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AMERICAN  
HERITAGE®

dictionary

of the  
English  
Language

  


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**ep·i·the·li·um**  (ěp'ə-thē lē-əm)

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*n. pl.* **ep·i·the·li·a** (-lē-ə) or **ep·i·the·li·ums**

Membranous tissue composed of one or more layers of cells separated by very little intercellular substance and forming the covering of most internal and external surfaces of the body and its organs.

[New Latin *epithēlium* : [EPI-](#) + Greek *thēlē*, nipple; see **dhē(i)-** [in the Appendix of Indo-European roots.](#)]

**ep'i-the li-al** *adj.*

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## Indo-European & Semitic Roots Appendices

Thousands of entries in the dictionary include etymologies that trace their origins back to reconstructed proto-languages. You can obtain more information about these forms in our online appendices:

[Indo-European Roots](#)

[Semitic Roots](#)

The Indo-European appendix covers nearly half of the Indo-European roots that have left their mark on English words. A more complete treatment of Indo-European roots and the English words derived from them is available in our [Dictionary of Indo-European Roots](#).

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