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- dacryocystorhinostomy:** Creation of an opening into the nose for draining of tears.
- database:** Collection of data organized in information fields in electronic format.
- data glove:** Gloves containing dual-axis sensors to detect wrist movements.
- daytime splint:** Splint used during the daytime that must be designed in such a way that it may be removed several times a day so that the client can prevent joint stiffening by moving the joint(s) to the full range of motion.
- deaf:** Complete or partial loss of the ability to hear.
- death rate:** Number of deaths occurring within a specific population during a particular time period, usually in terms of 1,000 persons per year.
- debility:** Weakness or feebleness of the body.
- débridement:** Removal of dead tissue and foreign matter from a wound.
- decentration:** Tendency to notice and take into account all or most of the relevant characteristics of an object when making an assessment (as opposed to toddlers' tendency toward centration, in which they attend only to one aspect of an object).
- decision making:** The process of making decisions (i.e., the choice of certain preferred courses of action over others).
- declarative memory:** The registration, retention, and recall of past experiences, sensations, ideas, thoughts, and knowledge through the hippocampal nuclear structures or the amygdala, which results in long-term memory.
- decorticate rigidity:** Exaggerated extensor tone of the lower extremities and flexor tone of the upper extremities resulting in abnormal posturing due to damage to the brainstem.
- decortication:** Removal of portions of the cortical substance of a structure or organ, as of the brain, kidney, lung, etc.
- decubitus ulcer:** Open sore due to lowered circulation in a body part.
- dedifferentiation:** *See* anaplasia.
- deductible:** Amount of loss or expense that an insured or covered individual must incur before an insurer assumes any liability for all or part of the remaining cost of covered services.
- deductive reasoning:** A serial strategy where conclusions are drawn on the basis of premises that are assumed to be true.
- deep venous thrombosis (DVT):** A blood clot in the deep venous system of the lower or upper extremity, which can be extremely dangerous if the clot becomes dislodged; it could travel to the lungs and create a pulmonary embolism.
- defense mechanisms:** Unconscious processes that keep anxiety-producing information out of conscious awareness (e.g., compensation, denial, rationalization, sublimation, and projection).
- defibrillation:** The stoppage of fibrillation of the heart. The separation of the fibers of a tissue by blunt dissection.