

Word for Word

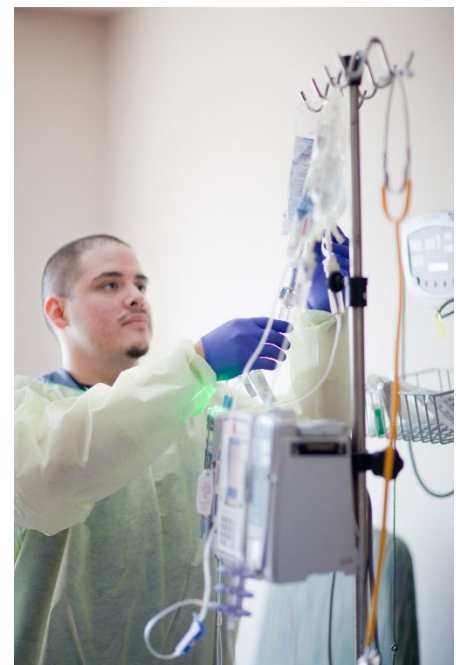
"Namely" or Not?

Namely is used to introduce a term or phrase that explains or offers details about something mentioned earlier in the sentence.

Example:

We studied the benefit of adding targeted agents, namely, bevacizumab and cetuximab, to standard chemotherapy. [*Namely* introduces a phrase that offers details about the targeted agents mentioned earlier in the sentence.]

However, *namely* is usually not needed. If a sentence is clear and easily understood without *namely*, we recommend removing the word.



Examples:

Original: Reviewers for the National Institutes of Health score proposals in terms of 5 core criteria, namely, significance, investigator(s), innovation, approach, and environment.

Revised: Reviewers for the National Institutes of Health score proposals in terms of 5 core criteria: significance, investigator(s), innovation, approach, and environment.

When you use *namely*, the word should be set off by commas.

Examples:

Incorrect: We explored a potential noninvasive alternative to tissue biopsy, namely analysis of circulating tumor DNA.

Correct: We explored a potential noninvasive alternative to tissue biopsy, namely, analysis of circulating tumor DNA.

Bibliography

Garner BA. Garner's Modern American Usage, 4th ed. New York: Oxford University Press; 2016:613.

--Stephanie Deming

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