-dac-ty-la /ˈp(ə)rɪsəˈdaktələ/ **n.** an order of mammals that comprises the odd-toed ungulates. Compare with **Artiodactyla**. — **per-is-so-dac-tyl** **n.** & **adj.** [mod. L. (pl.), from Gk. *perissos* 'uneven' + *daktulos* 'finger, toe']

peri-stal-sis /ˈp(ə)rɪstəlsɪs/ **n.** Physiol. the involuntary constriction and relaxation of the muscles of the intestine or another canal, creating wavelike movements that push the contents of the canal forward. — **peri-stal-tic** /ˈstɒltɪk/ **adj.** **peri-stal-tic-al-ly** /ˈstɒltɪk(ə)li/ **adv.** [19th C.: mod. L., from Gk. *peristallein* 'wrap around', from *peri-* + *stallein* 'to place']

peri-stome /ˈp(ə)rɪstəm/ **n.** Zool. the parts surrounding the mouth of various invertebrates. ■ Bot. a fringe of small projections around the mouth of a capsule in mosses and certain fungi. [18th C.: from mod. L. *peristoma*, from Gk. *peri-* 'around' + *stoma* 'mouth']

peri-style /ˈp(ə)rɪstɪl/ **n.** Archit. a row of columns surrounding a space within a building such as a court or internal garden or edging a verandah or porch. ■ an architectural space such as a court or porch that is surrounded or edged by such columns. [17th C.: ult. from Gk. *peristulos* from *peri-* 'around' + *stulos* 'pillar']

peri-the-ci-um /ˈp(ə)rɪθɛsɪ(ə)m/ **n.** (pl. **-the-ci-a** /ˈθɛsɪə/) Bot. (in some fungi) a round or flask-shaped fruiting body with pore through which the spores are discharged. [19th C.: mod. L., from *peri-* + Gk. *thēkē* 'case']

peri-to-ne-um /ˈp(ə)rɪtnēəm/ **n.** (pl. **-ne-ums** or **-ne-a** /ˈnēə/) Anat. the serous membrane lining the cavity of the abdomen and covering the abdominal organs. — **peri-to-ne-al** /ˈnēəl/ **adj.** [ME: via late L. from Gk. *peritoneion*, from *peritonos* 'stretched around', from *peri-* + *tonos* 'stretched']

peri-to-ni-tis /ˈp(ə)rɪtnɪtɪs/ **n.** Med. inflammation of the peritoneum, typically caused by bacterial infection either via the blood or after rupture of an abdominal organ.

per-i-tus /ˈp(ə)rɪtʊs/ **n.** (pl. **-ti** /-tē/) a theological adviser or consultant to a council of the Roman Catholic Church. [1960s: from L.]

per-i-wig /ˈp(ə)rɪwɪɡ/ **n.** a highly styled wig worn



periscope



periwig

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