Medical Terms Used on the VTNE

The VTNE contains a number of medical terms and abbreviations that may be unfamiliar to you. Review these common medical terms and abbreviations and their definitions so you can recognize them on the VTNE.

**Abduction**—The movement of a limb away from the body

**Ad lib—**As much as desired

**A.D.**—Right ear

**Addison’s disease**—A disease in which the adrenal gland produces an insufficient amount of hormones

**Adduction**—The movement of a limb toward the body

**Adrenal gland**—One of a pair of endocrine glands that produces hormones such as cortisol and epinephrine

**ALT—**Alanine aminotransferase

**Analgesia**—Decreased pain sensibilities

**Anatomy**—A subbranch of biology that deals with the structure of living things

**Anesthesia**—Loss of pain sensation

**Anterior**—Located toward the front of the body

**Antiseptic**—A substance that inhibits the growth of bacteria

**Anuria**—A condition in which no urine is produced

**A.S.**—Left ear

**AST**—Aspartate aminotransferase

**A.U.**—Both ears

**Benign**—Mild or not life threatening

**b.i.d.**—An abbreviation meaning *two times per day*

(every 12 hours)

**Bilateral**—Located on both sides of the body

**Biopsy**—Removal of tissues from the body for examination

**Bone marrow**—A soft tissue made up of blood vessels and connective tissues found in bones

**Brachycephalic**—The state of being short-faced or broad-headed

**BUN—**Blood urea nitrogen

**Carapace**—The upper shell of a turtle, tortoise, or crab

**Carcinogen**—A substance that causes cancer

**Castration**—Sterilization of a male animal

**Cataracts**—Loss of transparency of the lens of the eye

**CK—**Creatinine kinase

**CNS—**Central nervous system

**Coagulation**—The chemical reaction that thickens liquid blood into a clot

**Colitis**—An inflammation or infection of the colon

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**Congenital**—Present at birth; acquired during pre- natal development

**Conjunctivitis**—An inflammation of the conjunctiva, or the lining of the eyelid and the front of the eyeball

**CRT—**Capillary refill time

**Cushing’s disease**—A disease in which the adrenal gland produces an abnormally large amount of hormones

**Cytology**—A branch of biology that focuses on the structures and functions of cells

**Dermatitis**—The inflammation of the skin

**Disinfection**—The use of chemicals or heat to kill germs

**Distal**—Located away from the body

**Distemper**—A viral disease that causes a severe and often fatal systemic illness in dogs

**Diuresis**—An increase in urine production **Diurnal**—Of or relating to the daytime **Dorsal**—Toward the back of the body

**Ecdysis**—The process in which reptiles shed the external layers of the skin

**ECG—**Electrocardiogram

**Ectoparasite**—A parasite that lives on the outside surface or skin of another animal

**Edema**—A condition that causes the tissues of the body to retain too much fluid

**EDTA—**Anticoagulant ethylenediaminete traacetic acid

**Elizabethan Collar**—A plastic cone-shaped collar used on animals to prevent licking or biting of the skin

**Emaciation**—The severe loss of body weight

**Endotracheal tube**—A tube placed into the animal’s trachea (windpipe) to allow oxygen and gases to be breathed into the lungs

**Estrus**—The time when a female animal is fertile

**Euthanasia**—The act of killing an animal humanely because it is severely injured or helplessly ill

**Feces**—Wastes excreted through the anus from the large intestine

**FeLV—**Feline leukemia virus **FFD—**Film focal distance **FIP—**Feline infectious peritonitis **FIV—**Feline immunodeficiency virus

**Fluoroscopy**—An X-ray procedure in which X-rays are transmitted through the body onto a fluorescent screen

**Fracture**—The breaking of bone

**Gastric dilatation-volvulus (bloat)**—A condition caused by expanding gas in which the stomach dis- tends or becomes enlarged, which includes a com- plete rotation of the stomach that prevents gas from escaping

**Gastritis**—Inflammation of the stomach

**GI—**Gastrointestinal

**Gingivitis**— Inflammation of the gums

**HCT—**Hematocrit

**Heartworm**—A parasitic worm that lives and repro- duces in the chambers of an animal’s heart

**Hematology**—A branch of science that studies blood. **Hematoma**—A mass of blood within the tissue **Hematuria**—The presence of blood in urine

**Hemostat**—A surgical instrument used to clamp blood vessels

**Hip dysplasia**—Developmental, orthopedic condition that causes abnormal formation of the hip joint socket and leads to joint damage

**Hot spot**—Inflammation of the skin frequently caused by flea bites, allergies, or bacteria

**Hyperglycemia**—Higher than normal levels of glucose in the blood

**Hyperthermia**—Increased body temperature **Hypothermia**—Decreased body temperature **ID**—Intradermal

**IM**—Intramuscular

**Immunity**—A condition in which the animal’s immune system is able to protect the body from a disease-causing agent

**Incubation period**—The time between exposure to disease and the onset of the disease

**Infectious agents**—Organisms that cause infection **Intercostal space**—The space between ribs **IO**—Intraosseous

**IP**—Intraperitoneal **IV**—Intravenous

**Jaundice**—A condition in which the waste product bilirubin builds up in the body and causes the yel- lowing of mucus membranes within the body

**Jugular vein**—A vein that returns blood from the head and neck to the heart

**Keel**—Bony ridge on the sternum of birds where the flight muscles attach

**Keratin**—A tough, waterproof protein that makes up scales, beaks, and claws of animals

**Keratitis**—Inflammation of the cornea of the eye

**kg, mg, g or gm**—kilogram, milligram, gram **kl, ml, l**—kiloliter, milliliter, liter **kPa**—Kilopascal

**Laryngoscope**—An instrument that aids in the insertion of an endotracheal tube

**Lateral**—Located away from the center of the body

**Leukopenia**—A condition that causes a below- average number of white blood cells

**Lichenification**—Thickening or hardening of the skin

**Lipids**—Various substances, such as fats, that are soluble in nonpolar organic solvents and insoluble in water

**Lymph nodes**—Small masses of tissue within the lymphatic system that contain white blood cells and filter bacteria and foreign particles from the lymphatic system

**Malignant**—Tendency of a condition to become pro- gressively worse

**Mandible**—The bone of the lower jaw **MAP**—Mean arterial pressure **Masticate**—To chew or crush

**Mastitis**—Inflammation of the mammary glands **Maxilla**—The bone of the upper jaw **Medial**—Toward the midline of the body

**Monogastric**—Having a simple, single-chambered stomach

**Necrosis**—The death and breakdown of cells **Neuropathy**—Abnormal function of the nerves **Neuter**—Sterilization of a male animal **Nocturnal**—Of or relating to the night time **NPO**—Nothing by mouth

**O.D.**—Right eye

**OFD—**Object film distance

**Oliguria**—The excretion of less urine than normal **Omnivore**—Animal that eats both meat and plants **Opioid**—Drug that has effects similar to opium

**Orchiectomy**—Surgical removal of a male animal’s testes

**O.S.**—Left eye

**O.U.**—Both eyes

**Oviposition**—The act of laying eggs **Palpation**—To examine with the hands or fingers **Pancreatitis**—Inflammation of the pancreas **Parturition**—The act of giving birth **PCV**—Pack cell volume

**Peritonitis**—Inflammation of the lining of the abdomen

**Pica**—A condition that causes the chronic eating of items that are not normally eaten

**Plaque**—A buildup on the teeth

**Platelets**—Cellular components of the blood that help clots to form

**PO**—Per os, by mouth

**Polyuria**—Excessive urination **Posterior**—Located behind or toward the rear **PRN**—As needed

**Proximal**—Located or situated toward the body

**Pruritus**—Itching **psi**—Pounds per square inch

**Pyometra**—Disease of the uterus characterized by the accumulation of pus.

**q.d.**—Once a day

**q.i.d.**—Four times a day (every six hours)

**Radiograph**—An X-ray

**RBC**—Red blood cell

**Red blood cell (RBC)**—A blood cell that contains hemoglobin and is responsible for the transport of oxygen and carbon dioxide

**Regurgitation**—The act of expelling food from the esophagus

**Ruminant**—An herbivore that has a complex, four- chambered stomach, such as cattle, goats, and sheep

**Sarcoptic mange**—Skin disease caused by the bite of a parasitic mite that causes extreme itching and hair loss

**SC or SQ**—Subcutaneous

**Sepsis**—The presence of toxins in the blood or other tissues

**s.i.d.**—Once a day

**SID—**Source image distance

**Skin cytology**—Examination of a skin scraping or material from swabbing the skin

**Spay**—Sterilization of a female animal

**Spirochete**—A long, slender bacteria that assumes a spiral shape

**Squamate**—Scaly-bodied reptile

**Supraventricular tachycardia**—A condition that causes the heart to beat very rapidly because of signals coming from the atria or near the junction of the atria with the ventricles

**Syncope**—Temporary loss of consciousness

**Thrombocytopenia**—A lower than normal number of platelets in the blood

**t.i.d.**—Three times a day (every 8 hours)

**Titer** —A measurement of the amount of antibodies in the blood

**U/A**—Urinalysis

**Urticaria**—The development of hives

**Uveitis**—Inflammation of the uvea or middle, vas- cular portion of the eye

**Vasculitis**—Inflammation of blood vessels

**Ventral**—Located toward the belly or floor

**Vertebrate**—Animal with a vertebral column (or spine)

**Whelping**—The act of giving birth in dogs

**White blood cell (WBC)**—Blood cell lacking hemo- globin that helps protect the body from infectio