

# Glossary

**Abdominal Film** - an X-ray of the abdomen, showing the stomach, intestines, and other organs.

**Anemia** - the condition of too few red blood cells in the blood.

**Antibiotics** - drugs that either kill bacteria or slow their growth; used in treating or preventing bacterial infections.

**Apnea** - the condition of not breathing; usually temporary, common in premature babies.

**Aspirate** - material suctioned from any body cavity, (i.e. gastric aspirate—material suctioned from stomach).

**Aspiration** - inhalation of materials (formula, meconium) into the trachea (windpipe) or lungs.

**Bagging** - manually pumping air into the lungs.

**Bili Lights** - see phototherapy.

**Bilirubin** - breakdown product of red blood cells; excess amount in the blood cause jaundice, a yellowing of the skin.

**Blood gas** - test performed on a sample of blood to be sure that the amounts of oxygen and carbon dioxide in the bloodstream are normal.

**Bradycardia** - slowing of the heart rate.

**Cardiology** - medical specialty that deals with the heart and circulatory system.

**Catheter** - a plastic tube for putting fluids into the body (umbilical artery catheter) or removing fluids from the body (bladder catheter).

**CC** - cubic centimeter, 30cc = 1 ounce.

**Chemstrip** - special strip of plastic used to determine how much sugar (glucose) is present in a sample of blood.

**Chest Film** - X-ray picture of the chest, showing the heart and lungs.

**Circumcision** - procedure of removing the foreskin of the penis.

**CPAP** - continuous positive airway pressure. Used to keep the lungs expanded while baby breaths independently.

**CPT** - chest physiotherapy - a means of vibrating or gently tapping over the chest lungs area to help loosen and drain secretions.

**Culture** - to test in the laboratory for infection of body fluids such as spinal fluid, blood or urine.

**Cyanosis** - a bluish discoloration of the skin and lips due to insufficient oxygen in the blood.

**Dusky** - see cyanosis.

**Edema** - presence of large amounts of fluid in the tissues of the body.

**EEG** (electroencephalogram) - a record of the electric current produced by the brain, from which certain things can be learned of the brain's structure and function.

**EKG (electrocardiogram)** - a record of the electric current produced by the heart muscle from which certain things can be learned about the heart's structure and function.

**Electrode** - a small adhesive patch that is placed on the skin to conduct the electric signals from the heart and breathing to the monitor.

**Electrolytes** - body chemicals, for example, sodium, calcium, potassium, and chloride, which must be present in normal concentration for the optimal function of all cells.

**EMI scan (CT scan, CAT scan)** - a three-dimensional picture of the layers of the body, usually the head.

**Endotracheal tube (ET tube)** - Tube placed through the mouth into the trachea (windpipe) connected to a respirator (ventilator).

**Gavage** - a method of feeding milk through a small tube which is passed through the mouth or nose into the stomach.

**Gestational Age** - the length of time from conception to delivery, which is usually 40 weeks.

**Glucose** - a sugar that is a principle source of energy.

**Gram** - basic unit of weight in metric system 28gm = 1 ounce.

**Guaiac** - a test for blood in stools.

**Heart failure** - inability of the heart to pump blood efficiently.

**Heel Stick** - method of obtaining blood samples from the heel of a baby.

**Hyaline Membrane Disease** - disorder most often seen in premature infants in which there is a tendency for the tiny air sacs of the lungs to collapse as the baby exhales.

**Hyperalimentation** - administration of sugar and other nutrients into a vein; used on infants that cannot be fed by mouth.

**Hypoglycemia** - blood sugar level below normal.

**I.M.** - abbreviation for intramuscular; one means of giving medication by injection.

**Infusion pump** - device used to carefully regulate the administration of I.V. fluids.

**Intravenous (I.V.)** - introduction of fluids into a vein, through a hollow needle or tube.

**Intubation** - insertion of a tube through the mouth into the trachea (windpipe).

**Isolette (incubator)** - special enclosed bed for a newborn, in which temperature, oxygen, and humidity can be controlled.

**Jaundice** - yellow color of skin due to an excess of bilirubin in the blood.

**Lumbar puncture (LP, spinal tap)** - insertion of a small needle through the back of the spinal canal to obtain a sample of spinal fluid.

**Meconium** - dark green-black material in the intestines at birth; the first stool the baby passes.

**Monitor** - machine at the bedside which attaches to the baby with wire electrodes on adhesive patches. Monitor shows heart rate and respiratory rate and patterns at all times and alarms when they are not normal, alerting the nurse to the baby's needs.

**Mucous** - secretions of the membranes of the nose and trachea.

**Murmur** - sound made by the heart or major blood vessels which may or may not indicate a problem for the baby.

**Neonatal** - period of baby's life from birth to four weeks.

**Neonatologist** - physician who specializes in the care of sick newborns.

**Neonatology** - the medical specialty which deals with the diseases of infants.

**Neurology** - the medical specialty which deals with the nervous system and its disorders.

**NG tube (nasogastric tube)** - a plastic tube which is passed through the nose or mouth into the stomach and is used for giving nutrients and medications or for aspirating stomach contents. Used for gavage feedings.

**NPO** - nothing by mouth.

**Oxyhood** - clear plastic box that is placed over the baby's head to provide additional oxygen and moisture.

**PDA (Patent ductus arteriosus)** - persistence of the opening of a vessel normally open in prenatal life. This vessel normally closes after birth. When it remains open it causes an added burden on the heart and lungs.

**PCO<sub>2</sub>** - carbon dioxide level -- see blood gas.

**Pediatrician** - physician who specializes in the care of infants and children.

**Phototherapy** - treatment for jaundice that involves the use of fluorescent light.

**Pneumonia** - inflammation of the lungs, which may be caused by infection or aspiration.

**Pneumothorax** - a condition when air leaks out of the lung, compressing the lung and causing it to collapse. A chest tube is inserted to remove the unwanted air and allow the lung to re-expand.

**Premature** - an infant who is born earlier than 37 weeks gestation.

**Public Health Nurse** - a specially trained nurse who visits patients and their families at home after the patient is discharged from the hospital.

**Oxygen monitor (Pulse oximeter)** - machine showing the amount of oxygen in the baby's blood. It attaches by a light sensor in an adhesive strap to the baby's hand, wrist, or foot.

**Red Blood Cells (RBC)** - the cells in the blood which contain hemoglobin and carry oxygen.

**Respirator (ventilator)** - machine that breathes for the baby.

**Respiratory Distress Syndrome (RDS)** - disorder most often seen in premature infants in which there is a tendency for the tiny air sacs of the lungs to collapse as the baby exhales.

**Retracting** - sucking in of the baby's chest during breathing, a common symptom of troubled breathing.

**Room air** - the normal air we breathe which has an oxygen concentration of 21%.

**Rounds** - the gathering of doctors, nurses, and other hospital personnel to discuss the condition and treatment of the babies, usually done in the morning and late afternoon.

**Sepsis** - infection of the blood.

**“Spells”** - term used to indicate an apnea and/or bradycardic episode that a baby may experience.

**Stool** - bowel movement.

**Suction** - removing secretions from the nose, throat, or from an endotracheal tube using a plastic tube (catheter).

**Term infant** - an infant whose gestational age is between 38 and 42 weeks.

**TPN** - total parenteral nutrition --see hyperalimentation.

**TPN line, “central line,” “CVC line”** - an IV means of administering TPN fluid using a large central vein.

**Trachea** - windpipe.

**Ultrasound** - exam using high frequency sound waves to examine different areas of the body.

**Umbilical Artery Catheter (UAC)** - small plastic tube that is placed in one of the arteries of the umbilical cord; blood can be drawn from the baby and fluids administered to the baby through this tube without additional needle sticks.

**Umbilical Venous Catheter (UVC)** - same as above, but a vein in the umbilical cord is used.

**Urinalysis** - the laboratory examination of urine.

**Vapotherm** – tiny tubes placed into the nose to provide warmed humidified oxygen and/or air for respiratory support.

**Ventilator** - see respirator.