

Joint Commission Prohibited list:

PROHIBITED/DANGEROUS ABBREVIATIONS:

Abbreviations	Intended Meaning	Misinterpretation	PLEASE USE:
1/d	one daily	tid	1 daily
AD, AS, AU	right ear, left ear, each ear	OD, OS, OU	right ear, left ear, each ear
BT	bedtime	bid (twice daily)	bedtime
cc	cubic centimeters	"u" (units)	mL
D/C	discharge or discontinue	Premature discontinuation of medications if D/C (intended to mean "discharge") has been misinterpreted as "discontinued" when followed by a list of discharge medications.	Discharge or Discontinue
hs (h.s.)	at bedtime, hours of sleep	half-strength	at bedtime
HS	half-strength	bedtime	half-strength
IJ	injection	IV or intrajugular	injection
IN	intranasal	IM or IV	intranasal or NAS
IU	international unit	IV (intravenous) or 10 (ten)	units
od (o.d.)	once daily	"right eye" (OD-oculus dexter), leading to oral liquid medications administered in the eye.	daily
OD, OS, OU	right eye, left eye, each eye	AD, AS, AU (right ear, left ear, each ear)	right eye, left eye, each eye
OJ	orange juice	OD or OS (right or left eye); drugs meant to be diluted in orange juice may be given in the eye.	orange juice
per os	by mouth or orally	"os" can be mistaken as "left eye" (OS-oculus sinister)	PO, by mouth, orally
q.d. or qd	every day	q.i.d., especially if the period after the "q" or the tail of the "q" is misunderstood as an "l."	daily
q.o.d. or QOD	every other day	"q.d." (daily) or "q.i.d." (4 times daily) if the "o" is poorly written	every other day
q1d	daily	q.i.d. (r times daily)	daily
q6PM, etc.	early evening at 6 p.m.	every 6 hours	"6 PM nightly," or "6 PM daily."
qhs (q.h.s.)	at bedtime	"qhr" or "every hour"	at bedtime
qn	nightly	qh (every hour)	nightly
SC, SQ, sub q	subcutaneous	SC mistaken as SL (sublingual); SQ mistaken as "5 every," the "q" in "sub q" has been mistaken as "every" (e.g., a heparin dose order <i>sub q 2 hours before surgery</i> misunderstood as <i>every 2 hours before surgery</i>).	"subcut" or "subcutaneously"
ss	sliding scale (insulin) or ½ (apothecary)	55	Spell out "sliding scale"; use "one-half" or "½."
SSI	sliding scale insulin	Strong solution of iodine (Lugol's)	sliding scale (insulin)
SSRI	sliding scale regular insulin	selective-serotonin reuptake inhibitor	sliding scale (insulin)
TIW, tiw, t.i.w.	3 times a week	"3 times a day" or "twice in a week."	3 times weekly
U or u	unit	Number 0 or 4, causing a 10-fold overdose or greater (e.g., 4U seen as "40" or "4u" seen as "44"); mistaken as "cc" so dose given in volume instead of unites (e.g., 4u seen as 4 cc).	unit

SYMBOLS:

Symbols	Intended Meaning	Misinterpretation	PLEASE USE:
/ (slash mark)	separates 2 doses or indicates "per"	number 1 ("25 units/10 units" read as "110 units.")	Do not use a slash mark to separate doses. Spell out the word "per."
+	"plus" or "and"	4	and
> or <	"greater than" or "less than"	opposite of intended	"greater than" or "less than"
&	and	2	and
@	at	2	at
	Minim	mL	Use the metric system
x3d	for 3 days	3 doses	for 3 days
•	dram	3	Use the metric system
°	hour	zero (e.g., q2° seen as q 20)	hr, h, or hour
µg	microgram	mg	mcg

DOSE DESIGNATIONS AND OTHER INFORMATION:

Dose Designation/Information	Intended Meaning	Misinterpretation	PLEASE USE:
"0" (zero) after decimal point (1.0)	1 mg	10 mg if the decimal point is not seen.	Do not use terminal zeros for doses expressed in whole numbers.
Large doses without properly placed commas (e.g., 100000 units; 1000000 units)	100,000 units; 1,000,000 units	100000 has been mistaken as 10,000 or 1,000,000; 1000000 has been mistaken as 100,000.	Use commas for dosing units at or above 1,000 or use words such as 100 "thousand" or 1 "million" to improve readability.
mg. or mL. with a period following the abbreviation.	mg, mL	The period is unnecessary and could be mistaken as the number 1 if written poorly	Use mg, mL, etc., WITHOUT a terminal period.
Name letters and dose numbers run together (e.g., Inderal40 mg)	Inderal 40 mg	Misread as Inderal 140 mg	Always use a space between drug name, dose, and unit of measure.
No zero before decimal dose (.5 mg)	0.5 mg	5 mg	Always use zero before a decimal when the dose is less than a whole unit.
Numerical dose and unit of measure run together (e.g., 10mg, 100mL)	10 mg; 100 mL	The "m" is sometimes mistaken as a zero or 2 zeros, risking a 10- to 100-fold overdose.	Place adequate space between the dose and unit of measure.

DRUG NAME ABBREVIATIONS:

Drug Name	Intended Meaning	Misinterpretation	PLEASE USE:
ARA A	vidarabine	cytarabine (ARA C)	Use complete drug name
AZT	zidovudine (Retrovir)	azathioprine or aztreonam	Use complete drug name
CPZ	Compazine (prochlorperazine)	chlorpromazine	Use complete drug name
DPT	Demerol-Phenergan- Thorazine	diphtheria-pertussis-tetanus (vaccine)	Use complete drug name
DTO	diluted tincture or opium, or deodorized tincture of opium	tincture of opium	Use complete drug name
HCl	hydrochloric acid or hydrochloride	potassium chloride ("h" misinterpreted as "k")	Use complete drug name
HCT	hydrocortisone	hydrochlorothiazide	Use complete drug name
HCTZ	hydrochlorothiazide	hydrocortisone (seen as HCT250 mg)	Use complete drug name
MgS04	magnesium sulfate	morphine sulfate	Use complete drug name
MS, MS04	morphine sulfate	magnesium sulfate	Use complete drug name
MTX	methotrexate	mitoxantrone	Use complete drug name
PCA	procainamide	patient controlled analgesia	Use complete drug name
PTU	propylthiouracil	mercaptapurine	Use complete drug name
T3	Tylenol with codeine No. 3	liothyronine	Use complete drug name
TAC	triamcinolone	tetracaine, Adrenalin, cocaine	Use complete drug name
TNK	TNKase	TPA	Use complete drug name
ZnS04	zinc sulfate	morphine sulfate	Use complete drug name

STEMMED DRUG NAMES:

Stemmed Drug Names	Intended Meaning	Misinterpretation	PLEASE USE:
IV Vanc	intravenous vancomycin	Invanz	Use complete drug name.
Nitro drip	nitroglycerin infusion	sodium nitroprusside infusion	Use complete drug name.
Norflox	norfloxacin	Norfex	Use complete drug name.