

UNACCEPTABLE ABBREVIATION AND SYMBOL LIST

Do Not Use Any of the Following When Ordering, Prescribing or in Documentation:

- * The Joint Commission’s “do not use” list of abbreviations. **(BOLDED)**
- ** Institute of Safe Medication Practices (ISMP) list of dangerous abbreviations relating to medication use. The ISMP recommends these abbreviations should be explicitly prohibited.

Unacceptable Abbreviation/Symbol	Code	<u>Why</u> this is <u>not</u> to be used	What <u>is acceptable</u> practice
Decimal point preceding dose <u>without</u> preceding zero Example: .5 mg	*/**	Can be mistakenly read as multitudes of the intended amount without notice of the decimal	Include the preceding zero (0) before a decimal point when the dose is less than a whole unit Example: 0.5 mg
Trailing or terminal zero after decimal point - prohibited for all medication orders and other medication-related documentation Example: 3.0 mg	*/**	Can be mistakenly read as multitudes of the intended amount without notice of the decimal point	Do not use trailing or terminal zeros. Write doses as whole numbers Example: 3 mg <i>Acceptable practice does include reporting laboratory values and in certain other numeric notations, i.e., equipment size where the precision of the numeric value is indicated by the digits after the decimal point</i>
IU	*/**	Can be mistaken for intravenous or 10 (ten)	Write out the words “international units”
MgSO₄	*/**	Can be mistaken for morphine sulfate	Write out the complete name of drug
MS, MSO₄	*/**	Can be mistaken for magnesium sulfate	Write out the complete name of drug
q.d., qd, Q.D. or QD (every day)	*/**	Can be mistaken for q.i.d., four times daily	Write out the word “daily” or “every day”
q.o.d., qod, Q.O.D. or QOD (every other day)	*/**	Can be mistaken for daily or four times daily	Write out the phrase “every other day”
U or u	*/**	Frequently mistaken for the number zero or the number four	Write out the word “unit”
A.D., A.S., A.U.	**	Can be mistaken for each other or for O.D., O.S., O.U.	Write out the term “left ear”, “right ear” or “both ears”
Apothecary symbol for the word dram	**	Can be mistaken for the number three (3)	Use the metric system instead of this apothecary symbol

UNACCEPTABLE ABBREVIATION AND SYMBOL LIST (continued)

Unacceptable Abbreviation/Symbol	Code	Why this is <u>not</u> to be used	What <u>is acceptable</u> practice
Apothecary symbols for the word minim	**	Can be mistaken for the abbreviation mL	Use the metric system instead of this apothecary symbol
BT	**	Can be mistaken for BID (twice daily)	Write out the phrase "at bedtime"
cc	**	Can be mistaken for units (with the cc looking like a "u")	Use the term mL or write out the term "cubic centimeters"
D/C	**	Can be interchanged to mean discontinue or discharge	Write out your intent, either "discontinue" and the name of the drug or "discharge the patient"
HS, qhs	**	Can be mistaken for every hour or half-strength	Write out the word "nightly" or the phrase "nightly at bedtime"; write out "half-strength"
IJ (injection)	**	Can be mistaken for IV, intravenous or intrajugular	Write out the word "injection"
IN (intranasal)	**	Can be mistaken for IM or IV	Write out the word "intranasal"
OD or o.d. (once daily)	**	Can be mistaken for "right eye"	Write out "daily" or "once a day"
O.D., O.S., O.U.	**	Can be mistaken for each other or for A.D., A.S., A.U.	Write out the term "left eye", "right eye" or "both eyes"
OJ (orange juice)	**	Can be mistaken for OD or OS (right or left eye)	Write out the words "orange juice"
per os	**	The abbreviation "os" can be mistaken for left eye	Write out the term "per mouth", or the word "orally" or use the abbreviation "PO"
qn	**	Can be mistaken for every hour	Write out the word "nightly"
q1d (daily)	**	Can be mistaken for q.i.d, four times daily	Write out the word "daily"
q6PM, etc.	**	Can be mistaken for every six (6) hours	Write out "6PM nightly" or "6PM daily"
ss (sliding scale or 1/2 apothecary)	**	Can be mistaken for the number 55	Write out the phrase "sliding scale" or write out "one half" or "1/2"

UNACCEPTABLE ABBREVIATION AND SYMBOL LIST (continued)

Unacceptable Abbreviation/Symbol	Code	Why this is <u>not</u> to be used	What <u>is acceptable</u> practice
SSRI (sliding scale regular insulin)	**	Can be mistaken for selective-serotonin reuptake inhibitor	Write out "sliding scale insulin"
SSI (sliding scale insulin)	**	Can be mistaken for Strong Solution of Iodine (Lugol's Solution)	
Sub q	**	The "q" can be mistaken for the term "every"	Write out the word "subcutaneous" or the abbreviation "subcut"
SC	**	SC can be mistaken for sublingual	
SQ	**	Can be mistaken for "5 every"	
TIW or tiw	**	Can be mistaken for three times per day	Write out "three times per week"
> and <	**	Can be misinterpreted to mean the opposite of what is intended	Write out the terms "greater than" or "less than"
1/2	**	Can be mistaken for 55	Write out the phrase "one-half" or use quotes around the numbers "1/2"
Use of the slash mark (/)	**	Can be mistaken for the number 1	Do not use a slash mark to separate doses, write out the word "per"
µg (for microgram)	**	Can be mistaken for mg (milligram), which can result in a ten-fold dosing overdose	Use the abbreviation "mcg" or write out the word "microgram"
x3d	**	Can be mistaken for three doses	Write out the phrase "for three days"
@	**	Can be mistaken for the number 2	Write out the word "at"
&	**	Can be mistaken for the number 2	Write out the word "and"
+	**	Can be mistaken for the number 4	Write out the word "and"
Symbol of hour (°)	**	Can be mistaken for zero (0)	Write out "hour" or "h" or "hr"

UNACCEPTABLE ABBREVIATION AND SYMBOL LIST (continued)

<p>The following Drug Abbreviations are not to be used because they can be mistaken for other drugs:</p>	<p>Write out the complete name of the drug</p>
ARA-A - Vidarabine **	
AZT- Zidovudine (Retrovir) **	
CPZ - Prochlorperazine (Compazine) **	
DPT - Abbreviation for Demerol-Phenergan-Thorazine **	
HCl - Hydrochloric Acid **	
HCT - Hydrocortisone **	
HCTZ- Hydrochlorothiazide **	
MTX - Methotrexate **	
PCA - Procainamide **	
PTU - Propylthiouracil **	
T3 - Tylenol with Codeine No. 3 **	
TAC - Triamcinolone **	
TNK - TNKase **	
ZnSO4 - Zinc sulfate **	

Unacceptable	<u>Why this is not to be used</u>	<u>What is acceptable practice</u>
<p>Do not Shorten Names of Drugs</p> <p>Example: "Nitro drip"</p>	<p>Can be mistaken for other drug names, such as in the example -</p> <p>"Nitro" drip can mean nitroglycerin or sodium nitroprusside</p>	<p>Write out the complete name of drug</p>
<p>The name of the drug and dose run together</p> <p>Example: Inderal40 mg</p>	<p>Inderal 40 mg is mistaken for Inderal 140 mg</p>	<p>Ensure adequate space between the name of the drug, the dose and the unit of measure</p>
<p>The dose of the drug runs together with the unit of measure</p> <p>Example: 10mg</p>	<p>The "m" is mistaken for another zero</p>	<p>Place a space between the dosage and the unit of measure</p> <p>Example: 10 mg</p>
<p>A period is placed after an abbreviation</p> <p>Example: mg. or mL.</p>	<p>If poorly written, the period could look like the number 1</p>	<p>Do not place a period after abbreviations, such as:</p> <p>Example: mg, mL</p>
<p>Commas not placed when large doses are written</p> <p>Example: 10000 units of heparin</p>	<p>Orders are not clear without the commas; wrong dosages are given</p>	<p>Remember to place commas appropriately at or above 1,000 units, or to write out the complete dosage</p> <p>Example: 10,000 units of heparin</p>

UNACCEPTABLE ABBREVIATION AND SYMBOL LIST (continued)

Approval by Pharmacy and Therapeutics Committee

Chairperson Signature

Approval Date

Approval by Medical Executive Committee

Chief of Staff Signature

Approval Date

List Revision Dates:

