

The First-Year Survival Starter

*How to start medical school in English
without drowning.*



WELCOME

From Bagrat & Afina.

Hi — we're Bagrat and Afina, a brother and sister in Tbilisi. One of us is in the first year of medical school, in English. The other is preparing to get in, also in English.

We made this because nobody handed it to us. We got lost, we got overwhelmed, and we spent months looking for answers no one explained simply. This is the short, honest guide we wish someone had given us on day one.

It won't take long to read. Keep it somewhere you'll see it when the panic hits.

— *Bagrat & Afina*

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

Read it once today. Then do the one small action at the end of each chapter — that's where it actually starts working.

CHAPTER 1

The first shock: medicine in English.

The hardest part of the first weeks isn't the science. It's doing the science in a second language. You understand the idea in Georgian in your head — and then freeze when you have to say it, write it, or answer it in English.

Here's what we learned the slow way: don't translate under pressure. Learn the term in English from the very first day, next to its meaning, so it never has to pass through Georgian first. The exam is in English. Your memory should be too.

Most of first year is not being smarter — it's not quitting in week three.

DO THIS TODAY

Pick 10 words from today's lecture and write them in English first — not as a translation. Meaning comes second.

CHAPTER 2

20 terms you must know.

If you learn nothing else this week, learn these. They appear in every subject, every lecture, every exam.

Term	Meaning	Latin / Greek root
Hepatic	relating to the liver	<i>hepar</i>
Renal	relating to the kidney	<i>ren</i>
Cardiac	relating to the heart	<i>cor</i>
Pulmonary	relating to the lungs	<i>pulmo</i>
Cerebral	relating to the brain	<i>cerebrum</i>
Gastric	relating to the stomach	<i>gaster</i>
Osseous	relating to bone	<i>os</i>
Cutaneous	relating to the skin	<i>cutis</i>
Vascular	relating to vessels	<i>vas</i>
Hepatocyte	a liver cell	<i>hepar + cytus</i>
Anterior	toward the front	<i>anterior (ante = before)</i>
Posterior	toward the back	<i>posterior (post = after)</i>
Superior	above / higher	<i>superior (super = above)</i>
Inferior	below / lower	<i>inferior (infra = below)</i>
Proximal	nearer the origin	<i>proximus (nearest)</i>
Distal	farther from the origin	<i>distans (distant)</i>
Medial	toward the midline	<i>medius (middle)</i>
Lateral	toward the side	<i>latus (side)</i>
Enzyme	a protein that speeds a reaction	<i>Gk. zyme (leaven)</i>
Substrate	the molecule an enzyme acts on	<i>substratum</i>

In the full pack, every term comes in three languages. A taste:

English	ქართული	Русский
Heart	გული	сердце
Liver	ღვიძლი	печень
Cell	უჯრედი	клетка

The full trilingual version (English · Georgian · Russian) is inside the Medical English Starter Pack.

DO THIS TODAY

Cover the meaning column and test yourself. Anything you miss twice, write on a flashcard tonight.

CHAPTER 3 · FROM BAGRAT

4 mistakes to avoid.

These cost me weeks in first year. If this guide saves you even one of them, it was worth writing.

01 I memorised before I understood.

I could recite a whole cycle and still not know what it meant. Understand first — memory follows.

02 I thought in Georgian, then froze in English.

Learn the terms in English from day one. Don't translate under pressure in the exam.

03 I studied everything equally.

Some topics carry the exam; some barely appear. Find the high-yield ones and start there.

04 I studied alone until I was drowning.

One question to a classmate saved more time than a whole night alone. Ask early.

“Some days we don't want to study either. The difference isn't discipline — it's that we built a way to keep going anyway.”

CHAPTER 4

Our study map.

The whole road, in four moves. Wherever you are, you're on one of these — and you're not on it alone.

Decide — Is this really for me?

Be honest about why medicine, in English, before you spend a year preparing. Clarity now saves years later.

Prepare — Biology, chemistry, and the language.

Build the entrance subjects and your medical English in parallel — not one after the other.

Get in — Applications and entrance exams.

Know the exact requirements of your university. Follow Afina's real-time diary as she does this now.

Year one — Survive — then build a system.

Anatomy, biochemistry, and a way to keep going on the hard days. Follow Bagrat from inside it.

Next step — go deeper. The Medical English Starter Pack: 75 essential first-year terms in English, Georgian and Russian, with flashcards and the mistakes to avoid.

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