



Ependyma cells (Chippis, Clanin, and Campbell, 1992)



Ependymoma (Cotran, Kumar, and Collins, 1999)

ephapse /ef'aps/ [Gk, *ephasis*, a touching], a point of lateral contact between nerve fibers across which impulses may be transmitted directly through the cell membranes rather than across a synapse. Compare **synapse**. —**ephaptic**, *adj.*

ephaptic transmission /ifap'tik/, the passage of a neural impulse from one nerve fiber, axon, or dendrite to another through the membranes. The mechanism may be a factor in epileptic seizures. Compare **synaptic transmission**.

epheiatrics /ēfeb'ē-at'riks/ [Gk, *ephebos*, puberty, *iatros*, physician], a branch of medicine that specializes in the health of adolescents.

ephedra, an evergreen herb found throughout the world. Also called *ma huang*.

■ **USES:** This herb is used for seasonal and chronic asthma, nasal congestion, and cough.

■ **CONTRAINDICATIONS:** Ephedra is contraindicated in those with known hypersensitivity to sympathomimetics, women who are pregnant or lactating, children less than 12 years of age, and people with narrow-angle glaucoma, seizure disorders, hyperthyroidism, diabetes mellitus, prostatic hypertro-

phy, arrhythmias, heart block, hypertension, psychosis, tachycardia, and angina pectoris.

ephedrine /ef'adrēn/, an adrenergic bronchodilator.

■ **INDICATIONS:** It is prescribed in the treatment of asthma and bronchitis and is used topically as a nasal decongestant.

■ **CONTRAINDICATIONS:** Concomitant administration of monoamine oxidase inhibitors, hypertension, cardiac artery disease, cardiac arrhythmia, or known hypersensitivity to this drug prohibits its use.

■ **ADVERSE EFFECTS:** Among the more serious adverse reactions are nervousness, insomnia, anorexia, and increased blood pressure.

ephemeral /ifem'ərəl/ [Gk, *epi*, above, *hemera*, day], pertaining to a short-lived condition, such as a fever.

ephemeral fever, any febrile condition lasting only 24 to 48 hours that is uncomplicated and of unknown origin.

epi-, ep-, prefix meaning 'on, upon': *epicanthus*, *epicostal*, *epidural*.

epiblast /ep'iblast/ [Gk, *epi*, upon, *blastos*, germ], the primordial outer layer of the blastocyst or blastula, before differentiation of the germ layers, that gives rise to the ectoderm and contains cells capable of forming the endoderm and mesoderm. See also **ectoderm**. —**epiblastic**, *adj.*

epicanthus /ep'ikan'thəs/ [Gk, *epi* + *kanthos*, lip of a vesel], a vertical fold of skin over the angle of the inner canthus of the eye. It may be slight or marked, covering the canthus and the caruncle. It is a hereditary trait in Asian people and is of no clinical significance. Some infants with Down syndrome have marked epicanthal folds. Also called **epicanthal fold**, **epicanthic fold**. —**epicanthal**, **epicanthic**, *adj.*

epicardia /-kär'dē-ə/ [Gk, *epi*, above, *kardia*, heart], the part of the esophagus that lies between the cardiac orifice of the stomach and the esophageal opening of the diaphragm.

epicardial. See **epicardium**.

epicardial pacing. See **pacing**.

epicardium /ep'ikär'dē-əm/ [Gk, *epi* + *kardia*, heart], the outermost of the three layers of tissue that form the heart wall. It is composed of a single sheet of squamous epithelial cells overlying delicate connective tissue. The epicardium is the visceral portion of the serous pericardium and folds back on itself to form the parietal portion of the serous pericardium. Compare **myocardium**. See also **pericardium**. —**epicardial**, *adj.*

epicondylar. See **epicondyle**.

epicondylar fracture /-kon'dilər/, any fracture that involves the medial or lateral epicondyle of a specific bone, such as the humerus.

epicondyle /ep'ikon'dəl/ [Gk, *epi* + *kondylos*, knuckle], a projection on the surface of a bone above its condyle. —**epicondylar**, *adj.*

epicondylitis /ep'ikon'dilī'tis/, a painful and sometimes disabling inflammation of the muscle and surrounding tissues of the elbow, caused by repeated strain on the forearm near the medial or lateral epicondyle of the humerus. The strain may result from violent extension or supination of the wrist against a resisting force, such as may occur in playing tennis or golf, twisting a screwdriver, or carrying a heavy load with the arm extended. Treatment usually includes rest, injection of procaine with or without hydrocortisone, stretching and strengthening of the muscle, and, in some cases, surgery to release part of the muscle from the epicondyle. See also **golfer's elbow**, **lateral humeral epicondylitis**.

epicranial. See **epicranium**.

epicranial aponeurosis /-krä'nē-əl/ [Gk, *epi* + *kranion*, skull, *apo*, away, *neuron*, tendon], a fibrous membrane that