Acronyms and Other Important Words Related to Medical Reports

**Acute** - Description of a recent time frame; is not absolutely precise but often means within minutes or hours or at most a couple of days; meaning varies depending on what it is referring to, such as “acute subdural hematoma” or an “acute femur fracture”

**AHT** - Abusive Head Trauma; the term currently used for a inflicted head trauma, formerly known as Shaken Baby Syndrome (SBS)

**ALTE** - Apparent Life Threatening Event

**A/P** – Anterior/posterior; also Alleged Perpetrator; also Assessment and Plan

**ASA** - Alleged Sexual Assault

**Attending** - a physician who has completed residency and practices medicine in a clinic or hospital, in the specialty learned during residency. An attending physician can supervise fellows, residents, and medical students

**Bed sharing** - refers to the unsafe sleep practice of an infant sleeping on the same surface as another person; can result in positional asphyxia or overlay, also has a higher rate of SIDS

**CAP** - Child Abuse Pediatrician

**CBC** - Complete Blood Count; a blood test panel that gives information about a patient’s blood components

**CC** - Chief Complaint; the main reason a patient is brought to medical attention

**Chronic** - refers to a time frame that is the opposite of acute; implies something is long standing; “A chronic subdural hematoma means it did not happen from the fall yesterday.” Chronic may mean different times depending on the type of injury being discussed

**CMP** – Comprehensive Metabolic Panel; a blood test looking at the levels of electrolytes in the blood such as sodium, glucose, calcium, etc.

**Co-Sleeping** - a description to describe an infant sleep situation wherein the infant is in the same room but not the same bed as an adult; different than bed-sharing but sometimes people use them interchangeably

**CPS** - Child Protective Services, part of the Division of Child and Family Services

**CSF** - Cerebrospinal Fluid; the fluid that surrounds the brain and spinal cord

**CT** - Computed Tomography; a digital scan used to view cross-sections of the body and brain. Also known as a CAT scan
DCFS- The Division of Child and Family Services

DEC- Drug Endangered Child; a child exposed to drugs through parental use

DOB- Date of Birth

DOD- Date of Death

DOE- Date of Exam

ED or ER- Emergency Department or Emergency Room

EDH – Epidural hematoma; blood outside of the dura, under the skull; often the result of accidental injuries and may require surgery

EMR- Electronic Medical Records

EVD- External Ventricular Drain; a plastic tube used in neurosurgery to alleviate pressure in the brain when there is too much cerebrospinal fluid

FamHx or FH or FHX- family history of the patient; for example “Does anyone related by blood to this patient have diabetes? Cancer? Heart problems?”

Fellow- a doctor who has finished residency and is getting additional training to become a specialist

Frank- refers to a lot or overt or obvious; “There was frank blood coming from her genitals after she was assaulted.”

Frenula or frenum or frena- all refer to the attachment of something to something else; the frenula of the tongue, or lingual frenula, attaches the tongue to the floor of the mouth

FTT- Failure To Thrive; a medical diagnosis that indicates a failure to grow as would be expected; cannot be diagnosed with a single data point such as a weight

Fx- fracture, also known as a broken bone

GC or GC/CT- A test for gonorrhea and/or chlamydia

HEENT- a physical examination of the head, ears, eyes, nose and throat

Hematoma- a bruise or collection of blood

Hemorrhage- bleeding

HIPAA- Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act; this act protects private health information; it does NOT say doctors can’t talk to law enforcement or CPS

HPI – History of Present Illness; the story of how/why the patient got to medical attention this time; some reports use “Significant History” instead of HPI
ICP – Intracranial Pressure; a measurement of the pressure within the skull. A high number means the brain is under excessive pressure.

Infant- a child less than 12 months of age

Labial or Labia- can refer either to the female genitalia or the lips; the labial frenula is the attachment of the lip to the gum; the labia minora is the inner part of the female genitalia

LFT-Liver Function Test; a test designed to assess the functioning of a patient’s liver

Lingual- Refers to the tongue; the lingual frenula is underneath the tongue

MCA- Medical Child Abuse, formerly referred to as Munchausen Syndrome by Proxy (or Pediatric Condition Falsification); a child receiving unnecessary and harmful or potentially harmful medical care at the instigation of a caregiver

MCL- Classic Metaphyseal Lesion; a type of fracture at the end of a long bone (arm bones or leg bones) that is highly suspicious for abuse

Menarchal-when a female has her first period

MRI- Magnetic Resonance Imaging; a type of medical imaging used to see internal structures of the body or brain; often gives the most information about brain injuries as they relate to timing

MSBP- Munchausen Syndrome by Proxy; the fabrication or introduction of an illness in a child to gain attention; now referred to as Medical Child Abuse

NAT- Non-Accidental Trauma; trauma that was caused by physical abuse; some people use “inflicted trauma” instead of NAT

Neonate- a child less than one month of age

Non-acute-meaning not in the immediate time frame; does not refer to a specific length of time, rather, implies that the injury or event has occurred in a time several or more days past; such as “the disclosure of sexual abuse was non-acute. The event happened last summer.”

OFC – Occipital-Frontal Circumference; a measurement of head size used in children less than 3 years of age

OI – Osteogenesis Imperfecta; also known as “Brittle Bone Disease”

OSH or OSHED- Outside Hospital or Outside ED; a hospital or ED that is not the one where the writer of the note is employed

PCIT- Parent-Child Interaction Therapy; an evidence-based treatment model used with children who have behavior problems and their parents

PCH- Primary Children’s Hospital
PCMC- Primary Children’s Medical Center *Note, the name was changed to be Primary Children’s Hospital and is no longer PCMC, it is PCH

PCP- Primary Care Provider, or the child’s primary doctor

PCR- Polymerase Chain Reaction; a lab test that is used to test for certain infections

PE- Physical Examination

Pediatric- person less than 21 years of age, technically, however, many pediatric providers will only see people less than 18 years of age

Petechiae- tiny, pinpoint broken capillaries under the skin; looks like red and/or purple dots

PHI- Protected Health Information; confidential health information that is protected through HIPAA

PMHx or PMH- Past Medical History of the patient such as surgeries, hospitalizations, illnesses

Positional Asphyxia- A cause of death often associated with unsafe infant sleep conditions, such as sharing a sleep surface with another person, having unsafe bedding such as blankets or pillows or an unsafe sleep location such as a couch

Pre-pubertal- before a child has gone through puberty; ages vary

PT/PTT- tests to determine if the blood can clot appropriately

Redundant- often used to refer to the hymen; means the tissue often folds onto itself

RH – Retinal Hemorrhage; bleeding in the back of the eyeball

RPR- Rapid Plasma Reagin, a screening test for syphilis

SAH- Subarachnoid Hemorrhage; bleeding into the subarachnoid space of the brain (see diagram)

SBS- Shaken Baby Syndrome; now known as Abusive Head Trauma (AHT)

SDH- Subdural Hematoma; bleeding underneath the dura (the outer covering of the brain) and outside of the arachnoid (see diagram)

SHF- Safe and Healthy Families

SHFFN- Safe and Healthy Families Forensic Nurse; a nurse who is trained in collecting forensic evidence associated with sexual assault

SIDS- Sudden Infant Death Syndrome

SocialHx or SH or SHX- Social History; who lives with the patient, who takes care of the patient
SS- Skeletal Survey; a series of x-rays of all of the bones in the body; almost exclusively used in children less than 2 years of age

Subacute- a time somewhere between acute and chronic; it is neither in the immediate past few hours or the last couple of days, nor is it from weeks ago; often refers to an injury such as a brain injury or a fracture

SUIDI-Sudden Unexpected Infant Death Investigation; a protocol to standardize an infant death investigation

TBI – Traumatic Brain Injury; may be accidental or inflicted

TBSA- Total Body Surface Area; a measure of the amount of burn over a person’s body; number is a %

TFCBT- Trauma Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy; an evidence-based treatment model for children who have experienced a trauma such as sexual abuse

Toddler- a child older than an infant and typically less than preschool age, no firm age boundaries

UTD- Up To Date; refers to whether a child has had the appropriate immunizations based on their age

WCC- Well Child Check; a regular pediatric appointment
**Directional Words:**

*Proximal:* Closer to the center of the body; opposite of distal; example: My elbow is proximal to my wrist.

*Distal:* Farther from the center of the body; opposite of proximal; example: My ankle is distal to my knee.

*Superior:* Towards the head; opposite of inferior.

*Inferior:* Towards the feet; opposite of superior.

*Anterior:* Towards the front of the body; opposite of posterior; example: The femur fracture was anteriorly angulated (the fracture was bent towards the front of the leg).

*Posterior:* Towards the back of the body; opposite of anterior; example: The child had bruises over most of her posterior legs.

*Medial:* Towards the middle of the body; opposite of lateral; example: The child had bruises on his medial thighs.

*Lateral:* Towards the sides of the body; opposite of medial; example: The lateral aspect of his calf had belt marks.

*Ventral:* Same as anterior, refers to the front surface of the body; opposite of dorsal.

*Dorsal:* Same as posterior, refers to the back surface of the body; opposite of ventral.

*Prone:* Positioned face down (remember, prone has an in it).
Supine: Positioned face up (remember, supine has up in it)