

Common Terms & Abbreviations used in the **NICU**

The More You Know

Having a child in the NICU can be very upsetting for a parent, especially when you feel like the medical professionals are speaking a different language. Here are some of the most common terms used in the NICU. Once you understand what they mean, the NICU will seem a lot less scary.

| Term | Meaning |
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| CNS Central Nervous System | The brain and spinal cord. |
| CPAP Continuous positive airway pressure | A way to give a steady, gentle supply of air into the airway while a baby is breathing on their own. This can be done with a ventilator (breathing machine). |
| CPR Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation | A way to get the heart and lungs working again if they have stopped. |
| ET/ETT Endotracheal Tube | A breathing tube - it goes through the mouth or nose into the windpipe. |
| HFV High-frequency Ventilator | A machine that gives hundreds of tiny breaths per minute. |
| IMV Intermittent Mandatory Ventilation | A way to help babies breathe using a ventilator to give a set number of breaths per minute. |
| IV Intravenous | Given by vein. |
| IV Catheter | A tiny flexible, hollow plastic tube inserted into a vein over a needle. The needle comes out and the catheter stays in the vein. |
| IV Pump | A machine used to give IV fluids. |
| Kangaroo Care Skin-to-Skin Care | A special way for parents to hold their baby up against their bare chest. |
| LP Lumbar Puncture | A test in which a small needle is used to remove fluid from around the spinal column. |
| Neonatologist | A physician who specialises in the development, care and diseases of newborns. |
| NG Tube Nasogastric Tube | A feeding tube that goes through the nose to the stomach. |
| NPO Nil per os | It is a shortening of a Latin term meaning no food or liquid given by mouth. |

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| O2 Oxygen | A gas in the air we breathe. It is needed for life. |
| OG Tube Orogastric Tube | A feeding tube that goes through the mouth into the stomach. |
| PICC Peripherally Inserted Central Catheter / PCVC Percutaneous Central Venous Catheter | A type of tube that is put into a central (large) vein. |
| Radiant Warmer Bed | An open bed with a heating device. |
| SIMV Synchronised Intermittent Mandatory Ventilation | IMV (see above) timed with the baby's breaths. |
| TPR | Temperature, pulse, and respiration. |
| TPN Total Parenteral Nutrition | Nutrition fed straight into the bloodstream. |
| UAC Umbilical Arterial Catheter | A tube put into an artery. It is put in at the stump of the umbilical cord. |
| UVC Umbilical Venous Catheter | A tube put into a vein. It is put in at the stump of the umbilical cord. |
| VS Vital Signs | Temperature, pulse, respiration (breathing), and blood pressure. |

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