

Medical Terms Found in Comprehensive Client Assessment Form

Update: May 12, 2008

The following are definitions and terms that can be found in the New Orleans EMA Comprehensive Client Assessment Form. This form is completed by case managers for both medical and non-medical cases.

Term	Definition
Hysterectomy	An operation to remove a woman's uterus (womb).
Vasectomy	A method of birth control that involves a surgical procedure designed to make a man sterile by cutting or blocking both the right and left vas deferens, the tubes through which sperm pass into the ejaculate to prevent the release of sperm when a man ejaculates.
Depo Provera	A method of birth control through injection of progesterone into the female body
Spermicide	<p>A barrier method of birth control containing a sperm-killing product. Spermicides are available in foam, cream, jelly, film, suppository or tablet form.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foam: prevents pregnancy by bubbling within the vagina, blocking the entrance to the uterus and killing sperm. • Cream, Film, Jelly and Suppositories: prevent pregnancy by melting in the vagina, blocking the entrance to the uterus and killing sperm.
Tubal ligation	A surgical sterilization technique for women. Also commonly known as “getting your tubes tied,” This procedure closes the fallopian tubes, and stops the egg from traveling to the uterus from the ovary. It also prevents sperm from reaching the fallopian tube to fertilize an egg. In a tubal ligation, fallopian tubes are cut, burned, or blocked with rings, bands or clips. The surgery is effective immediately. Tubal ligations are 99.5% effective as birth control. They do not protect against sexually transmitted infections, including HIV/AIDS.
Pneumovax	A vaccine (trade name Pneumovax) effective against the 23 most common strains of pneumococcus.
Pneumococcus	A bacteria that causes many different kinds of infections in people, ranging from ear infections and sinus infections to pneumonia, meningitis, and sepsis
Tetanus toxoid vaccine	<p>A serious disease caused by bacteria. Tetanus toxoid vaccine exposes the individual to a small amount of the bacteria (or to a protein from the bacteria) causing the body to develop immunity to the disease. Tetanus toxoid vaccine can help prevent tetanus.</p> <p>Tetanus toxoid vaccine can help prevent tetanus.</p>
Abscesses	<p>A pocket of pus. You can get an abscess almost anywhere in your body. When an area becomes infected, your body's immune system tries to fight it. White blood cells go to the infected area, collect within the damaged tissue and cause inflammation. During this process, pus forms. Pus is the buildup of fluid, living and dead white blood cells, dead tissue and bacteria or other foreign substances.</p> <p>Bacteria, viruses, parasites and swallowed objects can all lead to abscesses. Skin abscesses are easy to detect. They are red, raised and painful. Abscesses inside your body may not be obvious and can damage organs, including the brain, lungs and others.</p>
Epilepsy	A common chronic neurological disorder that is characterized by recurrent unprovoked seizures

Term	Definition
Endocarditis	An inflammation of the inside lining of the heart chambers and heart valves (endocardium).
Chronic diarrhea	Watery stool that lasts for more than 2 weeks is considered persistent or chronic. In an otherwise healthy person, chronic diarrhea may be a nuisance problem, or, for someone who has a weak immune system (HIV), a life-threatening illness.
Chancroid	A sexually transmitted infection (STI) characterized by painful sores on the genitalia. Chancroid is known to be spread from one to another individual through sexual contact.
Herpes simplex	An STI that is caused by a herpes simplex virus (HSV). Oral herpes causes cold sores around the mouth or face. Genital herpes affects the genitals, buttocks or anal area. Genital herpes is a sexually transmitted disease (STD). You can get it from having sex, even oral sex. The virus can spread even when sores are not present. Mothers can also infect their babies during childbirth.
Chlamydia	An STI caused by that can damage a woman's reproductive organs. Even though symptoms of chlamydia are usually mild or absent, serious complications that cause irreversible damage, including infertility, can occur "silently" before a woman ever recognizes a problem. Chlamydia also can cause discharge from the penis of an infected man.
Trichomonas	An STI that affects both women and men, although symptoms are more common in women. The vagina is the most common site of infection in women, and the urethra (urine canal) is the most common site of infection in men. The parasite is sexually transmitted through penis-to-vagina intercourse or vulva-to-vulva (the genital area outside the vagina) contact with an infected partner. Women can acquire the disease from infected men or women, but men usually contract it only from infected women.
Gonorrhea	An STI that can grow and multiply easily in the warm, moist areas of the reproductive tract, including the cervix (opening to the womb), uterus (womb), and fallopian tubes (egg canals) in women, and in the urethra (urine canal) in women and men. The bacterium can also grow in the mouth, throat, eyes, and anus.
Bacterial vaginosis	Also known as BV, is the most common vaginal infection in women of childbearing age. It happens when the normal balance of bacteria in the vagina is disrupted and replaced by an overgrowth of certain bacteria. The vagina normally contains mostly "good" bacteria, and fewer "harmful" bacteria. BV develops when there is an increase in "harmful" bacteria and fewer "good" bacteria. It is sometimes accompanied by discharge, odor, pain, itching, or burning.
Wart	A small, rough tumor, typically on hands and feet, that can resemble a cauliflower or a solid blister. Warts are common, and are caused by a viral infection, specifically by the human papillomavirus (HPV) and are contagious when in contact with the skin of another. It is also possible to get warts from using towels or other objects. They typically disappear after a few months but can last for years and can recur. A few papilloma viruses are known to cause cervical cancer.
Perirectal warts	A small rough tumors around the rectum, the last part of the bowel that ends at the anus.
Genital warts	Genital warts may be small, flat, flesh-colored bumps or tiny, cauliflower-like bumps. In men, genital warts can grow on the penis, near the anus, or between

Term	Definition
	the penis and the scrotum. In women, genital warts may grow on the vulva and perineal area, in the vagina and on the cervix. Genital warts vary in size and may even be so small that you can't see them. They can lead to cancer of the cervix in women or cancer of the penis in men.
Syphilis	<p>An STI that has been called “the great imitator” because so many of the signs and symptoms are indistinguishable from those of other diseases.</p> <p>It is passed from person to person through direct contact with a syphilis sore. Sores occur mainly on the external genitals, vagina, anus, or in the rectum. Sores also can occur on the lips and in the mouth. Transmission of the organism occurs during vaginal, anal, or oral sex. Pregnant women with the disease can pass it to the babies they are carrying. Syphilis cannot be spread through contact with toilet seats, doorknobs, swimming pools, hot tubs, bathtubs, shared clothing, or eating utensils.</p>
Cancer	A general name for a group of more than 100 diseases in which cells in a part of the body begin to grow out of control. Although there are many kinds of cancer, they all start because abnormal cells grow out of control. Untreated cancers can cause serious illness and even death.
Cervical cancer	Cancer that forms in tissues of the cervix (the organ connecting the uterus and vagina). It is usually a slow-growing cancer that may not have symptoms but can be found with regular Pap tests (a procedure in which cells are scraped from the cervix and looked at under a microscope).
Kaposi Sarcoma	<p>Kaposi's sarcoma is a cancer that causes patches of abnormal tissue to grow under the skin, in the lining of the mouth, nose, and throat or in other organs. The patches are usually red or purple and are made of cancer cells and blood cells. The red and purples patches often cause no symptoms, though they may be painful. If the cancer spreads to the digestive tract or lungs, bleeding can result. Lung tumors can make breathing hard.</p> <p>Before the AIDS epidemic, KS usually developed slowly. In AIDS patients, though, the disease moves quickly.</p>
Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma	Also known as non-Hodgkin's lymphoma, NHL, or sometimes just lymphoma, is a cancer that starts in cells of the lymph system, which is part of the body's immune system. Lymph cells (called lymphocytes) are located mainly in the lymph nodes and other lymphoid tissues (such as the spleen or bone marrow).
Hodgkin's Lymphoma	A cancer of the immune system that is marked by the presence of a type of cell called the Reed-Sternberg cell. The two major types of Hodgkin's lymphoma are classical Hodgkin lymphoma and nodular lymphocyte-predominant Hodgkin lymphoma. Symptoms include the painless enlargement of lymph nodes, spleen, or other immune tissue. Other symptoms include fever, weight loss, fatigue, or night sweats. Also called Hodgkin disease.
Cryptosporidiosis	A disease caused by an intestinal parasite. Watery diarrhea and often abdominal cramping are the major symptoms. Other symptoms include nausea, vomiting, fatigue, weight loss and low-grade fever. In some patients, symptoms will come and go and in other patients they will be persistent. Symptoms usually occur about a week after exposure, but can begin as soon as one day or as late as 12

Term	Definition
	days after exposure.
Isosporiasis	Is a disease caused by the protozoan <i>Isospora belli</i> . The organism infects the lining of the small intestine and can cause severe diarrhea and malabsorption (an inability to absorb nutrients).
Isospora belli	Is spread by feces. Food or water contaminated with animal feces may carry this organism; it's also possible that oral-anal sex may spread the infection. On occasion, there are outbreaks of isosporiasis that can be traced to a feces-contaminated water supply.
Microsporidiosis	<p>An opportunistic intestinal infection that causes diarrhea and wasting in immunocompromised individuals (HIV, for example). It results from different species of microsporidia, a group of protozoal parasites.</p> <p>In HIV infected individuals, microsporidiosis generally occurs when CD4+ T cell counts fall below 100.</p>
Cyclosporiasis	An parasite composed of one cell, too small to be seen without a microscope.
Amoeba	The amoeba is a tiny, one-celled organism. You need a microscope to see most amoebas - the largest are only about 1 mm across. Amoebas live in fresh water (like puddle and ponds), in salt water, in wet soil, and in animals (including people). There are many different types of amoebas. The name amoeba comes from the Greek word amoibe, which means change. (Amoeba is sometimes spelled ameba.)
Giardiasis	An intestinal illness caused by a microscopic parasite called <i>Giardia lamblia</i> . It is a fairly common cause of diarrheal illness.
Toxoplasmosis	A parasitic disease caused by the protozoan <i>Toxoplasma gondii</i> . The parasite infects most warm-blooded animals, including humans, but the primary host is the felid (cat) family. Animals are infected by eating infected meat, by ingestion of faeces of a cat that has itself recently been infected, or by transmission from mother to fetus. Cats have been shown as a major reservoir of this infection.
Tuberculosis	Tuberculosis (TB) is a bacterial infection caused by a germ called <i>Mycobacterium tuberculosis</i> . The bacteria usually attack the lungs, but they can also damage other parts of the body. TB spreads through the air when a person with TB of the lungs or throat coughs, sneezes or talks.
Mycobacterium avium complex (MAC)	<p>is a group of genetically-related bacteria belonging to the genus <i>Mycobacterium</i>. It includes <i>Mycobacterium avium</i> subspecies <i>avium</i> (MAA), <i>Mycobacterium avium</i> subspecies <i>hominis</i> (MAH), and <i>Mycobacterium avium</i> subspecies <i>paratuberculosis</i> (MAP).</p> <p>Historically, MAC has also included <i>Mycobacterium avium intracellulare</i> (MAI) – a distinct species of bacteria.</p>
Bacterial pneumonia	Pneumonia is an infection of the lungs. People with pneumonia usually complain about coughing, fever, shortness of breath, and chest pain. Bacterial pneumonia is a pneumonia caused by bacteria.
Nocardia infection	Also called nocardiosis, infection with bacteria called <i>Nocardia</i> which tend to strike the lungs, brain and skin, particularly in people with an impaired immune system. The majority (about 80%) of cases of nocardiosis involves lung infection, brain abscess, or disseminated (widespread) disease from <i>Nocardia</i> . The remaining 20% of cases are localized to the skin and cause cellulitis (skin infection).

Term	Definition
	The most common symptoms with the pulmonary form of nocardiosis are fever, cough, and chest pain. With brain nocardiosis, the symptoms are usually headache, lethargy, confusion, seizures, and sudden onset of neurologic problems.
Staph infections	<p>Staph is the shortened name for Staphylococcus (pronounced: staf-uh-low-kah-kus), a type of bacteria. These bacteria can live harmlessly on many skin surfaces, especially around the nose, mouth, genitals, and anus. But when the skin is punctured or broken for any reason, staph bacteria can enter the wound and cause an infection.</p> <p>There are more than 30 species in the staph family of bacteria, and they can cause different kinds of illnesses — for example, one kind of staph can cause urinary tract infections. But most staph infections are caused by the species <i>Staphylococcus aureus</i> (<i>S. aureus</i>).</p>
S. aureus	Commonly causes skin infections like folliculitis, boils, impetigo, and cellulitis that are limited to a small area of a person's skin. <i>S. aureus</i> can also release toxins (poisons) that may lead to illnesses like food poisoning or toxic shock syndrome.
Bacillary angiomatosis	<p>Bacillary angiomatosis (BA) is a bacterial infection caused by either <i>Bartonella henselae</i> or <i>Bartonella quintana</i>. <i>Bartonella henselae</i> is most often transmitted through a cat scratch or bite, though ticks and fleas may also act as a vector. On the other hand, <i>Bartonella quintana</i> is usually transmitted by lice.</p> <p>BA is characterised by the proliferation of blood vessels, resulting in them forming tumour-like masses in the skin and other organs. It most commonly manifests in people with AIDS, rarely appearing in those who are immunocompetent. While curable, it is potentially fatal if not treated.</p>
Cytomegalovirus (CMV)	is a common virus that infects most people at some time during their lives but rarely causes obvious illness. It is a member of the herpes virus family. Other members of the herpes virus family cause chickenpox, infectious mononucleosis, fever blisters (herpes I) and genital herpes (herpes II). Like other herpes viruses, CMV infection can become dormant for a while and may reactivate at a later time. The virus is carried by people and is not associated with food, water or animals.
Hepatitis B	Hepatitis B is a serious disease caused by a virus that attacks the liver. The virus, which is called hepatitis B virus (HBV), can cause lifelong infection, cirrhosis (scarring) of the liver, liver cancer, liver failure, and death.
Hepatitis C	Hepatitis C is a disease of the liver caused by the hepatitis C virus (HCV).
Herpes zoster virus	Called Shingles. Shingles is a painful rash caused by the Varicella zoster virus (<i>Herpes varicellae</i>), which is the virus that causes chickenpox . Shingles occurs in people who have had chickenpox and is a reactivation of the dormant virus. Shingles often occurs many years after the initial chickenpox infection. Shingles is contagious and may itself cause chickenpox. However, contact with a person with shingles or chickenpox cannot cause shingles.
Molluscum contagiosum	Molluscum contagiosum (MC) is a viral infection of the skin or occasionally of the mucous membranes. MC has no animal reservoir, infecting only humans, as

Term	Definition
	<p>did smallpox. However, there are different pox viruses that infect many other mammals. The infecting human MC virus is a DNA poxvirus called the molluscum contagiosum virus (MCV). There are 4 types of MCV, MCV-1 to -4, with MCV-1 being the most prevalent and MCV-2 seen usually in adults and often sexually transmitted. The incidence of MC infections in young children is around 17% and peaks between 2-12 years of age. MC affects any area of the skin but is most common on the body, arms, and legs. It is spread through direct contact or shared articles of clothing (including towels).</p> <p>In adults, molluscum infections are often sexually transmitted and usually affect the genitals, lower abdomen, buttocks, and inner thighs. In rare cases, molluscum infections are also found on the lips, mouth, and eyelids.</p>
Oral hairy leukoplakia	<p>Oral hairy leukoplakia (OHL) refers to a white patch – or white patches – that can develop in the mouth. These patches usually occur along the sides of the tongue, although they can sometimes develop on the top and underside of the tongue or along the inside of the cheek. These patches may appear shaggy or may contain a number of tiny folds or ridges.</p> <p>OHL can look like thrush, another common problem characterized by white patches that can develop in the mouths of HIV-positive people. However, thrush usually comes off when it is lightly scraped with a toothbrush, whereas OHL does not.</p> <p>OHL is often one of the first opportunistic infections to occur in HIV-positive people. It can occur at any T-cell count. HIV-positive people with more than 500 T-cells have developed OHL, but it is most common among HIV-positive people with fewer than 200 T-cells. OHL can occur in people with healthy immune systems, including those not infected with HIV.</p> <p>OHL is caused by the Epstein-Barr virus (EBV). Most people in the world are infected with EBV. Only in some people, including those with compromised immune systems, does it cause disease.</p>
Progressive multifocal leukoencephalopathy	<p>A rapidly progressive neuromuscular disease caused by opportunistic infection of brain cells (oligodendrocytes and astrocytes) by the JC virus (JCV). It is an opportunistic infection associated with AIDS and certain cancers. It occurs in people with inadequate immune response and carries a poor prognosis.</p>
Esophageal candidiasis	<p>An opportunistic infection of the esophagus by <i>Candida albicans</i>. The disease occurs in patients in immunocompromised states, including post-chemotherapy and in AIDS. It is also known as candidal esophagitis or monilial esophagitis. Patients with esophageal candidiasis present with odynophagia, or painful swallowing. Longstanding esophageal candidiasis can result in weight loss. There is often concomitant thrush.</p> <p>Some patients present with esophageal candidiasis as a first presentation of systemic candidiasis.</p>
Pneumocystis pneumonia	<p>The most common opportunistic infection in people with HIV. Without treatment, over 85% of people with HIV would eventually develop PCP. It has</p>

Term	Definition
	<p>been the major killer of people with HIV. However, PCP is now almost entirely preventable and treatable.</p> <p>PCP is caused by a fungus. A healthy immune system can control the fungus. However, PCP causes illness in children and in adults with a weakened immune system.</p> <p>Pneumocystis almost always affects the lungs, causing a form of pneumonia. People with CD4 cell counts under 200 have the highest risk of developing PCP. People with counts under 300 who have already had another opportunistic infection are also at risk. Most people who get PCP become much weaker, lose a lot of weight, and are likely to get PCP again.</p> <p>The first signs of PCP are difficulty breathing, fever, and a dry cough. Anyone with these symptoms should see a doctor immediately. However, everyone with CD4 counts below 300 should discuss PCP prevention with their doctor, before they experience any symptoms.</p>
Thrush (oral candidiasis)	A yeast infection of the mucous membranes of the mouth and tongue.
Vaginal yeast infections	<p>Yeast are tiny organisms that normally live in small numbers on the skin and inside the vagina. The acidic environment of the vagina helps keep yeast from growing. If the vagina becomes less acidic, too many yeast can grow and cause a vaginal infection.</p> <p>The acidic balance of the vagina can be changed by your period (menstruation), pregnancy, diabetes, some antibiotics, birth control pills and steroids. Moisture and irritation of the vagina also seem to encourage yeast to grow.</p>
Histoplasmosis	Histoplasmosis is a disease caused by the fungus <i>Histoplasma capsulatum</i> . Its symptoms vary greatly, but the disease primarily affect the lungs. Occasionally, other organs are affected, which are known as disseminated histoplasmosis and it can be fatal if untreated.
Cryptococcosis	<p>An infection acquired by inhalation of soil contaminated with the encapsulated yeast (fungus) <i>Cryptococcus neoformans</i>. It is a defining opportunistic infection for AIDS.</p> <p>In humans, <i>C. neoformans</i> causes three types of infections:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wound or cutaneous cryptococcosis • Pulmonary cryptococcosis • Cryptococcal meningitis
Coccidioidomycosis	A disease caused by inhalation of the spores of the fungus, <i>Coccidioides immitis</i> .
Aspergillosis	<p>Aspergillosis is an infection, growth, or allergic response caused by the <i>Aspergillus</i> fungus. There are several forms of aspergillosis:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pulmonary aspergillosis - allergic bronchopulmonary type is an allergic reaction to the fungus that develops in with asthma. • Aspergilloma- a growth (fungus ball) that develops in an area of previous lung disease such as tuberculosis or lung abscess • Pulmonary aspergillosis – an invasive type is a serious infection with pneumonia that spreads to other parts of the body. This infection occurs almost exclusively in people with weakened immune systems due to cancer, AIDS, leukemia, organ transplantation, chemotherapy, or other

Term	Definition
AIDS dementia complex	<p>conditions or events that reduce the number of normal white blood cells.</p> <p>(ADC) was first identified early in the AIDS epidemic as a common and novel CNS syndrome. The three components of the term, AIDS dementia complex embody central features of the condition. AIDS emphasizes its morbidity and poor prognosis, particularly when its severity is at stage 2 or greater, a severity comparable to other clinical AIDS-defining complications of HIV-1 infection. Dementia designates the acquired and persistent cognitive decline with preserved alertness that usually dominates the clinical presentation and determines its principal disability. Complex emphasizes that this disease not only impairs the intellect, but also concomitantly alters motor performance and, at times, behavior. This involvement of the nervous system beyond cognition is evidence of a wider involvement of the CNS than occurs in some other types of dementia such as Alzheimer's disease. Additionally, myelopathy may be an important, indeed predominating, aspect of ADC, and organic psychosis may also be a feature in a subset of patients (see Rheumatologic and Musculoskeletal Manifestations of HIV). These manifestations are therefore also encompassed within this term. By contrast, neither neuropathy nor functional psychiatric disturbance are included in ADC.</p>
Peripheral neuropathy	<p>A problem with the nerves that carry information to and from the brain and spinal cord. This produces pain, loss of sensation, and inability to control muscles.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Peripheral" means nerves beyond the brain and spinal cord. • "Neuro" means nerves. • "Pathy" means abnormal.
Post-herpetic Neuralgia	<p>Postherpetic neuralgia (PHN) is the most common complication of herpes zoster or shingles. It is defined broadly as any pain that remains after healing of herpes zoster lesions or rash, usually after a three month period.</p>
Shingles (also known as herpes zoster)	<p>A skin rash that can be very painful. It is a viral infection of the nerves, that can occasionally continue to cause severe pain after the shingles have cleared. Shingles appear as a rash, patch, or a line of painful blisters which arise on the skin over a nerve in the shape of a band. This band follows the distribution of a specific nerve where the virus has been living before its spread to the skin.</p> <p>This disease is caused by the same virus that causes chicken pox (varicella zoster). Chicken pox usually affects young children, and its symptoms involve itchy blisters all over the body. Once these symptoms go away, the varicella zoster virus stays in the nerves near the spine. It is almost as if the virus "goes to sleep". It will "wake up", however, when the body's immune system is weakened. The virus then grows in the nerves, causing pain. When the virus reaches the skin, it causes the shingles rash.</p> <p>This acute phase lasts until the lesions are healed, usually several weeks after the onset of the rash. Postherpetic neuralgia (PHN) refers to pain that persists after the acute phase of the illness passes.</p>
Aphthous ulcers	<p>Also known as canker sores. They are small ulcer craters in the lining of the mouth that are frequently painful and sensitive. About 20% of the population (1 out of 5) people have canker sores at any one time.</p>

Term	Definition
Thrombocytopenia	A medical term for a low blood platelet count.
Platelets (thrombocytes)	Colorless blood cells that play an important role in blood clotting. They stop blood loss by clumping together and forming plugs in blood vessel holes. If for any reason your blood platelet count falls below normal, this is called thrombocytopenia. It often occurs as a result of a separate disorder, such as leukemia or an immune system malfunction, or as a medication side effect. Complications may range from none to severe bleeding.
Leukopenia	Decreased concentration of white blood cells in the blood
Wasting syndrome	A loss of body mass or size, most notably muscle mass (sometimes referred to as "lean body mass").