

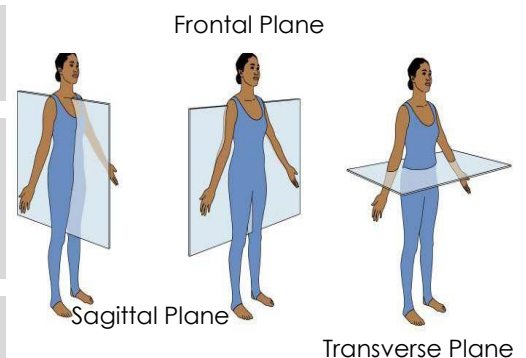
## Body Planes and Directional Terms

As part of an Independent Medical Assessment, a specialist may be required to carry out a physical examination of the claimant. When the specialist dictates the report, they will need to refer to the body and the location of its parts in precise detail. In doing this they will use terminology of body planes. They will also use directional terms when communicating the position or location of a condition or injury. Directional terms are also used to describe how a process, organ or body system relates to another.

These are terms that will appear in the finished medicolegal report and on occasion, it can be difficult for the client or claimant to interpret. The tables below should assist in understanding some of these terms.

### The Planes

Sagittal Plane	This plane divides the body or any of its parts lengthwise into left and right sides.
Frontal (or Coronal) Plane	This plane divides the body into front (anterior or ventral) and back (posterior or dorsal) portions. This plane slices from right to left.
Transverse or Horizontal Plane	This plane divides the body into the superior (upper) and inferior (lower) parts.



<b>Superior</b>	Above or towards the head	<b>Proximal</b>	Near to or close to
<b>Inferior</b>	Below or towards the feet	<b>Distal</b>	Away from or distant
<b>Anterior</b>	Towards the front of the body	<b>Supine</b>	Lying horizontally, facing down
<b>Posterior</b>	Towards the back of the body	<b>Prone</b>	Lying horizontally, facing up
<b>Ventral</b>	Pertaining to the front	<b>Extension</b>	Making the angle of the joint larger
<b>Dorsal</b>	Pertaining to the back	<b>Flexion</b>	Making the angle of the joint smaller
<b>Medial</b>	Middle of the body	<b>Eversion</b>	Turning outward or inside out
<b>Lateral</b>	Towards the side	<b>Inversion</b>	Turning inward, or reversal of normal
<b>Abduction</b>	To move away from the midline	<b>External</b>	Towards or near the outside
<b>Adduction</b>	To move towards the midline	<b>Internal</b>	Towards or near the inside