

Commonly Used Terms in the Nursery  
Santa Clara Valley Medical Center

**ABG (Arterial Blood Gas)**

To obtain blood by arterial puncture to analyze how much oxygen and carbon dioxide are in the blood and to check the acid-base balance in the blood.

**ANEMIA**

A condition of insufficient red blood cells or hemoglobin in the blood.

**ANTIBIOTIC**

Medication used to treat infection.

**APNEA**

The baby stops breathing, usually for a short period of time.

**APGAR SCORE**

The standard for evaluating the condition of infants at birth.

**ARTERY**

A large blood vessel that carries oxygen to the body.

**BAG**

An inflatable black bag with a small rubber mask.

**BAGGING**

A way of breathing for the baby by moving oxygen into a baby's lungs with a bag and mask. The mask fits over the baby's nose and mouth or through the endotracheal tube.

**BILIRUBIN**

A substance in the blood that is made from the break-down of red blood cells.

**BILILIGHT**

A florescent light used to treat jaundice (high bilirubin).

**BLOOD GASSES**

A blood test done to evaluate how the heart and lungs are functioning.

**BRADYCARDIA**

A slowing down of the heart rate.

**CARDIAC**

The heart.

**CATHETER**

A small plastic tube.

**CATH TOES**

A discoloration of the toes, can be a grey/blue color or a very pale to white color.

**CC's**

Cubic centimeters, a fluid measurement - 30 cc's equal one ounce.

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CULTURE

A sample of body fluid, tested for signs of infection (blood, spinal fluid, urine, stool).

CYANOSIS

A bluish color of the skin.

EDEMA

Having too much fluid in the body tissue, usually causing a swelling and/or puffy look.

ELECTRODE

A round adhesive patch, placed on the baby's chest to measure the heart rate and the breathing. These are connected to a monitor that displays the numbers, and has a rhythm strip on the monitor.

ENDOTRACHEAL TUBE

A stiff plastic tube that is passed through the mouth onto the trachea/windpipe and is connected to a respirator.

FULL TERM INFANT

An infant who is born between 38-42 weeks gestation.

GAVAGE FEEDING

A way of feeding a baby either breast milk or formula through a small tube passed through the baby's mouth to the stomach.

HEEL STICK

A way of obtaining blood samples by pricking the baby's heel.

INCUBATOR

A special enclosed bed for the baby, where the temperature is controlled.

INTRAVENEOUS

Giving fluids through a hollow needle into a vein.

ISOLETTE

A type of incubator.

JAUNDICE

A yellow color of the skin that is caused by too much bilirubin in the blood.

MECONIUM

Dark green material found in the newborn's intestine; the first stool that the baby passes.

NEONATE

A newborn infant.

Commonly Used Terms in the Nursery  
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OPEN RADIANT WARMER

An open bed with an overhead heater that helps to keep the infant warm. There is very good access to the baby, several people are able to care for the baby at the same time.

OXYHOOD

A round plastic box that fits over the baby's head to provide oxygen and moisture.

PHOTOTHERAPY

A treatment for jaundice by placing fluorescent lights over the baby's bed to help break down bilirubin.

PREMATURE INFANTS

An infant who is born early, before 38 weeks gestation.

RESPIRATOR

A machine that breathes for the baby.

SEPSIS

An infection.

TRACHEA

The windpipe.

UAC (UMBILICAL ARTERY CATHETER)

A small plastic tube that is placed in one of the arteries of the umbilical cord. Blood can be drawn from the body and fluids can be given into the body through this tube.

UVC (UMBILICAL VENOUS CATHETER)

A small plastic tube that is placed in the umbilical vein. Fluids are given through this tube and the blood pressure can be measured through this tube.