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clit·o·ris  (klīt ər-īs, klī-tôr īs, klī tər-īs)

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n.

A small erectile body situated at the anterior portion of the vulva and projecting between the branched extremities of the labia minora forming its prepuce and frenulum.

[New Latin *clitoris*, from Greek *kleitoris*, possibly from diminutive of **kleitōr*, clasp of a necklace, key; see **klei-** in the Appendix of Indo-European roots, from *kleiein*, to close (for the semantic development, compare Greek *balanos*, acorn, peg with an acorn-shaped bulge in a fastener, clasp of a necklace, glans penis).]

clit o·ral (-ər-əl) *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](#)

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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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