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Have you ever thought about how many acronyms we use on a daily basis? Some we know by heart, but other definitions remain a bit fuzzy. Knowing the meaning behind the acronyms can help our memory and understanding of the terms. So, go ahead, get your geek on!

- ACT** Activated Clotting Time is a blood test to determine clotting times in whole blood. It is usually used in suspected rodenticide toxicity and to monitor treatments with heparin such as in dialysis.
- AD** Auris dextra or right ear
- ALI & ARDS** Acute Lung Injury and Acute Respiratory Distress Syndrome are types of non-cardiogenic pulmonary edema characterized by severe inflammation of the lungs most commonly the result of major trauma with shock, sepsis, pneumonia, burns or severe pancreatitis. Often resulting in high mortality rates.
- ALS** Advanced life support is a generic term for the type of resuscitative efforts that may include defibrillation, airway intubation, drugs and open chest heart massage.
- ARDS** Acute respiratory distress syndrome is a life-threatening lung condition characterized by fluid accumulation in the lungs that prevents oxygen from getting to the blood.
- AS** Auris sinistra or left ear
- ATE** Arterial Thromboembolism is when a clot formed in the heart travels to a peripheral artery. In feline patients this is sometimes referred to as FATE or saddle thrombus.
- AU** Aures unitas means both ears together or aures uterque means each ear.
- AUS** Abdominal Ultrasound
- BAL** Bronchial alveolar lavage is the aspiration or removal of cells and fluid from the bronchi after flushing sterile saline through a bronchoscope.
- BDLD** Big Dog Little Dog refers to injuries caused when a bigger dog inflicts wounds to a smaller dog.
- BID** Bis in die or twice a day
- BLS** Basic life support refers to the type of resuscitative efforts following cardiac and/or respiratory arrest that usually include external chest compressions and assisted ventilation. The intervention is considered noninvasive.
- BMBT** Buccal mucosal bleeding time is a test to measure platelet function. It may be prolonged in diseases such as ITP or von Willebrand's disease.
- CHF** Congestive Heart Failure is when the heart is unable to effectively pump blood out of the heart resulting in an accumulation of fluids in the body.
- CIRCI** Critical Illness Related Corticosteroid Insufficiency Inability of the body to produce an adequate supply of cortisol during times of severe illness.
- CNS** Central nervous system refers to the brain and spinal cord.
- CPR** Cardiopulmonary resuscitation is an emergency procedure using chest compressions and manual ventilation to restore circulation and respirations after a cardiac arrest. It is the essential component of basic and advanced life support.
- CRI** Constant rate infusion is the continuous infusion of drugs, fluids or nutrition usually administered by way of a fluid pump or syringe pump. It usually refers to the infusion of medications that are short acting but are being utilized to maintain constant levels in circulation.
- CRRT** Continuous Renal Replacement Therapy is mechanical blood filtration therapy to eliminate toxins and to correct severe electrolyte imbalances.
- CT** Computed tomography is a planar imaging modality using X-rays.
- CVP** Central venous pressure is a direct measurement via manometer or transducer of pressure being exerted by blood in the right atrium or vena cava.
- DBW** Dog Bite Wound
- DC** Discontinue
- DIC** Disseminated intravascular coagulation is a bleeding disorder caused by widespread inappropriate utilization of clotting factors within the blood vessels. The end stage of the disorder is characterized by profuse hemorrhaging.
- DKA** Diabetic Ketoacidosis. Complication in patients with diabetes mellitus resulting in hyperglycemia and the production of ketones and thus metabolic acidosis.
- DNR** Do not resuscitate is a medical directive declining any and all resuscitative efforts.
- ECG/ EKG** Electrocardiogram is a tracing representing minute electrical impulses generated by the heart.
- EDTA** Ethylenediaminetetraacetic acid is an anticoagulant for blood specimens.
- ELISA** Enzyme-linked immunosorbent assay is any enzyme immunoassay using an enzyme-labeled immunoreactant and an immunosorbent.
- ETW** Endotracheal wash is a procedure to aseptically obtain a fluid sample from the lower airways by using a sterile endotracheal tube. A thin long sterile tube is passed through the endotracheal tube and sterile saline is infused then aspirated to retrieve a sample for culture and cytology.

- FAST** Focused assessment with sonography for trauma is the use of ultrasound equipment to examine the body cavities of a trauma patient.
- FCE** Fibrocartilaginous embolism occurs when pieces of fibrocartilage from the vertebral discs break off and occlude the blood vessels within the spinal cord causing weakness or paralysis in the limbs.
- FeLV** Feline Leukemia Virus is a retrovirus that is spread by the transfer of body fluids from one cat to another. Modes of transport can be through bites, scratches, in utero and through a mother's milk.
- FIP** Feline Infectious Peritonitis is caused by a feline coronavirus transmissible through oral-fecal routes. There is a "wet" form defined by fluid accumulation in the abdomen and chest and a "dry" form resulting in inflammation around the blood vessels (brain, kidneys and abdomen).
- FIV** Feline Immunodeficiency Virus is a retrovirus also known as feline AIDS. This virus destroys a cat's WBCs resulting in a weakened immune system. Usually spread by bite wounds.
- Fio2** Fractional percentage of inspired oxygen or the percentage of oxygen in the space being measured. Room air is 20.9% oxygen which means an FiO₂ of 0.21
- FFP** Fresh frozen plasma is the blood component containing clotting factors that is separated by centrifugation and frozen to prolong shelf life.
- FNA** Fine needle aspirate is when a small needle is used to aspirate or suction cells of a lump or pocket of fluid into a syringe. The resultant sample is then placed on a slide for microscopic analysis. This is different than a biopsy.
- GDV** Gastric dilation and volvulus is a life-threatening condition when the stomach becomes distended with air then rotates on its axis cutting off the passage of stomach contents and compressing and occluding blood vessels thus affecting perfusion. The volvulus or torsion can be partial or complete.
- HBC** Hit By Car
- HCM** Hypertrophic Cardiomyopathy is a thickening of the walls of the heart. This thickening causes a decreased elasticity of the heart walls and thus decreases its ability to effectively pump blood entering and exiting the heart.
- HHS** Hyperglycemic Hyperosmolar Syndrome is a complication of diabetes mellitus defined by elevated blood glucose in the absence of significant ketoacidosis and the presence of increased osmolarity.
- HR/RR** Heart rate/ Respiratory Rate
- ICP** Intracranial pressure is the pressure in the skull. This can change with the swelling of brain tissue or as a result of a rise in pressure of cerebral spinal fluid.
- IM** Intramuscular refers to an injection given in a muscle bed
- IMHA** Immune-mediated hemolytic anemia is an autoimmune disease where the immune system produces antibodies to attack and destroy its own red blood cells. When the destruction of the red blood cells is faster than production of red blood cells an anemia results.
- IO** Intraosseous pertains to the interior of a bone that can be used as a delivery route for fluid and drugs via an intraosseous catheter when IV access is not feasible.
- IOP** Intraocular Pressure is the fluid pressure in the eye measured in mm/Hg
- ITP** Immune-mediated thrombocytopenia is an autoimmune disease in which the immune system produces antibodies to destroy its own platelets.
- MAP** Mean arterial pressure is the calculated average of the blood pressure in the artery for one heartbeat.
- MCT** Mast cell tumor is a cancer of a type of white blood cell (granulocyte) normally involved in the body's response to allergens and inflammation.
- MDR** Multidrug Resistance is an insensitivity or resistance of a microorganism to more than one antimicrobial agent.
- mm Hg** Millimeters of mercury is a measurement of height in which the pressure in blood vessels push a column of mercury.
- MODS** Multiorgan Dysfunction Syndrome also known as multiorgan failure is the dysfunction of 2 or more organ systems that were not involved in the initial insult.
- MRI** Magnetic resonance imaging is the use of a magnetic field and pulses of radio wave energy to image the internal organs of the body.
- MRSA** Methicillin Resistant Staph Aureus is a bacterium that is resistant to several antibiotics normally used to treat staph infections. It is easily spread through physical contact.
- MRSP** Methicillin Resistant Staphylococcus Pseudintermedius is a bacteria found primarily on the skin, mouth, nose and gastrointestinal tract. It is a zoonotic disease and infection is usually found in immune compromised individuals as a result of a break in the skin from cuts or scratches.
- NE/NG Tube** Nasoesophageal and nasogastric tubes are feeding tubes usually utilized for short-term trickle feeding. NE tubes are placed to end in the distal third of the esophagus. NG tubes enter the stomach and have the advantage of allowing gastric emptying in cases of ileus.
- NPO** Nil Per Os is nothing orally
- NSAID** Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drug
- OD** Oculus dexter or right eye
- OS** Oculus sinister or left eye
- OU** Oculus uterque or each eye

PaO₂	Partial pressure of oxygen is the measure of oxygen in arterial blood, normally greater than 80 mmHg.	PPN	Partial parenteral nutrition is the IV administration of an amino acid-dextrose solution with a lipid emulsion. This is for patients whose nutritional requirements cannot be fully met through oral means.
PaCO₂	Partial pressure of carbon dioxide is the measure of carbon dioxide in arterial blood. It reflects pulmonary gas exchange in relation to blood flow, normally 35 mmHg to 45 mmHg.	PRN	Pro Re Nata means as needed
PCR	Polymerase chain reaction is the rapid technique for the in vitro amplification of specific DNA or RNA sequences, allowing small quantities of short sequences to be analyzed without cloning.	QD	Quaque die, every day although SID is more commonly used so it is not confused with Q.I.D.
PCV	Packed cell volume is the percent of cells in a sample after centrifugation in a hematocrit tube.	QID	Quarter in die or four times a day
PEEP	Positive end expiratory pressure is a type of ventilation where positive pressure is maintained during expiration, thus increasing the amount of air remaining in the lungs at the end of an exhaled breath and improving gas exchange.	QS	Quantum sufficit or a sufficient quantity. Usually part of CRI formulations to indicate the removal of some of the diluent from a fluid bag to make the added medication at the appropriate concentration.
Ph	Measure of the degree in which a solution is acetic or alkaline. A measurement of less than 7 indicates acidity and greater than 7 indicates alkalinity. Normal physiological pH is 7.35 to 7.45	ROM	Range of motion
PLE	Protein losing enteropathy is the excessive loss of enteric plasma protein into the intestines causing hypoproteinemia.	SC/SQ	Subcutaneous
PLN	Protein losing nephropathy is the loss of proteins and serum into the urine due to glomerular damage and can lead to renal failure.	SID	Semel in die or once a day
PO	Per OS or By Mouth or Orally	SIRS	Systemic inflammatory response syndrome is a clinical condition characterized by widespread activation of the inflammatory system secondary to a sterile inflammatory disease (non-septic SIRS) or an infectious insult (septic SIRS).
PPDH	Peritoneal-pericardial diaphragmatic hernia is a congenital abnormality where abdominal contents have entered the pericardial cavity and yet the pleural space remains intact.	SOAP	Subjective, Objective, Assessment, Plan
PPV	Positive pressure ventilation is mechanical ventilation controlled by a ventilator unit that applies positive airway pressure forcing gas into the lungs.	SPO₂	Peripheral capillary oxygen saturation is measured with a pulse oximeter, a noninvasive method to measure arterial blood oxygen saturation and pulse rate.
PRBC	Packed red blood cells are the result of the plasma component being centrifuged and separated from whole blood. It is a concentrated form of red blood cells.	TEG	Thromboelastogram or thromboelastography is a device to measure the rate of clot formation and dissolution.
PT	Prothrombin time is the rate in which prothrombin is converted to thrombin and is used to assess the extrinsic coagulation system of the blood.	TID	Ter in die or three times a day
PTE	Pulmonary thromboembolism is when a clot formed in peripheral veins travels to the right side of the heart and then subsequently to the pulmonary arteries. PT Prothrombin time is used to assess the extrinsic pathways of the coagulation system.	TPN	Total parenteral nutrition is the IV administration of a concentrated solution that fulfills the total daily nutritional requirements. The solution is highly osmolar and can cause thrombosis of the peripheral veins so a central line is used for administration.
PTT/ aPTT	Partial thromboplastin time or activated partial thromboplastin time is used to assess the intrinsic and common pathways of the coagulation system.	TPR	temperature, pulse, respiratory rate
PO	Per Os is to give orally	US	Urine Analysis
POCUS	Point Of Care Ultrasound is a mobile ultrasound device	VPC	Ventricular premature contractions/complexes occur when the heartbeat is initiated at the level of the ventricles rather than the sinoatrial node.
		WNL	Within Normal Limits