

## Preemie Care Glossary of NICU Terms

The PreemieCare glossary currently contains 191 acronyms and terms.

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## A

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Term	Definition	Links to Information
<b>Adjusted Age</b>	Used most appropriately to describe children up to 3 years of age who were born preterm, "corrected age" or "adjusted age" is calculated by subtracting the number of weeks born before 40 weeks of gestation from the chronological age.	<a href="#">University of Michigan Health System: What is child development?</a>  <a href="#">Gaining and Growing: Assuring the Nutritional Care of Preterm Infants: Calculating Corrected Age</a>
<b>AFDC</b>	<b>(see <a href="#">Aid to Families with Dependent Children</a>)</b>	
<b>Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC)</b>	A government subsidized program that offers financial assistance to eligible families. Ask your social worker for additional information on this and other programs you may be eligible for.	<a href="#">US Office of Health and Human Services: Family Assistance</a>
<b>Anemia</b>	One of the more common blood disorders, anemia occurs when the level of healthy red blood cells (RBCs) in the body becomes too low.	<a href="#">Kids Health: Anemia</a>  <a href="#">March of Dimes: Complications of Premature Birth</a> <a href="#">Kids Health: What is an Apgar Score</a>
<b>Apgar Score</b>	A scoring system that helps the physician estimate a baby's general condition at birth. The test measures a baby's heart rate, breathing, muscle tone, reflex response and color at 1 minute, 5 minutes and 10 minutes of life. Named after its creator, Virginia Apgar.	<a href="#">Childbirth.org: Apgar Scoring for Newborns</a>  <a href="#">Children's Hospital of Wisconsin: Assessments of Newborn Babies</a>

<b>Apnea</b>	A pause in breathing that lasts longer than 15- 20 seconds. Apnea of Prematurity occurs in infants who are born prematurely (before 34 weeks of pregnancy). Because the brain or respiratory system may be immature or underdeveloped, the baby may not be able to regulate his or her own breathing normally.	<a href="#">Kids Health: Apnea</a> <a href="#">Kids Health: Apnea of Prematurity</a> <a href="#">Children's Hospital of Stanford: Respiratory Disorders</a> <a href="#">MCG Health System: High-Risk Newborn</a> <a href="#">Medline Plus: Aspiration</a>
<b>Aspiration</b>	Inhaling a foreign object, such as food, medicine, or meconium.	<a href="#">Medline Plus: Aspiration</a>
<b>Attending Physician</b>	The physician who has been selected by or assigned to the patient and who has assumed primary responsibility for the treatment and care of the patient.	<a href="#">Law Skills: Definition of Attending Physician</a> <a href="#">Wikipedia: Attending Physician</a>
<b>Audiologist</b>	A medical professional with 6 years of training who treats patients with hearing, balance, and related ear problems.	<a href="#">US Department of Labor: Audiologists</a> <a href="#">Audiology.net</a>
<b>Auditory Neuropathy</b>	a condition found in infants to adults who displays auditory characteristics consistent with normal outer hair cell function and abnormal neural function at the level of the VIIIth (vestibulo-cochlear) nerve. These characteristics are observed on clinical audiologic tests as normal otoacoustic emissions (OAEs) in the presence of an absent or severely abnormal auditory brainstem response (ABR).	<a href="#">Auditory Neuropathy Information</a> <a href="#">National Institute of Deafness and Other Communication Disorders</a> <a href="#">My Baby's Hearing</a>

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Term	Definition	Links to Information
<b>Bagging</b>	Pumping air or oxygen into a baby's lungs by squeezing a bag of air into a mask placed over the baby's mouth and nose, or through an endotracheal tube.	<a href="#">Royal Prince Alfred Hospital: Department of Neonatal Medicine: Protocol Book: Resuscitation</a> <a href="#">Yahoo Health: Antenatal corticosteroids for fetal lung development</a>
<b>Beta-methasone</b>	Corticosteroid given to the mother before the baby is born to stimulate fetal lung maturation and to decrease the frequency and damage from intracranial hemorrhage in premature infants.	<a href="#">WebMD: Bilirubin</a>
<b>Bilirubin</b>	Bilirubin is a breakdown product of hemoglobin, the substance in blood that carries oxygen. Normally bilirubin passes through the liver and is excreted as bile through the intestines. Jaundice occurs when bilirubin builds up faster than a newborn's liver can break it down and pass it from the body.	<a href="#">Healthy Kids: Jaundice in Healthy Newborns</a>

<b>Bi-level Positive Airway Pressure (bipap)</b>	A way to provide adequate oxygen to an infant with sleep apnea	<a href="#">PubMed: Use of CPAP and BiPAP in Acute Respiratory Failure</a>
<b>Bipap</b>	(see <b>Bi-level Positive Airway Pressure</b> )	
<b>BPD</b>	(see <b>Bronchopulmonary Dysplasia</b> )	
<b>Bradycardia</b>	A heart rate less than 100, slower than normal for an infant.	<a href="#">Kids Health: Common Diagnoses in the NICU</a>  <a href="#">American Pregnancy Association: Premature Birth Complications</a>
<b>Brain Bleed</b>	(see <b>Intra ventricular Hemorrhage</b> )	
<b>Breast Pump</b>	A machine to collect breast milk without the baby present. A hospital-grade breast pump is often more powerful than those for home use, and may be available for rental.	<a href="#">Mayo Clinic: Choosing a Breast Pump</a>
<b>Broncho-pulmonary Dysplasia (BPD)</b>	A chronic lung disorder that is most common among children who were born prematurely, with low birth weights, and who received prolonged mechanical ventilation.	<a href="#">Prematurity.org: BPD</a>  <a href="#">Nucleus Medical Art: Bronchopulmonary Dysplasia (BPD)</a>

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Term	Definition	Links to Information
<b>Cannula</b>	A slender tube that can be inserted into a body cavity or duct.	<a href="#">Storknet: Ventilator, CPAP, Nasal Cannula, Etc</a>
<b>Catheter</b>	A hollow flexible tube for insertion into a body cavity, duct, or vessel to allow the passage of fluids or distend a passageway. Its uses include the drainage of urine from the bladder through the urethra or insertion through a blood vessel into the heart for diagnostic purposes.	<a href="#">March of Dimes: Common NICU Equipment</a>
<b>CBC</b>	(see <b>Complete Blood Count</b> )	
<b>CC</b>	(see <b>Cubic Centimeter</b> )	
<b>Central Venous Line</b>	A narrow tube that is placed into a large blood vessel and passed into the opening of the heart. It is used to receive medicine, fluid, and to draw blood.	<a href="#">MedicineNet: Definition of Central venous line</a>
<b>Cerebral Palsy (CP)</b>	Appearing in the first few years of life, this diagnosis means the child will have problems moving parts of their body. The extent of the problem is not always known immediately.	<a href="#">The Alfred DuPont Institute: Cerebral Palsy Program</a>  <a href="#">National Organizations of Neurological Disorders and Stroke: Cerebral Palsy Information Page</a>

<b>Complete Blood Count (CBC)</b>	Blood test that looks at the number and type of white blood cells, the concentration of hemoglobin, the percentage of blood volume consisting of red blood cells (hematocrit), and the number of platelets.	<a href="#">WebMD: Complete Blood Count</a>
<b>Continuous Positive Airway Pressure (CPAP)</b>	Pronounced "see Pap," and stands for Continuous Positive Airway Pressure. Through small tubes that fit into the baby's nostrils, called nasal CPAP, this machine pushes a continuous flow of air or oxygen to the airways to help keep tiny air passages in the lungs open.	<a href="#">Kids Health: Apnea of Prematurity</a>
<b>Corrected Age</b>	<b>(see Adjusted Age)</b>	
<b>CP</b>	<b>(see Cerebral Palsy)</b>	
<b>CPAP</b>	<b>(see Continuous Positive Airway Pressure)</b>	
<b>Cubic Centimeter (cc)</b>	A metric unit of volume equal to one thousandth of a liter (a milliliter). There are 30 cc in a fluid ounce.	<a href="#">Wikipedia: Cubic Metre</a>
<b>Culture</b>	A lab test which detects infections in the body by placing samples in a special dish and monitoring them for twenty-four to seventy-two hours.	<a href="#">MedicineNet: Definition of Culture</a>

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Term	Definition	Links to Information
<b>Developmental Care</b>	Used in NICUs to reduce the stress of the NICU experience on premature babies, including many different practices such as: swaddling, noise levels, skin-to-skin care, Individual Care Plans, parental involvement, positioning for development, expanding visitation policies, lactation support, and music therapy. (Also known as Family-Centered Care)	<a href="#">Developmental Care for Our Little Miracles</a> <a href="#">National Association of Children's Hospitals</a> <a href="#">Institute for Family Centered Care</a>
<b>Developmental Delays</b>	The failure to meet certain milestones such as rolling, sitting, walking, and talking at the average age.	<a href="#">Prematurity.org: Developmental Follow-up of Pre-term Infants at High Risk for Delays</a> <a href="#">Society of Developmental and Behavioral Pediatrics</a>
<b>Developmental Pediatrician</b>	These physicians have ten years of training and specialize in evaluating and treating problems with child development. They assess the level of development of premature infants.	

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Term	Definition	Links to Information
<b>Early Intervention Program (EI)</b>	Early intervention refers to services that are provided to children three years of age or younger, who have or might develop a special need that may affect their development.	<a href="#">The Global Early Intervention Network</a>  <a href="#">Kid Source Online: What is Early Intervention</a>
<b>Echo-cardiogram</b> <b>ECMO</b>	The use of ultrasound to view the structure and function of the heart. <b>(see Extracorporeal Membrane Oxygenation)</b>	<a href="#">Massachusetts General Hospital: Echocardiogram</a>
<b>EEG</b>	<b>(see Electroencephalogram)</b>	
<b>EI</b>	<b>(see Early Intervention Program)</b>	
<b>EKG</b>	<b>(see Electrocardiogram)</b>	
<b>Electro-cardiogram (EKG)</b>	An adhesive patch placed anywhere on the body, and connected by a wire to a monitor, used to detect heart rate, respirations, or blood oxygen levels.	<a href="#">WebMD: Electrocardiogram</a>
<b>Electrodes</b>	A conductor used to make contact with a nonmetallic part of a circuit.	<a href="#">Wikipedia: Electrode</a>
<b>Electro-encephalogram (EEG)</b>	A noninvasive and painless study, in which electrodes placed on the scalp record the electrical activity of the brain.	<a href="#">The Better Health Channel: Electroencephalogram</a>
<b>Endotracheal Tube (ET Tube)</b>	A tube that is placed down the newborns windpipe and delivers warm humidified air and oxygen to the lungs.	<a href="#">MedicineNet: Endotracheal Intubation</a>
<b>ET Tube</b>	<b>(see Endotracheal Tube)</b>	
<b>Extracorporeal Membrane Oxygenation (ECMO)</b>	In infants, this machine is usually used to allow the lungs to rest and recover from disease or medical condition. ECMO is similar to the heart-lung bypass used in the operating room but is used for longer periods of time. Also called extracorporeal life support (ECLS).	<a href="#">University of Michigan Health System: A Family Guide to Neonatal ECMO</a>  <a href="#">Vanderbilt Medical Center Children's Hospital: ECMO Program</a>
<b>Extremely Low Birth Weight</b>	Extremely low birth weight babies refer to infants with a birth weight of less than 1000 grams or 2lbs 3oz.	<a href="#">Merrill Advanced Studies Center: Towards Universal Newborn Sensorimotor Screening and Habilitation</a>  <a href="#">National Center for Biology Information: Improved survival and short-term outcome of inborn "micropreemies".</a>  <a href="#">UCSF Children's Hospital: Very Low and Extremely Low Birthweight Infants'</a>

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Term	Definition	Links to Information
<b>Failure to Thrive</b>	The failure to gain weight as expected, which is often accompanied by poor height growth.	<a href="#">Kids Health: Failure to Thrive</a> <a href="#">American Academy of Family Physicians: Failure to Thrive</a> <a href="#">Health A to Z: Failure to thrive</a>
<b><u>Family Centered Care</u></b>	<b>(see Developmental Care)</b>	
<b>Fellow</b>	Physician who has completed medical school, internship and a residency, and has chosen to receive very specialized training in one particular treatment or research area.	<a href="#">Kids Health: When Your Baby's in the NICU</a>
<b>Fontanelle or Fontanel</b>	"Soft spot" between the parts of the baby's skull that will later grow together.	<a href="#">Parent's Common Sense Encyclopedia: Fontanelle</a> <a href="#">Wikipedia: Fontanelle</a>

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Term	Definition	Links to Information
<b>Gastro- enterologist</b>	A physician with seven years of training in diagnosing and treating diseases of the GI tract and digestive system.	<a href="#">WebMD: Gastroenterologist</a>
<b>Gastro esophageal Reflux</b>	This occurs when gastric juice from the stomach backs up into the esophagus. Adults refer to this as "heart burn" although it has nothing to do with the heart.	<a href="#">Ask Dr. Sears: GER: What is it, What to do, FAQs</a>
<b>Gastro- intestinal Tract (GI Tract)</b>	The tube that goes from the mouth to the anus where food is digested and eliminated from the body (as a bowel movement).	<a href="#">Children's Memorial Hospital: Necrotizing Enter colitis</a>
<b>Gavage Feeding</b>	A method of feeding a baby with breast milk or formula before s/he has learned how to swallow. A small flexible tube is placed into a baby's nostril or mouth and passed down into the stomach.	<a href="#">Children's Hospital Boston: Newborn Intensive Care Unit: Nutrition</a>
<b>Gestation</b>	Period of time between fertilization and birth of an animal. In humans 40 weeks is the average gestation for a full-term singleton. Commonly called pregnancy.	<a href="#">Wikipedia: Gestation</a> <a href="#">Biology II: Gestation and Human Development</a>
<b><u>GI Tract</u> Gram</b>	<b>(see Gastrointestinal Tract)</b> A metric unit of weight equal to one thousandth of a kilogram. One gram weighs the same as one plain M&M or one small paperclip. There are 30 grams in an ounce.	<a href="#">Baby Center: Average fetal length and weight chart</a>

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Term	Definition	Links to Information
<b>Hematocrit</b>	The percentage of blood volume consisting of red blood cells. Used as a measure of anemia.	<a href="#">Lab Tests Online: Hematocrit</a>
<b>Hemoglobin</b>	The component of red blood cells that carries oxygen. Used as a measure of anemia.	<a href="#">University of Maryland Medical Center: Hemoglobin</a>
<b>Hernia</b>	The protrusion of an organ or structure into surrounding tissues that shouldn't be there.	<a href="#">Kids Health: Could that Lump be a Hernia?</a>
<b>HFV</b> <b>High Frequency Ventilation</b>	(see Oscillator) (see Oscillator)	
<b>Hydrocephalus</b>	A condition where too much fluid collects in the ventricles, exerting increased pressure on the brain and causing the baby's head to expand abnormally. Surgery may be required.	<a href="#">Health A to Z: Hydrocephalus</a> <a href="#">Hydrocephalus Foundation Inc.</a> <a href="#">Dr. Trejos: Hydrocephalus FAQ</a> <a href="#">State University of New York Neurosurgery: Endoscopic Third Ventriculostomy</a>
<b>Hyper-bilirubinemia</b>	(see Jaundice)	

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Term	Definition	Links to Information
<b>IGUR</b>	(see Intrauterine Growth Retardation)	
<b>Ileal Perforation</b>	A hole in the small intestine.	<a href="#">Baby Zone: Ileal Perforation</a> <a href="#">World Journal of Emergency Surgery: Non-traumatic terminal ileal perforation</a>
<b>Incubator/Isolette</b>	A heat-controlled crib used to maintain a baby's body temperature.	<a href="#">Bliss the Premature Baby Charity: Equipment on the Neonatal Unit</a>
<b>Inflammation</b>	Pain, redness, and swelling, possibly caused by infection or injury.	<a href="#">Cleveland Clinic Information Center: Inflammation: What you need to know</a>
<b>Infusion Pump</b>	Device that delivers measured amounts of fluids or medications into the bloodstream over a period of time	<a href="#">Neonatology on the Web: Equipment in the NICU</a>

<b>Intrauterine Growth Retardation (IGUR)</b>	Inadequate growth of the fetus so that it is smaller than expected for gestational age [can happen at any time].	<a href="#">Family Doctor: Intrauterine Growth Restriction: When Your Baby Stops Growing Before Birth</a>  <a href="#">American Academy of Family Physicians: IUGR-Why Is My Baby Small and What Can Be Done About It?</a>  <a href="#">Baby Center: Intrauterine growth restriction (IUGR)</a> <a href="#">MedicineNet: Definition of Intravenous (IV)</a>
<b>Intravenous (IV)</b>	A small tube inserted into a vein in the hand, foot, arm, leg, or scalp. An IV delivers medicine, fluids into the blood.	<a href="#">All Refer: Intracerebral Hemorrhage</a>
<b>Intra ventricular Hemorrhage (IVH)</b>	Condition in which immature and fragile blood vessels within the brain burst and bleed into the hollow chambers (ventricles) normally reserved for cerebrospinal fluid and into the tissue surrounding them. An IVH is assigned a grade to give an estimate of how serious it is.	<a href="#">Penn State Newborn Intensive Care Unit: Intraventricular Hemorrhage (IVH)</a>  <a href="#">Royal Women's Hospital: Interval delivery in multiple pregnancy</a>  <a href="#">Multiple Birth Resources, LLC: Selective Interval Delivery</a> <a href="#">University of Utah Health Sciences Center: Respiratory Distress Syndrome</a>
<b>Interval Delivery</b>	The delivery of subsequent babies can be delayed after the preterm delivery of the first.	
<b>Intubation</b>	The procedure of inserting a tube through the mouth or nose, down the throat, and into the trachea or windpipe of a patient who may have difficulty breathing, or may be at risk of stopping breathing because of illness, surgery, or other medical problem.	
<b>IV</b>	(see <b>Intravenous</b> )	
<b>IVH</b>	(see <b>Intra ventricular Hemorrhage</b> )	

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Term	Definition	Links to Information
<b>Jaundice</b>	Yellow discoloration of skin and whites of the eyes that results from excess bilirubin in the body's system. May require use of special lights (phototherapy) until the baby is more mature. Also known as hyperbilirubinemia.	<a href="#">Family Doctor: Jaundice and Your Baby</a>  <a href="#">Caring for Kids: Jaundice in newborns</a>  <a href="#">American Academy of Pediatrics: Jaundice and Your Newborn</a>

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Term	Definition	Links to Information
<b>Kangaroo Care</b>	Holding a baby against one's naked chest, so there is skin-to-skin contact.	<a href="#">Answers.com: Kangaroo Care</a> <a href="#">Kangaroo Mother Care</a> <a href="#">Prematurity.org: Kangaroo Care Benefits</a> <a href="#">March of Dimes: Holding Your Baby Close: Kangaroo Care</a>

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Term	Definition	Links to Information
<b>Lactation Consultant</b>	A health professional, sometimes but not always a nurse, who provides information and support about breastfeeding and pumping breast milk.	<a href="#">Breastfeeding.com: Lactation Consultant Directory</a> <a href="#">International Board of Lactation Consultant Examiners</a>
<b>Lanugo</b>	Fine, downy hair that covers the fetus until shortly before or after birth.	<a href="#">La Leche League International Dr. Greene: Lanugo</a> <a href="#">Best Knows: Lanugo</a> <a href="#">The Tiny Miracles Foundation</a>
<b>Lead Wires</b>	The wires that go from a monitor to its electrodes.	<a href="#">MedicineNet: Definition of Lesion</a>
<b>Lesion</b>	Any patch of abnormal skin, or any small part of an injury or infection that is abnormal and causes an illness.	<a href="#">US Department of Labor: Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses</a>
<b>Licensed Practical Nurse/ Licensed Vocational Nurse</b>	Health care professional with a vocational education lasting approximately 12 months and licensed to give nursing care under the direct supervision of a registered nurse or physician. In some states, called a licensed vocational nurse.	<a href="#">USP Neonatal Pharmacotherapy: Patent Ductus Arteriosus and Treatment Options</a> <a href="#">University of Maryland Medical Center: Congenital Heart Defect Corrective Surgery</a> <a href="#">Department of Neonatal Intensive Care Liverpool Hospital: Liquid Ventilation</a> <a href="#">Northshore Medical Center: Respiratory Distress Syndrome in Newborns</a>
<b>Ligation</b>	The act of binding or of applying a tie, wire, or bandage around a limb, blood vessel or similar to restrict blood flow. Used to treat PDA among other uses.	
<b>Liquid Ventilation</b>	A form of respiration in which someone breathes an oxygen rich liquid, rather than breathing air.	

<b>Low Birth Weight</b>	Low birth weight infants are born weighing less than 2,500 grams or 5lbs 8oz at birth.	<a href="#">March of Dimes: Low Birth Weight</a>
<b>LPN</b>	<b>(see Licensed Practical Nurse)</b>	
<b>Lumbar Puncture</b>	A diagnostic procedure that is done to collect a sample of spinal fluid for analysis, or on rare occasions to relieve increased pressure in the spinal fluid. (Also known as a spinal tap.)	<a href="#">WebMD: Lumbar Puncture</a> <a href="#">Children's Hospital Boston: Spinal Tap or Lumbar Puncture</a>
<b>LVN</b>	<b>(see Licensed Practical Nurse)</b>	
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<b>Term</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Links to Information</b>
<b>Meconium</b>	Fecal material made by the fetus; usually passed in the first bowel movement after birth, but sometimes may be passed before birth and inhaled in the amniotic fluid during the fetus's normal breathing movement.	<a href="#">About.com: Meconium</a>
<b>Meconium Aspiration Syndrome (MAS)</b>	Problems caused by meconium (baby's first bowel movement) going into the lungs. This can be serious but usually is not.	<a href="#">Neonatal: Meconium Aspiration Syndrome</a> <a href="#">All Refer: Meconium Aspiration US Department of Health and Human Services: Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services</a>
<b>Medicaid</b>	A program partially sponsored by the federal government and administered by states that is intended to provide health care and health-related services to both low-income individuals and to other qualifying persons. A child may qualify regardless of parental income, based on other circumstances, even if the child has other health insurance.	<a href="#">Wikipedia: Medicaid</a>
<b>Meningitis</b>	An inflammation of the lining of the brain, from infection or other causes.	<a href="#">Baby Center: Meningitis</a> <a href="#">Meningitis Research Foundation</a> <a href="#">Meningitis.org</a>
<b>Microcephaly</b>	A condition in which the circumference of the head is small because of abnormal brain growth. This condition may or may not result in future learning problems.	<a href="#">National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke: Microcephaly Information Page</a> <a href="#">Microcephaly Support Group</a>
<b>Micropreemie</b>	An infant who is born at less than 27 weeks gestation and weighs less than 800 grams or 1lb 12oz.	<a href="#">The Extremely Immature Newborn - The Dilemma of the Microbaby</a>

**Milestones**

Skills most children can perform at certain ages. Examples include: smiling, rolling, sitting, scooting, crawling, standing, walking, and talking.

[India Parenting: Definition of Milestones](#)

[Answers.com: Developmental Milestones](#)

[University of Michigan: What is Child Development?](#)

[The Whole Child: The ABC's Of Child Development](#)

**Moderately Premature Monitor (see Premature Infant)**

**Monitor** A machine that records information such as heartbeat, body temperature, respiration rate, and blood pressure.

[University Health Care: Procedures and Equipment in NICU](#)

**Moro Reflex** A normal reflex of young infants; a sudden loud noise causes the child to stretch out the arms and flex (scrunch up) the legs.

[Dr. Hull: Moro Reflex](#)

[About.com Moro Reflex](#)

[Keep Kids Healthy: Newborn Reflexes](#)

**Myopia** The inability to see distant objects as clearly as near objects.

[Baby Center: Developmental Milestones: Sight](#)

[Health Banks: Nearsightedness \(Myopia\)](#)

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Term	Definition	Links to Information
<b>Nasal Cannula</b>	The "oxygen tubes" that give extra oxygen by blowing moisturized oxygen, possibly mixed with air, into the nose.	<a href="#">UTMB Pulmonary Services: Nasal Cannula</a>
<b>Naso-Gastric Tube (NG tube)</b>	A tube that is passed through the nose and down through the throat and esophagus and into the stomach.	<a href="#">Medline Plus: Feeding Tube Infants</a>  <a href="#">Pediatrix Medical Group: Feeding Tubes</a>
<b>Nebulizer Treatment</b>	A device for giving medicine by making a fine mist that is inhaled through the nose and/or mouth.	<a href="#">Baby Center: Respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) or bronchiolitis</a>  <a href="#">Baby Center: Asthma</a>
<b><u>NEC</u> Necrotizing Enter colitis (NEC)</b>	<b>(see Necrotizing Enter colitis)</b> An infection that destroys part of the baby's intestines. Drugs and/or surgery may be required.	<a href="#">University of North Carolina: Necrotizing enter colitis</a>

<b>Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU)</b>	<p>There are three levels of NICUs:</p> <p><u>Level 3:</u> Cares for any infant (at any age of gestation) that may have or could have severe or life threatening conditions.</p> <p><u>Level 2:</u> Any newborn that may require monitoring after birth and requires more than routine newborn care.</p> <p><u>Level 1:</u> Routine newborn care. Usually for full term infants, there may not be specialized equipment or physicians for problems.</p>	<p><a href="#">Kids Health: When Your Baby is in the NICU?</a></p> <p><a href="#">Wikipedia: Neonatal Intensive Care Unit</a></p> <p><a href="#">WebMD: Getting to Know the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU)</a></p> <p><a href="#">Prematurity.org: Surviving the NICU</a></p>
<b>Neonatologist</b>	Physician with 10 years of training specialized in dealing with the diseases and care of newborn infants.	<a href="#">American Academy of Pediatrics: What is a Neonatologist?</a>
<b>Neurologist</b>	Physician with 7 years of training specialized in dealing with the diseases and care of the brains and nerves.	<p><a href="#">S A Preemies: People in the NICU</a></p> <p><a href="#">Henry Ford Health: NICU consultants and support staff</a></p>
<b>NG Tube</b>	<b>(see Naso-Gastric Tube)</b>	
<b>NICU</b>	<b>(see Neonatal Intensive Care Unit)</b>	
<b>Noninvasive</b>	Meaning the body does not have to be entered through the skin or an opening (mouth, nose, anus, etc). Nothing is entered in the body.	<a href="#">Medline Plus: Noninvasive</a>
<b>NP</b>	<b>(see Nurse Practitioner)</b>	
<b>Nurse Practitioner (NP)</b>	A health professional with six to eight years of training, licensed to diagnose and treat illness in collaboration with physicians. They can prescribe medicine, order lab and radiology tests, and interpret the results. Neonatal nurse practitioners are one NP specialty and usually work in the NICU.	<a href="#">American College of Nurse Practitioners: What is a Nurse Practitioner?</a>

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Term	Definition	Links to Information
<b>OAE</b>	<b>(see Otoacoustic Emission Test)</b>	
<b>Occupational Therapist</b>	A health professional with four to six years of training that helps people who are ill or disabled learn to manage their daily activities (their "occupations"). In the NICU, OTs may be involved in giving the premature baby stimulation, helping the infant learn to swallow, helping the infant stay comfortable and relaxed, and teaching the parents and other activities.	<a href="#">March of Dimes: Staff in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU)</a>

<b>Ophthalmologist</b>	Physician (MD) specializing in diagnosis and treatment of refractive, medical and surgical problems related to eye diseases and disorders.	<a href="#">Low Vision Gateway: Understanding Retinopathy of Prematurity</a>  <a href="#">Kids Health: Common Diagnoses in the NICU</a> <a href="#">American Pregnancy Association: Care for the Premature Baby</a> <a href="#">Pediatrix: High-Frequency Ventilator (HFV)</a>
<b>Oro-Gastric Tube</b>	A flexible tube inserted through the mouth, down the throat and esophagus, and into the stomach.	
<b>Oscillator</b>	Technique of ventilation that uses respiratory rates greater than normal breathing. (Also known as a HFV- High Frequency Ventilation.)	
<b>OT</b>	<b>(see Occupational Therapist)</b>	
<b>Otoacoustic Emission Test (OAE)</b>	A passive audiological test that verifies cochlear activity often is used in testing infants suspected of hearing loss.	<a href="#">National Deaf Children's Society: Your baby's follow-up screening</a>
<b>Oximeter (Pulse Oximeter)</b>	A device worn on the finger, toe or earlobe that can measure levels of oxygen in the blood painlessly.	<a href="#">Neonatology on the Web: Equipment in the NICU</a>
<b>Oxygen Therapy</b>	Giving extra oxygen to the tissues of the body through the lungs. The oxygen can be given in a number of ways, including through a ventilator, mask, nasal cannula, or blow-by. The amount of oxygen given may be measured as a percentage, and in number of liters of flow per minute.	<a href="#">Kids Health: Common Diagnoses in the NICU</a>

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<b>Patent Ductus Arteriosus (PDA)</b>	Heart condition caused by the failure of the Ductus Arteriosus to close. Usually this normal opening between the aorta and the pulmonary artery closes just after birth. When it doesn't, the baby may be treated with medicine or surgery to fix the condition.	<a href="#">Cleveland Clinic: Patent Ductus Arteriosus</a>
<b>PDA</b>	<b>(see Patent Ductus Arteriosus)</b>	
<b>Pediatrician</b>	Physician with seven years of training in the care and treatment of children.	<a href="#">Club Mom: Choosing a Pediatrician</a>  <a href="#">American Academy of Pediatrics</a>  <a href="#">About.com: Choosing a Doctor for Your Twins/Multiples</a> <a href="#">Children's Hospital Boston: Intravenous Line and Tubes</a>
<b>Percutaneous Line</b>	A long catheter placed into a surface vein, with the catheter tip extending farther into the body into a large central vein. Doesn't have to be replaced as often as a regular IV line.	<a href="#">University of Virginia Health System: Intravenous Lines and Tubes</a>

**Periventricular Leukomalacia**

The ventricles or fluid spaces of the brain, "Leukomalacia" is softening of the white matter of the brain. Periventricular Leukomalacia is softening of the brain near the ventricles. The softening occurs because brain tissue in this area has died. May result in future problems with learning, vision, or movement.

[National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke: Periventricular Leukomalacia Information Page](#)

[Baby Zone: Periventricular Leukomalacia \(PVL\)](#)

[CP Resource Center: PVL](#)

**Persistent Pulmonary Hypertension of the Newborn (PPHN)**

In PPHN, it is difficult for blood to get into the lungs and pick up more oxygen that can go to the rest of the body. The cause is usually unknown, and treatments are based on the individual situation. Persistent pulmonary hypertension (PPHN) is also known as persistent fetal circulation.

[NICU Web: Persistent Pulmonary Hypertension Of The Newborn](#)

[Kids Health: Persistent Pulmonary Hypertension of the Newborn \(PPHN\)](#)

**Phototherapy**

Treatment for jaundice in a newborn infant. The infant is placed under (or on top of) special lights to help the body break down the extra bilirubin in the blood.

[University of Michigan Health System: Your Baby, Jaundice, and Phototherapy](#)

[WebMD: Phototherapy for jaundice \(hyperbilirubinemia\) in newborns](#)

[FamilyDoctor.org: Jaundice and Your Baby](#)

**Physical Therapist (PT)**

A health professional with four years or more of training who performs and teaches exercises and other physical activities to aid in rehabilitation and maximize physical ability with less pain. In the NICU, the PT may be involved in helping the baby's muscle and movement development.

[How to Touch a Premie- a Beginner's Guide to Over stimulation](#)

[PhysicalTherapist.com](#)

**Physician**

A graduate of a medical school or school of osteopathy with an MD or DO degree.

[American Medical Association](#)

**PPHN**

**(see Persistent Pulmonary Hypertension of the Newborn)**

**Premature Infant**

An infant born before the 37th week of pregnancy.

[Premature-infant.com](#)

[Prematurity.org](#)

[Kids Health: A Primer on Premies](#)

[Prematurity.org: Premature Baby Resource Websites](#)

[Sidelines Premie Resources](#)

<b>Primary Carrier</b>	The insurer who is primary is determined by rules established by coordination of benefits.	<a href="#">Club Mom: Choosing a Pediatrician</a>  <a href="#">About.com: Choosing a Doctor for Your Twins/Multiples</a>
<b>PT</b>	(see <b>Physical Therapist/Therapy</b> )	
<b>Pulse Oximeter</b>	(see <b>Oximeter</b> )	
<b>PVL</b>	(see <b>Periventricular Leukomalacia</b> )	
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<b>Radiant Warmer</b>	A heater that works by sending out radiant energy usually in the form of heat. They warm objects without needing to touch them. Radiant warmers are often used to heat infants in the neonatal intensive care units.	<a href="#">Fisher &amp; Paykel Healthcare: What is a Radiant Warmer?</a>
<b>Radiologist</b>	A physician with seven years of training who specializes in creating and interpreting pictures of areas inside the body.	<a href="#">SA Preemies: People in the NICU: Radiologist</a>
<b>RDS</b>	(see <b>Respiratory Distress Syndrome</b> )	
<b>Reflux</b>	(see <b>Gastro esophageal Reflux</b> )	
<b>Registered Nurse</b>	Health professional with two or four years of training licensed to treat patient responses to illness and carrying out medication regimens prescribed by a physician, nurse practitioner, dentist or physician's assistant; usually has an associate's or bachelor's degree and may have additional degrees or certificates when working in the NICU.	<a href="#">American Nurses Association: Nursing World</a>
<b>Resident</b>	A physician with four years of training in medical or osteopathy school who is in the process of completing the additional three years of training in a primary specialty (for example, pediatrics, ophthalmology, radiology, obstetrics/gynecology) following medical school.	<a href="#">Brigham and Women's Hospital: Who is Caring for my Baby?</a>
<b>Respirator</b>	A machine that helps breathing by supplying and regulating a flow of air and oxygen that goes through a tube threaded through the nose or mouth, down the back of the throat, and into the trachea (windpipe.)	<a href="#">Keep Kids Healthy: Premature Babies</a>  <a href="#">March of Dimes: Common NICU Equipment</a>

<b>Respiratory Distress Syndrome (RDS)</b>	Condition in which a premature infant with immature lungs does not develop surfactant, a protective film that helps air sacs in the lungs to stay open.	<a href="#">March of Dimes: Complications of Premature Birth</a> <a href="#">Healthtouch Online: Respiratory Distress Syndrome in Newborns</a> <a href="#">Kids Health: Respiratory Syncytial Virus</a>
<b>Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV)</b>	A virus that causes mild respiratory infections, colds, and coughs in adults, but can produce severe respiratory problems, including bronchitis and pneumonia in young children.	<a href="#">Down Syndrome Health Issues: Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV)</a> <a href="#">March of Dimes: Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV)</a> <a href="#">PremieCare: RSV FAQs</a> <a href="#">US Department of Labor: Respiratory Therapists</a> <a href="#">American Association for Respiratory Care</a>
<b>Respiratory Therapists</b>	A health professional with 3-5 years of training who assesses breathing and heart function, treats with oxygen therapy or ventilation, and gives medicines to help with breathing as prescribed by a physician or practitioner.	<a href="#">National Eye Institute: Retinopathy of Prematurity (ROP)</a> <a href="#">Cleveland Clinic: Retinopathy of Prematurity</a>
<b>Retinopathy of Prematurity (ROP)</b>	A condition in which the blood vessels in the baby's eyes do not develop normally.	
<b>RN</b>	(see Registered Nurse)	
<b>ROP</b>	(see Retinopathy of Prematurity)	
<b>RSV</b>	(see Respiratory Syncytial Virus)	

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<b>Sepsis</b>	Infection, usually referring to a blood infection.	<a href="#">Aurora Healthcare: Neonatal Sepsis</a> <a href="#">Children's Hospital Boston: My Child has Sepsis</a>
<b>SGA</b>	(see Small for Gestational Age)	
<b>Small for Gestational Age (SGA)</b>	Smaller than the average baby born at that number of weeks gestation.	<a href="#">University of Wisconsin Medical School: Intra-Uterine Growth Restriction (IUGR) or Small for Gestational Age (SGA)</a>

<b>Social worker</b>	A professional with 4-6 years of training helping families cope with crises and change. In the NICU setting, the social worker helps families access community resources such as support groups and assistance programs. They help with planning the baby's hospital discharge and help families cope with stress.	<a href="#">National Association of Social Workers</a>
<b><u>Sonogram</u></b>	<b>(see Ultrasound)</b>	
<b><u>Spinal Tap</u></b>	<b>(see Lumbar Puncture)</b>	
<b><u>SSI</u></b>	<b>(see Supplemental Security Income)</b>	
<b>Step-down Unit</b>	Nursing unit with patients not in need of intensive care but still requiring skilled nursing care.	<a href="#">March of Dimes: Step Down Care</a>
<b>Supplemental Security Income (SSI)</b>	A Federal income program funded by general tax revenues. Children who qualify based on medical and financial criteria receive monthly payments.	<a href="#">Social Security Online: Supplemental Security Income</a>
<b>Surfactant/ Pulmonary Surfactant</b>	A protective film that helps air sacs in the lungs to stay open.	<a href="#">John's Hopkins Medical School: Surfactant</a>  <a href="#">About.com: Lung Diseases</a>  <a href="#">American Journal of Respiratory and Critical Care Medicine: Lung Surfactant and Neonatal Respiratory Distress Syndrome</a>  <a href="#">Wikipedia: Pulmonary Surfactant</a>
<b>Swaddling</b>	Wrapping infants snugly in cloths, blankets or similar cloth so that movement of the limbs is tightly restricted.	<a href="#">Baby Center: Swaddling your baby</a>  <a href="#">Advice for Baby.com: Swaddling</a>

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<b>Tachycardia</b>	Fast heart rate.	<a href="#">Winnipeg Children's Hospital: Caring for your baby with supraventricular tachycardia (SVT)</a>  <a href="#">University of Michigan Health System: Supraventricular Tachycardia</a>  <a href="#">University of Washington School of Medicine: Physical Exam and Anticipatory Guidance of the Newborn</a>

<b>Tachypnea</b>	Rapid breathing.	<a href="#">Kids Health: Transient Tachypnea of the Newborn (TTN)</a> <a href="#">Medline Plus: Transient tachypnea - newborn</a> <a href="#">National Medical Society Library: Respiratory Disorders of the Newborn</a> <a href="#">Yahoo Health: Transient Tachypnea of the Newborn (TTN)</a>
<b>TANF</b>	<b>(see Temporary Aid for Needy Families)</b>	
<b>Temporary Aid for Needy Families (TANF)</b>	A government subsidized program that provides financial assistance to needy families.	<a href="#">US Department of Health and Human Services: Welcome to the</a>
<b>Tonic Neck Reflex</b>	One of the reflexes present at birth also called the fencing reflex. An infant will crook one arm behind the head while the other is extended away from the body.	<a href="#">Dr. Hull: Reflexes, primitive</a> <a href="#">Keep Kids Healthy: Newborn Reflexes</a>
<b>Total Parenteral Nutrition (TPN)</b>	A technique in which nutrients are given to a person through an intravenous infusion.	<a href="#">Medline Plus: Total Parenteral Nutrition</a> <a href="#">WebMD: Total parenteral nutrition</a>
<b>TPN</b>	<b>(see Total Parenteral Nutrition)</b>	
<b>Transfusion</b>	The transfer of whole blood or blood products from one individual to another.	<a href="#">MedicineNet: Definition of Transfusion</a> <a href="#">Wikipedia: Blood Transfusion</a> <a href="#">WebMD: Blood Transfusion</a>
<b>TTTS</b>	<b>(see Twin-Twin Transfusion Syndrome)</b>	
<b>Twin-Twin Transfusion Syndrome (TTTS)</b>	A disease of the placenta (or afterbirth) that affects identical twin pregnancies. The shared placenta contains abnormal blood vessels which connect the umbilical cords and circulations of the twins.	<a href="#">Multiple Births Prenatal Education: Twin to Twin Transfusion Syndrome</a> <a href="#">About.com: Twin-to-Twin Transfusion Syndrome</a> <a href="#">Twin to Twin Transfusion Syndrome Foundation</a>

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<b>UAC</b>	<b>(see Umbilical Arterial Catheter)</b>	

<b>Ultrasound</b> (Sonogram)	The use of ultrasonic waves for diagnostic or therapeutic purposes, specifically to image an internal body structure.	<a href="#">WebMD: Cranial Ultrasound</a> <a href="#">CNN Health Library: Ultrasound</a>
<b>Umbilical Arterial Catheter</b> (UAC)	A line placed directly into the umbilical artery through the baby's umbilical cord.	<a href="#">Baystate Health: Umbilical Artery Catheter (UAC) or Umbilical Vein Catheter (UVC)</a>
<b>Umbilical Venous Catheter</b> (UVC)	A line placed directly into the umbilical vein (a much larger vein than a peripheral vein) through the baby's umbilical cord.	<a href="#">Health Touch Online: Umbilical Venous Catheters In Newborns</a> <a href="#">Baystate Health: Umbilical Artery Catheter (UAC) or Umbilical Vein Catheter (UVC)</a>
<b>UVC</b>	(see <b>Umbilical Venous Catheter</b> )	

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<b>Ventilator</b>	(see <b>Respirator</b> )	
<b>Ventricle</b>	In NICU terminology-a small chamber in the center of the brain or heart.	<a href="#">American Academy of Family Physicians: Office Care of the Premature Infant: Part II. Common Medical and Surgical Problems</a> <a href="#">Wikipedia: Ventricle (Heart)</a>
<b>Very Low Birth Weight</b>	Very low birth weight infants weight less than 1500 grams or 3lbs 5 oz.	<a href="#">March of Dimes: Low Birth Weight</a>
<b>Very Premature</b>	Infant born between 29 and 32 weeks gestation.	<a href="#">Premature-infant.com</a> <a href="#">American Academy of Family Physicians: Care of the Premature Infant Part I. Monitoring Growth and Development</a> <a href="#">Kids Health: A Primer on Premies</a> <a href="#">Medline Plus: Premature Infant</a> <a href="#">Prematurity.org Premature Baby Website Resources</a>
<b>Very, very premature</b>	Infants born between 27 and 29 weeks gestation.	<a href="#">University of Kansas Premie Neuroscience Research Program Towards Universal Newborn Sensorimotor Screening and Habilitation</a> <a href="#">PubMed: Improved survival and short-term outcome of inborn "micropremies".</a>

<b>Viable</b>	Viable means an infant is able to survive.	<a href="#">Fetal Development: Viability</a>
<b>Visiting Nurse</b>	A visiting nurse is a nurse who is paid to visit the sick in their homes.	<a href="#">Visiting Nurse Association</a>
<b>Vital Signs</b>	Temperature, heart rate, respiratory rate, blood pressure and pain level.	<a href="#">EMS Resource: Normal Vital Signs Guidelines for EMS</a> <a href="#">Medline Plus: Vital Signs</a>

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<b><u>WIC</u></b>	<b>(see Women's Infants, and Children program)</b>	
<b>Window Period</b>	A window period is the time after a person has been infected with a germ but before tests can show the infection is present.	<a href="#">MedHelp International AIDS Info</a>
<b>Women, Infants, and Children program (WIC)</b>	WIC is a nutrition program that helps pregnant women, new mothers, and young children eat well and stay healthy.	<a href="#">National WIC Association</a> <a href="#">USDA Food and Nutrition Services: State WIC Agencies</a> <a href="#">USDA Nutrition Assistance Programs</a> <a href="#">USDA: Women, Infants, and Children</a> <a href="#">WIC Sharing Center</a>

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