cysteine (sis’te-ēn) n. chemical name: 2-amino-3-mercaptopropionic acid. A sulfur-containing nonessential amino acid produced by the enzymatic or acid hydrolysis of proteins. It is easily oxidized to cystine, is sometimes found in the urine, and has limited detoxification properties. Symbols Cys and C. See also table at amino acid.
cysteine hydrochloride, the hydrochloride salt of cysteine; used as a dietary supplement.