

Abbreviations & Symbols Quick Reference

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■ **Warning:** The Joint Commission's *Do Not Use* list identifies abbreviations that have caused medication errors. These are marked **X DNUse** below. Always verify facility policy.

General Medical Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Meaning
Hx	History
Dx	Diagnosis
Rx	Prescription / Treatment
Sx	Symptoms
Tx	Treatment / Traction
c/o	Complains of
s/p	Status post
w/o	Without
HEENT	Head, Eyes, Ears, Nose, Throat
SOB	Shortness of breath
DOE	Dyspnea on exertion
N/V	Nausea and vomiting
BMI	Body mass index
CBC	Complete blood count
BMP / CMP	Basic / Comprehensive metabolic panel
UA	Urinalysis
EKG / ECG	Electrocardiogram
CT	Computed tomography
MRI	Magnetic resonance imaging
US / U/S	Ultrasound
CXR	Chest X-ray
NPO	Nothing by mouth (nil per os)
DNR	Do not resuscitate
AMA	Against medical advice
D/C	Discharge or Discontinue
F/U	Follow-up
WNL	Within normal limits
NAD	No acute distress
A&O	Alert and oriented
A&Ox3	Alert and oriented to person, place, time
Ht / Wt	Height / Weight

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Abbreviation	Meaning
T / P / R / BP	Temperature, Pulse, Respirations, Blood Pressure
SpO2	Peripheral oxygen saturation
GCS	Glasgow Coma Scale
ROM	Range of motion
ADL	Activities of daily living
PRN	As needed (pro re nata)
STAT	Immediately (statim)
BID	Twice daily (bis in die)
TID	Three times daily (ter in die)
QID	Four times daily (quater in die)
QD X DNUse	Every day — write out 'daily'
QOD X DNUse	Every other day — write out
HS X DNUse	At bedtime — write out 'nightly'
PO	By mouth (per os)
SL	Sublingual
IV	Intravenous
IM	Intramuscular
SC / SQ	Subcutaneous
NG	Nasogastric
GT / G-tube	Gastrostomy tube
U X DNUse	Units — write out 'units'
IU X DNUse	International units — write out
µg X DNUse	Micrograms — write 'mcg'
MS / MSO4 X DNUse	Morphine sulfate — write out fully
MgSO4 X DNUse	Magnesium sulfate — write out fully

Vital Signs & Lab Values

Abbreviation	Meaning	Normal Range (Adults)
BP	Blood pressure	< 120/80 mmHg
HR / P	Heart rate / Pulse	60–100 bpm
RR / R	Respiratory rate	12–20 breaths/min
T	Temperature	36.1–37.2 °C (97–99 °F)
SpO2	Oxygen saturation	≥ 95%
FBS / FBG	Fasting blood glucose	70–99 mg/dL
HbA1c	Glycated hemoglobin	< 5.7% (normal)

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Abbreviation	Meaning	Normal Range (Adults)
BUN	Blood urea nitrogen	7–20 mg/dL
Cr / SCr	Serum creatinine	0.6–1.2 mg/dL (M); 0.5–1.1 (F)
Na+	Sodium	136–145 mEq/L
K+	Potassium	3.5–5.0 mEq/L
Cl-	Chloride	96–106 mEq/L
HCO ₃ ⁻	Bicarbonate	22–29 mEq/L
WBC	White blood cell count	4,500–11,000 / μ L
RBC	Red blood cell count	4.7–6.1 M/ μ L (M); 4.2–5.4 (F)
Hgb / Hb	Hemoglobin	13.8–17.2 g/dL (M); 12.1–15.1 (F)
Hct	Hematocrit	40.7–50.3% (M); 36.1–44.3% (F)
Plt	Platelet count	150,000–400,000 / μ L
PT / INR	Prothrombin time / Int'l normalized ratio	PT: 11–13.5 sec; INR: 0.8–1.1
PTT / aPTT	Activated partial thromboplastin time	25–35 seconds

Common Surgical & Procedural Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Meaning
OR	Operating room
PACU	Post-anesthesia care unit
ICU / MICU / SICU	Intensive / Medical / Surgical ICU
CCU	Cardiac care unit
NICU	Neonatal intensive care unit
PICU	Pediatric intensive care unit
ED / ER	Emergency department / room
GA	General anesthesia
LA	Local anesthesia
I&D	Incision and drainage
ORIF	Open reduction internal fixation
CABG	Coronary artery bypass graft
PTCA	Percutaneous transluminal coronary angioplasty
TKR / TKA	Total knee replacement / arthroplasty
THR / THA	Total hip replacement / arthroplasty
EGD	Esophagogastroduodenoscopy
ERCP	Endoscopic retrograde cholangiopancreatography
C-section / CS	Cesarean section
VBAC	Vaginal birth after cesarean

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Abbreviation	Meaning
TAH-BSO	Total abdominal hysterectomy with bilateral salpingo-oophorectomy
LP	Lumbar puncture
BMT	Bone marrow transplant