




Common Medical Abbreviations with Meanings

Abbreviation	Meaning
a	Before
aa	Of each
ab	Abortion; antibiotic
abd	Abdomen
ABGs	Arterial blood gases
ac	Before meals; abdominal circumference
accel	(FHR) acceleration
ACE	Angiotensin-converting enzyme
ACTH	Adrenocorticotropic hormone
AD	Right ear
ADA	American Diabetes Association
ADD	Attention deficit disorder
ADH	Antidiuretic hormone
ADHD	Attention deficit hyperactive disorder
ADL	Activities of daily living
ad lib	As desired
AFB	Acid-fast bacilli
AFP	Alpha-fetoprotein
AFV	Amniotic fluid volume
AGA	Appropriate for gestational age
AGN	Acute glomerulonephritis
AID	Artificial insemination by donor
AIDS	Acquired immunodeficiency syndrome
AIH	Artificial insemination by husband
AKA	Also known as
ALL	Acute lymphocytic leukemia
ALT	Same as SGOT
alt noc	Every other night
AM	Midnight to all times before noon
AMA	Against medical advice
amb	Ambulate
AMI	Acute myocardial infarction
ANA	Antinuclear antibodies
ANLL	Acute nonlymphoid leukemia
ant	Anterior
AOM	Acute otitis media


A/P	Anteroposterior
aq	Water
ARB	Angiotensin receptor blocker
ARC	AIDS-related complex
ARF	Acute rheumatic fever
AROM	Artificial rupture of membranes; active range of motion
ASA	Aspirin
ASAP	As soon as possible
ASD	Atrial septal defect
ASHD	Arteriosclerotic heart disease
ASO	Antistreptolysin O
AV	Atrioventricular
Ax	Axillary
Az	2-hour pregnancy test
BA 	Barium enema
BAL	Blood alcohol level
BAT	Brown adipose tissue
BBB	Bundle branch block
BE	Barium enema
bid	Twice daily
BK	Below the knee
BM	Bowel movement
BMA	Bone marrow aspiration
BMR	Basal metabolic rate
BOW	Bag of waters
BP	Blood pressure
BPD	Biparietal diameter of fetal head; bronchopulmonary dysplasia
BPH	Benign prostatic hypertrophy
BPM	Beats per minute
BS	Blood sugar
BSA	Body surface area
BSST	Breast self-stimulation test
BUN	Blood urea nitrogen
Bx	Biopsy
C 	Celsius or centigrade; calorie
CA	Cancer
Ca+	Calcium
CABG	Coronary artery bypass graft
CAD	Coronary artery disease

cal	Calorie
cap	Capsule
CAT	Computed axial tomography
CBC	Complete blood count
CC	Chief complaint; cubic centimeter
cc	Cubic centimeter; chief complaint
CCB	Calcium channel blocker
CCU	Coronary care unit
CDC	Centers for Disease Control (and Prevention)
CF	Cystic fibrosis
CFT	Capillary fill time
C-H	Crown-heel (length)
CHD	Congenital heart disease
CHF	Congestive heart failure
CID	Cytomegalic inclusion disease
circ	Circumcision
Cl	Chloride
CLL	Chronic lymphocytic leukemia
cm	Centimeter
CMV	Cytomegalovirus
CN	Cranial nerve
CNM	Certified nurse-midwife
CNS	Central nervous system (brain and spinal column)
C/O	Complains of
CO ₂	Carbon dioxide
COA	Coarctation of the aorta
COLD	Chronic obstructive lung disease
COM	Chronic otitis media
comp	Compound
COPD	Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease
CP	Cerebral palsy
CPAP	Continuous positive airway pressure
CPD	Cephalopelvic disproportion
CPK	Creatine phosphokinase
CPP	Cerebral perfusion pressure
CPR	Cardiopulmonary resuscitation
CPT	Chest physiotherapy
CR	Controlled release
C-R	Crown-rump (length)


CRNA	Certified registered nurse anesthetist
CS	Cesarean section
C&S	Culture and sensitivity
CSF	Cerebrospinal fluid
CST	Contraction stress test
CT	Computed tomography
CTA	Clear to auscultation
CUG	Cystourethrogram
CV	Cardiovascular
CVA	Cerebrovascular accident
CVD	Cardiovascular disease
CVP	Central venous pressure
CVTC	Central venous tunneled catheter
CXR	Chest x-ray
d 🇺🇸	Day
DASH	Dietary approach to stop hypertension
D/C	Discontinue; discharge
D&C	Dilatation and curettage
DDST	Denver Developmental Standardized Test
del	(FHR) deceleration; delivery
DEXA (scan)	Dual energy x-ray absorptiometry
DHR	Department of Human Resources
DIC	Disseminated intravascular coagulation
dig	Digitalis
dL	Deciliter
DM	Diabetes mellitus
DO	Doctor of Osteopathy
DOA	Dead on arrival
DOB	Date of birth
DPT	Diphtheria; pertussis; tetanus
dr	Dram
DRG	Diagnosis-related group
DS	Double strength
dsg	Dressing
DTR	Deep tendon reflex
DVT	deep vein thrombosis
D ₅ W	5% dextrose in water
Dx	Diagnosis
ECF 🇺🇸	Extracellular fluid



ECG	Electrocardiogram (<i>also</i> EKG)
ECT	Electroconvulsive therapy
ED	Emergency department
EDC	Estimated date of confinement
EEG	Electroencephalogram
EENT	Ear, eye, nose, and throat
EFM	External fetal monitor
EKG	Electrocardiogram (<i>also</i> ECG)
elix	Elixir
EMG	Electromyogram
ENT	Ear, nose, and throat
EOM	Extraocular movements
epis	Episiotomy
esp	Especially
ER	Emergency room
ESR	Erythrocyte sedimentation rate (sed rate)
EST	Electroshock therapy
ET	Endotracheal
et	And
EUG	Excretory urogram
F 	Fundus; Fahrenheit; female
FAD	Fetal activity diary
FAS	Fetal alcohol syndrome
FBM	Fetal breathing movements
FBS	Fasting blood sugar; fetal blood (scalp) sample
FDA	Food and Drug Administration
Fe	Iron
F&E	Fluids and electrolytes
FEV	Forced expiratory volume
FH	Fundal height
FHR	Fetal heart rate
FHT	Fetal heart tones
FiO ₂	Fractional inspired O ₂ concentration
fl dr	Fluid dram
fl oz	Fluid ounce
FM	Fetal movement
FOC	Fronto-occipital circumference (head circumference)
FSH	Follicle-stimulating hormone
FSHRH	Follicle stimulating hormone-releasing hormone


FTND	Full-term normal delivery
FTP	Full-term pregnancy
FTT	Failure to thrive
FUO	Fever of undetermined origin
fx	Fracture
G 🇺🇸	Gravida (<i>also</i> grav)
g	Gram (<i>also</i> gm)
GB	Gallbladder
GC	Gonorrhoea
GDM	Gestational diabetes mellitus
G&D	Growth and development
GER	Gastroesophageal reflux
GFR	Glomerular filtration rate
GH	Growth hormone
GI	Gastrointestinal
Gm	Gram (<i>also</i> g)
gr	Grain
grav	Gravida (<i>also</i> G)
GTT	Glucose tolerance test
gtt	Drop
GU	Genitourinary
GYN	Gynecology
H 🇺🇸	Hypodermic
h	Hour (<i>also</i> hr)
HA	Headache
HAV	Hepatitis A
Hb	Hemoglobin (<i>also</i> hgb)
HBV	Hepatitis B
HC	Head circumference
HCG	Human chorionic gonadotropin
hct	Hematocrit
HCTZ	Hydrochlorothiazide
HDL	High-density lipoprotein
H-flu	<i>Haemophilus influenzae</i>
hgb	Hemoglobin (<i>also</i> Hb)
H&H	Hematocrit and hemoglobin
HHNK	Hyperglycemic, hyperosmolar, nonketotic coma
Hib	<i>Haemophilus influenzae</i> bacteria
HIV	Human immunodeficiency virus


HMD	Hyaline membrane disease
HMO	Health maintenance organization
H ₂ O	Water
H ₂ O ₂	Hydrogen peroxide
HOB	Head of bed
HPI	History of present illness
HPF	High-powered field (of microscope)
HR	Heart rate
hr	Hour (<i>also</i> h)
hs	Hour of sleep
ht	Height
HTN	Hypertension
HVH	Herpes virus hominis
Hx	History
hypo	Hypodermic
ICF 	Intracellular fluid
ICN	Intensive care nursery
ICP	Intracranial pressure
ICU	Intensive care unit
I&D	Incision and drainage
IDDM	Insulin-dependent diabetes mellitus
IDM	Infant of diabetic mother
I/E	Inspiratory/expiratory
IG	Immune globulin
IM	Intramuscular
incl	Including
inf	Infusion
inhal	Inhalation
inj	Injection
I&O	Intake and output
IOP	Intraocular pressure
IPPB	Intermittent positive-pressure breathing
IPPV	Intermittent positive-pressure ventilation
IQ	Intelligence quotient
ISADH	Inappropriate secretion of antidiuretic hormone
ISE	Internal scalp electrode
ITP	Idiopathic thrombocytopenic purpura
IU	International unit
IUD	Intrauterine device

IUFD	Intrauterine fetal demise
IUGR	Intrauterine growth retardation
IUP	Intrauterine pregnancy
IUPC	Intrauterine pressure catheter
IV	Intravenous
IVF	In vitro fertilization
IVP	Intravenous pyelogram; IV push
IVPB	IV piggyback
JRA 🇺🇸	Juvenile rheumatoid arthritis
JVD	Jugular vein distention
K+ 🇺🇸	Potassium
kcal	Kilocalorie
KCl	Potassium chloride
kg	Kilogram
KUB	Kidney, ureter, bladder
L 🇺🇸	Liter; left
LA	Long-acting
lat	Lateral
lb	Pound
LBW	Low birth weight
L&D	Labor and delivery
LDH	Lactase dehydrogenase
LDL	Low-density lipoprotein
LE	Lupus erythematosus
LFD	Low forceps delivery
lg	Large
LGA	Large for gestational age
LH	Luteinizing hormone
liq	Liquid
LLQ	Left lower quadrant
LMA	Left mentum anterior
LMLE	Left mediolateral episiotomy
LMP	Last menstrual period
LMT	Left mentotransverse (fetal position)
LOA	left occipitoanterior (fetal position)
LOC	Level of consciousness
LOF	Low outlet forceps
LOM	Left otitis media
LOP	Left occipitoposterior (fetal position)

LOT	Left occipitotransverse (fetal position)
lot	Lotion
LP	Lumbar puncture
LPN	Licensed practical nurse
LR	Lactated Ringer's
L/S	Lecithin/sphingomyelin
LSA	Left sacroanterior (fetal position)
LScA	Left scapuloanterior (fetal position)
LScP	Left scapuloposterior (fetal position)
LSP	Left sacroposterior (fetal position)
LST	Left sacrotransverse (fetal position)
LUQ	Left upper quadrant
M 	Male; minim
m	Meter; minute (<i>also</i> min)
m ²	Meter square
MAEW	Moves all extremities well
Mag	Magnesium sulfate (<i>also</i> MgSO ₄)
MAO	Monoamine oxidase
MAOI	Monoamine oxidase inhibitor
MAP	Mean arterial pressure
MAS	Meconium aspiration syndrome
mcg	Microgram (<i>also</i> mg)
MCH	Mean corpuscular hemoglobin
MCHC	Mean corpuscular hemoglobin concentration
MCV	Mean corpuscular volume
MD	Doctor of medicine
mec	Meconium
mec st	Meconium stain
med	Medicine
mEq	Milliequivalent
MeSH	Medical subject heading
Mg	Magnesium
mg	Milligram
MgSO ₄	Magnesium sulfate (<i>also</i> mag)
MI	Myocardial infarction
min	Minute (<i>also</i> m)
mL	Milliliter
MLE	Midline episiotomy
mm	Millimeter



μm	Microgram (<i>also</i> mcg)
mm^3	Cubic millimeter
MMR	Measles, mumps, rubella (vaccine)
mo	Month
mod	Moderate
MRI	Magnetic resonance imaging
MS	Multiple sclerosis; mitral stenosis; musculoskeletal
MTX	Methotrexate
MVA	Motor vehicle accident
Na^+ 	Sodium
NaCl	Sodium chloride
NAD	No acute distress
NaHCO_3	Sodium bicarbonate
NB	Newborn; non-hepatitis B
NBN	Newborn nursery
NC	Nasal cannula
NEC	Necrotizing enterocolitis
NG	Nasogastric
NICU	Nursery intensive care unit
NIDDM	Non-insulin-dependent diabetes mellitus
NIH	National Institutes of Health
NKA	No known allergies
NMS	Neuroleptic malignant syndrome
no	Number
noc	Night
NPO	Nothing by mouth
NS	Normal saline (0.9% NaCl)
NSAIA	Nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory analgesics
NSAID	Nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drug
NST	Non-stress test
NSVD	Normal sterile vaginal delivery
NTD	Neural tube defect
NTG	Nitroglycerin
N/V/D	Nausea/vomiting/diarrhea
O_2 	Oxygen
OA	Occiput anterior (fetal position)
OB	Obstetrics
OBS	Organic brain syndrome
OC	Oral contraceptive

OCT	Oxytocin challenge test
OD	Overdose; right eye
OFC	Occipitofrontal circumference (head circumference)
OL	Left eye
OM	Otitis media
OME	Otitis media with effusion
OOB	Out of bed
OP	Occiput posterior (fetal position)
OPV	Oral poliovirus vaccine
OR	Operating room
ORIF	Open reduction with internal fixation
OS	Left eye
os	Mouth
OTC	Over-the-counter
OU	Each eye
OV	Both eyes
oz	Ounce
P 	Para; phosphorus; phosphate (<i>also</i> PO ₄); pulse, wave on ECG complex
p̄	After
pa	Posteroanterior
PAC	Premature atrial contraction
PaO ₂	Partial arterial oxygen tension
paren	Parenterally
PAT	Paroxysmal atrial tachycardia
PCTA	Percutaneous transluminal angioplasty
Pb	Phenobarbital
PBI	Protein-bound iodine
pc	After meals
PCA	Patient-controlled analgesia
PCN	Penicillin
PCWP	Pulmonary capillary wedge pressure
PDA	Patent ductus arteriosus
PE	Physical exam
PE tubes	Pressure-equalizing tubes
PEEP	Positive end expiratory pressure
PEG tube	Percutaneous gastrostomy
PERL	Pupils equal, react to light
PERLA	Pupils equal, react to light and accommodation
PERRLA	Pupils equal, regular, react to light and accommodation

PET	Positron emission tomography
PG	Prostaglandin
pH	Refers to acidity or alkalinity
PHN	Public health nurse
PICC	Peripherally inserted central catheter
PID	Pelvic inflammatory disease
PIH	Pregnancy-induced hypertension
pit	Pitocin
PKU	Phenylketonuria
PM	Noon to all times before midnight
PMH	Past medical history
PMI	Point of maximum impulse
PMN	Polymorphonuclear neutrophils
PMS	Premenstrual syndrome
PND	Paroxysmal nocturnal dyspnea; postnasal drip
PO	By mouth; phone order
PO ₄	Phosphate (<i>also</i> P)
POHR	Problem-oriented health record
PP	Postpartum; postprandial
PPD	Purified protein derivative; percussion and postural drainage
PPN	Peripheral parenteral nutrition
PPTL	Postpartum tubal ligation
PR	Per rectum
primip	Primipara
prn	As needed
PROM	Passive range of motion; premature rupture of membranes
PSVT	Paroxysmal supraventricular tachycardia
PT	Prothrombin time; physical therapy
pt	Patient; pint
PTA	Prior to admission
PTT	Partial thromboplastin time
PVC	Premature ventricular contraction
q 	Every
qd	Every day
qh	Every hour
q 2 h	Every 2 hours
qid	Four times a day
qod	Every other day
QNS	Quantity not sufficient

QRS	Waves of electrocardiogram complex
qs	Quantity sufficient or as much as needed
qt	Quart
R 🇺🇸	Respiration
RAIU	Radioactive iodine uptake
RBC	Red blood cell; red blood cell count
RDS	Respiratory distress syndrome
Rh	Rhesus (blood factor)
RL	Ringer's lactate
RLF	Retrolental fibroplasia
RLL	Right lower lobe (of lung)
RLQ	Right lower quadrant
RMA	Right mentoanterior presentation (fetal)
RMP	Right mentoposterior presentation (fetal)
RMT	Right mentotransverse (fetal position)
RNC	Registered nurse certified
R/O	Rule out
ROA	Right occipitoanterior (fetal position)
ROM	Right otitis media; range of motion; rupture of membranes
ROP	Right occipitoposterior (fetal presentation); retinopathy of prematurity
ROS	Review of systems
ROT	Right occipitotransverse (fetal position)
RR	Respiratory rate
RSA	Right sacroanterior (fetal position)
RSP	Right sacroposterior (fetal position)
RScA	Right scapuloanterior (fetal position)
RScP	Right sacroposterior (fetal position)
RST	Right sacrotransverse (fetal position)
RSV	Respiratory syncytial virus
R/T	Related to
RUL	Right upper lobe (of lung)
RUQ	Right upper quadrant
Rx	Prescription; therapy; recipe; take
rx	Reaction
SA 🇺🇸	Sinoatrial
SaO ₂	Oxygen saturation
SBS	Short-bowel syndrome
SC	Subcutaneous
SFB	Single footling breech

SGA	Small for gestational age
SGOT	Serum glutamic oxaloacetic transaminase (<i>also</i> ALT)
SGPT	Serum glutamic pyruvic transaminase
SIADH	Syndrome of inappropriate antidiuretic hormone secretion
SIDS	Sudden infant death syndrome
sig	Write or label
SL	Sublingual
SLE	Systemic lupus erythematosus
SOB	Shortness of breath
sol	Solution
SOM	Serous otitis media; suppurative otitis media
sos	If necessary
sp gr	Specific gravity
sq	Subcutaneous
SR	Sustained release
SROM	Spontaneous rupture of membranes
SS	Serotonin syndrome
S&S	Signs and symptoms
SSRI	Selective serotonin reuptake inhibitor
stat	Immediately
STD	Sexually transmitted disease
STH	Somatotrophic hormone
suppos	Suppository
SVE	Sterile vaginal examination
Sx	Symptoms
syr	Syrup
Sz	Seizure
t 🇺🇸	Teaspoon (<i>also</i> tsp)
T	Temperature; triiodothyronine; thyroxine; tablespoon (<i>also</i> tbsp)
T&A	Tonsillectomy and adenoidectomy
TAH	Total abdominal hysterectomy
TB	Tuberculosis
tbsp	Tablespoon (<i>also</i> T)
TCA	Tricyclic antidepressant
TCDB	Turn, cough, and deep breathe
TCM	Transcutaneous monitoring
TD	Tardive dyskinesia
tid	Three times a day
tinct	Tincture (<i>also</i> tr)

TOF	Tetralogy of Fallot
top	Topical
TOPV	Trivalent oral polio vaccine
TORCH	Toxoplasmosis, other, rubella, cytomegalovirus, herpes
TPN	Total parenteral nutrition
TPR	Temperature, pulse, respiration
TPUR	Transperineal urethral resection
tr	Tincture (<i>also</i> tinct)
TSH	Thyroid-stimulating hormone
tsp	Teaspoon (<i>also</i> t)
TTN	Transient tachypnea of the newborn
tr	Tincture (<i>also</i> tinct)
TUR	Transurethral resection
Tx	Treat or treatment
U 	Unit
UA	Urinalysis
UC	Uterine contraction
UGI	Upper gastrointestinal
ung	Ointment
UOQ	Upper outer quadrant
UPI	Uterine placental insufficiency
URI	Upper respiratory infection
U/S	Ultrasound
UTI	Urinary tract infection
UV	Ultraviolet
vag 	Vaginal
VBAC	Vaginal birth after cesarean birth
VD	Venereal disease
VF	Ventricular fibrillation
VHD	Ventricular heart disease
VLDL	Very low density lipoprotein
VMA	Vanillylmandelic acid
VNA	Visiting Nurses' Association
VO	Verbal order
vol	Volume
VS	Vital signs
VSD	Ventricular septal defect
VT	Ventricular tachycardia
WBC 	White blood cell; white blood cell count

WIC	Supplemental food program for women, infants, and children
wk	Week
WNL	Within normal limits
wt	Weight
y/o 🇺🇸	Years old
yr	Year

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