



Medical Abbreviations

Abbreviations are widely used in the medical field. Nursing students, pre-med students, and students conducting clinical research may come across these abbreviations during their studies and research.

Caution: When using medical abbreviations, some may have various meanings. The following are the most common definitions, though it is possible that there are alternate meanings. Whenever possible, use the full term rather than the abbreviation.

<u>Medical Abbreviation</u>	<u>Meaning</u>	<u>Example</u>
a.c.	Before meals	Take the medication a.c.
ADL	Activities of daily living	The ADL's include eating + washing
ADR	Adverse drug reaction	An ADR of Tylenol is nausea
AM	In the morning	Take the medication AM
a.m.a.	Against medical advice	Patient is refusing treatment a.m.a.
AWOL	Absent without leave	Patient left the hospital AWOL
b.i.d.	Twice daily	Change the dressing b.i.d,
BM	Bowel movement	The patient had 1 BM and no urine
BP	Blood pressure	The average BP is 120/80
C/O	Complaint of	Patient C/O headache
cap	Capsule	This medication is a cap
CBC	Complete blood count	Draw bloods for the CBC
CPR	Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation	The patient needs CPR when in cardiac arrest
D/C	Discontinue or discharge	The medication has been D/C
DM	Diabetes mellitus	The patient has DM type 2
DNR	Do not resuscitate	No CPR
DVT	Deep vein thrombosis	The blood clot in the large vein is a DVT
ETOH	Alcohol	When taking the patient's history, ask about ETOH use
Fx	Fracture	The cast will heal the arm fx
gtt	Drops	Give 2 gtts of medication
h.s.	At bedtime	Take the medication h.s.

HTN	Hypertension	The high BP is because of the history of HTN
Hx	History	Take the patient's health hx
ICU	Intensive Care Unit	Unstable patients go to the ICU
IM	Intramuscular	The injection is given IM
IV	Intravenous	The medication
LLQ	Left lower quadrant	The abdominal pain in the LLQ can be diverticulosis
LUQ	Left upper quadrant	The LUQ of the abdomen is where the spleen is located
N/V	Nausea or vomiting	The patient is having N/V
npo	Nothing by mouth	Patient is npo before surgery
O.D.	Right eye	Give eye drops in O.D.
O.S.	Left eye	Give eye drops in O.D.
O.U.	Both eyes	Redness apparent in O.U.
ORIF	Open reduction and internal fixation	To repair the hip fracture, the patient had an ORIF surgery
p.c.	After meals	Take medication p.c.
PM	In the evening	Take the medication PM
p.o.	By mouth	Take the pill p.o.
p.r.n.	As needed	The medication can be taken p.r.n.
PERRLA	Pupils equal, round and reactive to light and accommodation	The neurovascular exam reveals PERRLA
PT	Physical therapy	The PT will come to assess the patient.
pt	Patient	The pt is doing well.
q	Every	Check in on q patient
q.d.	Each day/daily	Take the medication q.d.
q.i.d.	Four times daily	Take the medication q.i.d.
q2h	Every 2 hours	Take the medication q2h
q3h	Every 3 hours	Take the medication q3h
qAM	Every morning	Take the medication qAM
qhs	Every night at bedtime	Take the medication qhs
qod	Every other day	Take the medication qod
qPM	Every evening	Take the medication qPM
RA	Rheumatoid arthritis	The immobility in the hands are due to RA

R/O	Rule out	We must R/O covid-19 with the test.
RLQ	Right lower quadrant	The RLQ of the abdomen is where the appendix is located
RUQ	Right upper quadrant	The RUQ of the abdomen is where the liver is located
SOB	Shortness of breath	The patient is experiencing SOB
SOBOE	Shortness of breath on exertion	When the patient walks, they have SOBOE
s/c	subcutaneous	The injection is given s/c
T	Temperature	The healthy T range is 36.5-37.5 degrees celsius
t.i.d.	Three times daily	Take medication t.i.d.
tab	Tablet	The medication is given in the form of a tab
TMJ	Tempomandibular joint	The patient has difficulty eating because of TMJ pain
u/a	Urinalysis	Gather a urine sample for the urinalysis
URI	Upper respiratory infection	The common cold is a URI
ut dict	As directed	Change dressing ut dict in the chart
UTI	Urinary tract infection	Pain upon urination is indicative of a UTI
VSS	Vital signs stable	Assessments show the patient's VSS
VSR	Vital signs routine	Take VSR every shift

CODE	Meaning
Code Blue	Cardiac arrest adult
Code Red	Fire
Code Yellow	Missing patient
Code White	Violent person
Code Black	Bomb threat
Code Orange	External disaster
Code Green	Evacuation
Code Pink	Cardiac arrest pediatric
Code Brown	Dangerous material spill internal
Code Gray	External toxic gas