

Medical Terminology: Abbreviations

- **ā**: before
- **āā**: of each
- **abd**: abdomen
- **ABG**: arterial blood gas
- **ac**: before meals
- **ACLS**: advanced cardiac life support
- **ad lib**: as much as desired
- **ADL**: activities of daily living
- **AED**: automated external defibrillator
- **AF**: atrial fibrillation
- **AK**: above the knee
- **AKA**: above the knee amputation
- **A-line**: arterial line
- **AMA**: against medical advice
- **amb**: ambulatory
- **AMI**: acute myocardial infarction
- **AMS**: altered mental status
- **ant**: anterior
- **AOx4**: alert and oriented to person, place, time, and self
- **AP**: anteroposterior, front-to-back, action potential, angina pectoris, anterior pituitary, arterial pressure
- **APC**: atrial premature complex, activated protein C, aspirin-phenacetin-caffeine
- **Aq**: water
- **ARDS**: adult respiratory distress syndrome
- **ASA**: aspirin (acetylsalicylic acid)
- **ASHD**: arteriosclerotic or atherosclerotic heart disease
- **AV, A-V**: atrioventricular, arteriovenous
- **BBB**: bundle branch block
- **bid**: twice daily
- **BKA**: below the knee amputation
- **BM**: bowel movement
- **BP**: blood pressure
- **BS**: blood sugar, breath sounds, bowel sounds
- **BSA**: body surface area
- **bx**: biopsy
- **c** (with bar over): with
- **CA**: cancer, cardiac arrest, chronologic age, coronary artery, cold agglutinin
- **CABG**: coronary artery bypass graft
- **CAD**: coronary artery disease
- **CBC**: complete blood count
- **cc**: cubic centimeter
- **CC or C/C**: chief complaint
- **CCU**: coronary care unit
- **CHF**: congestive heart failure

- **c/o**: complaining of
- **CO**: cardiac output, carbon monoxide
- **COLD**: chronic obstructive lung disease
- **COPD**: chronic obstructive pulmonary disease
- **CP**: chest pain, chemically pure, cerebral palsy
- **CRT**: capillary refill time, cathode-ray tube
- **CSF**: cerebrospinal fluid
- **CSM**: carotid sinus massage, cerebrospinal meningitis
- **CVA**: cerebrovascular accident
- **CVP**: central venous pressure
- **CXR**: chest x-ray
- **D&C**: dilation and curettage
- **D/C**: discontinue
- **diff**: differential
- **dig**: digoxin
- **DM**: diabetes mellitus
- **DOA**: dead on arrival
- **DOE**: dyspnea on exertion
- **DOS**: dead on scene
- **DPT**: diphtherial, pertussis, and tetanus toxoids vaccine
- **DSD**: dry sterile dressing
- **DtaP**: diphtheria tetanus toxoids, and acellular pertussis vaccine
- **DTP**: diphtheria, tetanus toxoids, and pertussis vaccine
- **DTs**: delirium tremens
- **DVT**: deep venous thrombosis
- **D5W**: dextrose 5% in water
- **Dx**: diagnosis
- **EDC**: estimated date of confinement
- **ET**: endotracheal tube, endotracheal
- **ETOH**: ethyl alcohol
- **ETT**: endotracheal tube
- **FIO₂**: fraction of inspired oxygen
- **FBS**: fasting blood sugar
- **FHR**: fetal heart rate
- **FHT**: fetal heart tones
- **FHx**: family history
- **fL**: femtoliter
- **fl**: fluid
- **fld**: fluid
- **fx**: fracture
- **GB**: gallbladder
- **gr**: grain
- **GSW**: gunshot wound
- **gtt**: drop(s)
- **GTT**: glucose tolerance test
- **GU**: genitourinary

- **(H):** hypodermic
- **H:** hypodermic
- **H&H:** hemoglobin and hematocrit
- **H&P:** history and physical
- **H/A:** headache
- **Hb:** hemoglobin
- **Hct:** hematocrit
- **Hgb:** hemoglobin
- **HH:** hiatal hernia
- **HPI:** history of present illness
- **hs:** at bedtime
- **HTN:** hypertension
- **Hx:** history
- **I&O:** intake and output
- **IC:** intracardiac, inspiratory capacity irritable colon
- **ICP:** intracranial pressure
- **IDDM:** insulin-dependent diabetes mellitus
- **IM:** intramuscular
- **IO:** intraosseous
- **IPPB:** intermittent positive pressure breathing
- **JVD:** jugular venous distention
- **KUB:** kidneys, ureters, and bladder
- **KVO:** keep vein open
- **LAC:** laceration laparoscopic-assisted colectomy
- **LE:** lower extremity, left eye, lupus erythematosus
- **LLL:** left lower lobe of the lung
- **LLQ:** left lower quadrant of the abdomen
- **L/M:** liters per minute
- **LMP:** last menstrual period
- **LOC:** level of consciousness
- **LPM:** liters per minute
- **LR:** lactated Ringer's
- **LSD:** lysergic acid diethylamide
- **LUL:** left upper lobe of the lung
- **LUQ:** left upper quadrant of the abdomen
- **MAE:** moves all extremities
- **MAEW:** moves all extremities well
- **MAP:** mean arterial pressure
- **mcg:** microgram
- **MCL:** midclavicular line, modified chest lead
- **mEq:** milliequivalen
- **MI:** myocardial infarction
- **MICU:** mobile intensive care unit; medical intensive care unit
- **MS:** morphine sulfate
- **MSO4:** morphine sulfate
- **MVA:** motor vehicle accident

- **MVC:** motor vehicle crash
- **MVP:** mitral valve prolapse
- **N:** normal
- **NA, N/A:** not applicable
- **NAD:** no apparent distress, no appreciable disease
- **NC:** nasal cannula
- **NG:** nasogastric
- **NIDDM:** non-insulin-dependent diabetes mellitus
- **NKA:** no known allergies
- **NKDA:** no known drug allergies
- **NPA:** nasopharyngeal airway
- **NPO:** nil per os (nothing by mouth)
- **NS:** normal saline
- **NSR:** normal sinus rhythm
- **NTG:** nitroglycerin
- **N/V:** nausea and vomiting
- **N/V/D:** nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea
- **NVD:** neck vein distention
- **OBS:** organic brain syndrome
- **OP:** outpatient
- **OPA:** oropharyngeal airway
- **OS:** left eye
- **OU:** both eyes
- **p** (with bar over): after
- **pc:** after meals
- **PE:** pulmonary embolism, physical examination
- **PEA:** pulseless electrical activity
- **PEARL:** pupils equal and reactive to light
- **PEEP:** positive end expiratory pressure
- **PERL:** pupils equal and reactive to light
- **PERRL:** pupils equal, round, and reactive to light
- **PID:** pelvic inflammatory disease
- **PND:** paroxysmal nocturnal dyspnea
- **po:** per os (by mouth)
- **PO:** post operative
- **PRN:** pro re nata (as needed)
- **PSVT:** paroxysmal supraventricular tachycardia
- **pt:** patient
- **PTA:** prior to admission, plasma thromboplastin antecedent
- **PTT:** partial thromboplastin time
- **PVC:** premature ventricular complex, polyvinyl chloride
- **PVD:** peripheral vascular disease
- **q:** every
- **qd:** every day
- **qh:** every hour
- **quid:** four times a day

- **qod**: every other day
- **RA**: rheumatoid arthritis, right atrium
- **RAD**: reactive airway disease, right axis deviation
- **RHD**: rheumatic heart disease
- **RL**: Ringer's lactate
- **RLL**: right lower quadrant of the abdomen
- **R/O**: rule out
- **RUL**: right upper lobe of the lung
- **RUQ**: right upper quadrant of the abdomen
- **Rx**: prescription
- **s** (with bar over): without
- **SC**: subcutaneous, secretory component
- **SICU**: surgical intensive care unit
- **SL**: sublingual
- **SOB**: shortness of breath
- **SQ**: subcutaneous
- **ss**: half
- **S/S**: signs and symptoms
- **SubQ**: subcutaneous
- **SVT**: supraventricular tachycardia
- **Sx**: symptoms
- **sym**: symptoms
- **tab**: tablet
- **TBA**: to be admitted
- **TIA**: transient ischemic attack
- **tid**: three times a day
- **TKO**: to keep open
- **TPR**: temperature, pulse, respiration
- **Tx**: treatment
- **U**: unit
- **UA**: urinalysis
- **UE**: upper extremity
- **URI**: upper respiratory infection
- **VS**: vital signs
- **WNL**: within normal limits
- **x** (with bar over): except
- **↑** (up arrow): increased
- **↓** (down arrow): decreased
- **Ø** (zero with diagonal slash): no, not, none
- **®** (R inside a circle): right
- **Ⓛ** (L inside a circle): left
- **~** (tilde): approximately
- **x2**: times two
- **Δ**: change

Reference

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