



## Medical Abbreviations Cheat Sheet

Abr	Stands For	More Information
A&D	Admission and Discharge	
AAA	Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm	An enlarged area in the lower part of the major vessel that supplies blood to the body (aorta)
ABD	Abdomen	
ABG	Arterial Blood Gases	Test that measures the oxygen and carbon dioxide levels in blood as well as the blood's pH balance
AC	Before Meals	
ACE	Angiotensin Converting Enzyme	ACE inhibitors are medications that help relax the veins and arteries to lower blood pressure
ACL	Anterior Cruciate Ligament	One of the key ligaments that help stabilize the knee joint
ACLS	Advanced Cardiac Life Support	Builds upon the foundation of lifesaving BLS (basic life saving) skills
AD	Admitting Diagnosis	The condition identified by the physician at the time of the patient's admission requiring hospitalization
ADHD	Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder	Marked by an ongoing pattern of inattention and/or hyperactivity-impulsivity
ADL	Activities of Daily Living	Term used to collectively describe fundamental skills required to independently care for oneself
Adm.	Admission	
AFIB	Atrial fibrillation	Irregular and often very rapid heart rhythm (arrhythmia) that can lead to blood clots in the heart



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AIDS	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome	Chronic, potentially life-threatening condition caused by HIV (human immunodeficiency virus)
AKA	Above Knee Amputation	
ALL	Acute Lymphocytic Leukemia	Type of cancer of the blood and bone marrow
ALP	Alkaline Phosphatase	Protein found in all body tissues whose testing can indicate signs of a liver problem or bone disorder
ALS	Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis	Progressive neurodegenerative disease that affects nerve cells in the brain and spinal cord
ALT	Alanine Aminotransferase	An enzyme found mostly in the liver whose testing can indicate signs of a liver problem
Amb	Ambulation	
AMD	Age-Related Macular Degeneration	Eye disease that can blur the central vision due to aging
AMI	Acute Myocardial Infarction	Heart attack
AODM	Adult Onset Diabetes Mellitus	Type 2 diabetes
AP	Appendectomy	Surgical removal of the appendix
AST	Aspartate Aminotransferase	An enzyme found mostly in the liver whose testing can indicate signs of a liver problem
AV	Atrioventricular	Connection between the upper chambers (atria) and the lower chambers (ventricles) in the heart



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AVM	Arteriovenous Malformation	Abnormal tangle of blood vessels connecting arteries and veins which disrupts normal blood flow and oxygen circulation
BID	Twice a day	Your doctor may write this on your prescription.
BKA	Below Knee Amputation	
BLS	Basic Life Support	Type of care that first responders, healthcare providers, and public safety professionals provide to someone who is experiencing cardiac arrest or respiratory distress
BM	Bowel Movement	
BP	Blood Pressure	The force of blood pushing against the walls of the arteries
BPH	Benign Prostatic Hypertrophy	Enlargement of the prostate gland
BRCA	Breast Cancer Gene	Two genes important to fighting cancer as they act as tumor suppression genes when functioning properly
BUN	Blood Urea Nitrogen	Measures the amount of urea nitrogen in the blood to indicate the level of kidney function
BX	Biopsy	Removal of cells or tissues for examination by a pathologist
C/O	Complaining Of	
C&S	Culture and Sensitivity	A culture tests to find germs (such as bacteria or fungus) that can cause an infection while a sensitivity test determines what medications to use for treatment
CA	Cancer OR Calcium	



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CA-125	Cancer Antigen 125	Tumor marker recommended for clinical use in the diagnosis and management of ovarian cancer
CABG	Coronary Artery Bypass Graft	A procedure used to treat coronary artery disease by diverting blood around narrowed or clogged portions of an artery
CAD	Coronary Artery Disease	A heart disease caused by plaque buildup in the wall of the arteries that supply blood to the heart (coronary arteries)
CAT	Computerized Axial Tomography	(Also Known As CT Scan) A procedure used to create 3-D views of tissues and organs
CBC	Complete Blood Count	A blood test that measures many properties of the cells in blood
CCU	Coronary Care Unit / Cardiac Care Unit	
CF	Cystic Fibrosis	An inherited disorder that damages the lungs, digestive tract, and other organs as it affects the cells that produce mucus, sweat, and digestive juices
CHD	Congenital Heart Disease	One or more problems with the heart's structure that exist since birth
CHF	Congestive Heart Failure	The heart cannot pump enough blood and oxygen to support other organs in the body
CKD	Chronic Kidney Disease	A condition in which the kidneys are damaged and cannot filter blood as well as they should causing an excess of fluid and waste to remain in the body
CMV	Cytomegalovirus	Common virus that infects people of all ages
CNS	Central Nervous System	The brain and spinal cord
COPD	Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease	Group of diseases that cause airflow blockage and breathing-related problems



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CPK	Creatine Phosphokinase	An enzyme found in the body whose testing can indicate if a heart attack occurred
CPR	Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation	An emergency lifesaving procedure performed when the heart stops beating
CRF	Chronic Renal Failure	Irreversible deterioration of renal function that gradually progressed to end-stage renal disease
CRP	C-Reactive Protein	A protein made by the liver whose testing can indicate inflammation or heart problems.
CSF	Cerebrospinal Fluid	A fluid that surrounds the brain and spinal cord
CVA	Cerebrovascular Accident	A stroke or "brain attack"
CVC	Central Venous Catheter	A thin, flexible tube that is inserted into a vein, usually below the right collarbone, to give fluids, blood, or medications or to do medical tests quickly
CXR	Chest X-Ray	Imaging test that uses X-Rays to look at the structures and organs in the chest
D/C	Discontinue / Discharge	
D&C	Dilatation and curettage	A procedure to remove tissue from inside the uterus
DI	Diabetes Insipidus	Rare condition in which the body produces too much urine and is unable to properly retain water
DIC	Disseminated Intravascular Coagulation	Rare but serious condition that causes abnormal blood clotting throughout the body's blood vessels
DJD	Degenerative Joint Disease	(Also Known As Osteoarthritis) A common "wear and tear" disease that occurs when the cartilage and discs which cushion the vertebrae begin to stiffen and shrink



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DKA	Diabetic Ketoacidosis	Serious complication of diabetes that can be life-threatening due to an overload of ketones present in the blood
DM	Diabetes Mellitus	Group of diseases that affect how the body uses blood sugar (glucose)
DTP	Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis	A vaccine for three diseases
DVT	Deep-Vein Thrombosis	A blood clot that has formed in a deep vein
DX	Diagnosis	
ECG / EKG	Electrocardiogram	A test that measures electrical impulses of the heart
ECHO	Echocardiogram	A test that uses sound waves to look at the heart
ED	Emergency Department	
EEG	Electroencephalogram	A test that measures electrical impulses of the brain
EMG	Electromyography	A test that measures electrical impulses of muscles
ENT	Ear, nose and throat	
ERCP	Endoscopic Retrograde Cholangiopancreatography	A diagnostic tool for problems in the liver, gallbladder, bile ducts and pancreas
ESR	Erythrocyte Sedimentation Rate	Test that measures how quickly red blood cells settle to the bottom of a test tube to indicate the presence of inflammation



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ESRD	End-Stage Renal (kidney) Disease	Permanent kidney failure that requires a regular course of dialysis or a kidney transplant
ETT	Endotracheal Tube	A medical procedure in which a tube is placed in the windpipe (trachea) through the mouth or nose in order to give oxygen, medicine, or anesthesia
FBS	Fasting Blood Sugar	A measurement of the blood sugar after an overnight fast (not eating)
FSH	Follicle-Stimulating Hormone	A hormone that helps manage the menstrual cycle and stimulates the ovaries to produce eggs
Fx	Fracture	
GERD	Gastroesophageal Reflux Disease	Heart Burn
GFR	Glomerular Filtration Rate	A blood test that shows how well the kidneys are filtering and working properly
GI	Gastrointestinal	Digestive System
GTT	Glucose Tolerance Test	A lab test that checks how the body moves sugar from the blood into the tissues like muscle and fat for the diagnosis of diabetes
GU	Genitourinary	The urinary and sex organs
HAV	Hepatitis A Virus	Inflammation of the liver caused by the hepatitis A virus
HBV	Hepatitis B virus	Inflammation of the liver caused by the hepatitis B virus
HCT	Hematocrit	A blood test that measures the percentage of red blood cells present



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HCV	Hepatitis C virus	Inflammation of the liver caused by the hepatitis C virus
HDL	High Density Lipoprotein	"Good" cholesterol that absorbs cholesterol in the blood and carries it back to the liver
Hgb	Hemoglobin	Protein in the red blood cells that carries oxygen to the body's organs and tissues and transports carbon dioxide from the organs and tissues back to the lungs
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus	A virus that attacks the body's immune system
HOB	Head of Bed	
HPV	Human Papilloma Virus	A virus that can cause cervical, anal, oral, and other cancers
HRT	Hormone Replacement Therapy	Hormones supplements that replace the estrogen that the body stops making during menopause
HS	Bedtime	
HTN	Hypertension	High blood pressure
Hx	History	
I&O	Intake and Output	
IBD	Inflammatory Bowel Disease	A term for two conditions (Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis) that are characterized by chronic inflammation of the GI tract
IBS	Irritable Bowel Syndrome	Common, long term condition of the digestive system





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ICD	Implantable Cardioverter Defibrillator	A small battery-powered device placed in the chest to detect and stop irregular heart beats
ICU	Intensive Care Unit	
IDDM	Insulin-Dependent Diabetes Mellitus	Type 1 diabetes
ILS	Independent Living Skills	Term used to collectively describe fundamental skills required to independently care for oneself
IM	Intramuscular	Taking place within, or administered into, a muscle
IUD	Intrauterine Device	A tiny device placed into the uterus to prevent pregnancy
IV	Intravenous	Taking place within, or administered into, a vein
IVP	Intravenous Pyelogram	X-Ray exam that uses an injection of contrast material to evaluate the kidneys, ureters, and bladder
LDL	Low Density Lipoprotein	"Bad" cholesterol due to its contribution to fatty buildups in arteries (atherosclerosis)
LES	Lower Esophageal Sphincter	A ring of muscle that forms a valve at the lower end of the esophagus where it joins the stomach
LFT	Liver Function Tests	Blood tests that measure the different enzymes, proteins, and other substances made by the liver to check its overall health
LMP	Last Menstrual Period	
LOC	Level of Consciousness	A term used to describe a person's awareness and understanding of what is happening in their surroundings



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LP	Lumbar Puncture	(Also Known As Spinal Tap) A needle is inserted into the space between two lumbar bones (vertebrae) to remove a sample of cerebrospinal fluid for diagnostic purposes
MAP	Mean Arterial Pressure	The average pressure in a patient's arteries during one cardiac cycle - it is considered a better indicator of perfusion to vital organs than systolic blood pressure
MI	Myocardial Infarction	Heart attack
MMR	Measles, Mumps, and Rubella	A vaccine for three diseases
MRI	Magnetic Resonance Imaging	A noninvasive imaging technology that produces 3-D detailed anatomical images
MRSA	Methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus Aureus	A cause of staph infection that is difficult to treat because of its resistance to some antibiotics
MS	Multiple Sclerosis	A chronic disease that affects the central nervous system, including the brain, spinal cord, and optic nerves
MVA	Motor Vehicle Accident	
NG	Nasogastric	Reaching or supplying the stomach via the nose
NGT	Nasogastric Tube	A type of medical catheter that is inserted through the nose into the stomach
NIDDM	Non-Insulin-Dependent Diabetes Mellitus	Type 2 diabetes
NKA	No Known Allergies	
NKDA	No known Drug Allergies	



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NPO	Nothing By Mouth	
NSAID	Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drug	Medications widely used to relieve pain, reduce inflammation, and bring down a high temperature
OA	Osteoarthritis	(Also Known As Degenerative Joint Disease) A common "wear and tear" disease that occurs when the cartilage and discs which cushion the vertebrae begin to stiffen and shrink
OB	Obstetrics	The branch of medicine and surgery concerned with childbirth and the care of women giving birth
OCD	Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder	A chronic and long-lasting disorder that features a pattern of unwanted thoughts and fears (obsessions) that lead to repetitive behaviors (compulsions)
OOB	Out Of Bed	
OR	Operating Room	
Ortho	Orthopedics	Branch of medicine that focuses on the care of the musculoskeletal system
OT	Occupational Therapist / Therapy	Branch of healthcare that treats patients who have injuries, illnesses, or disabilities through the therapeutic use of everyday activities
PAD	Peripheral Arterial Disease	The narrowing or blockage of the vessels that carry blood from the heart to the legs
PAP	Papanicolaou	A procedure in which a small brush is used to gently remove cells from the surface of the cervix and surrounding area for diagnosis of cervical cancer
PAT	Paroxysmal Atrial Tachycardia	Occurs when electrical signals starting in the heart's atria fire irregularly causing excessive heart rate
Pc	After Meals	



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PET	Positron Emission Tomography	A procedure in which a small amount of radioactive glucose (sugar) is injected into a vein, and a scanner is used to make detailed, computerized pictures of areas inside the body
PFT	Pulmonary Function Test	Noninvasive tests that determine how well the lungs are working by measuring lung volume, capacity, rates of flow, and gas exchange
PID	Pelvic Inflammatory Disease	An infection of a female's reproductive organs
PLT	Platelets	(Also Known As Thrombocytes) A small cell fragment found in large numbers in the blood and involved in clotting
PMS	Premenstrual Syndrome	A group of symptoms that may occur before a menstrual cycle
PPD	Purified Protein Derivative	Skin test that used to diagnose silent (latent) tuberculosis (TB) infection
PRBC	Packed Red Blood Cells	Prepared by removing plasma from whole blood and is typically used to transfuse anemia patients who require infusion of red blood cells (RBC) to restore tissue oxygenation
Pre Op	Before Surgery	
PRN	As Needed	
PSA	Prostate Specific Antigen	A protein produced by the prostate gland whose testing can indicate prostate cancer
PT	Prothrombin Time	A test that measures the time it takes for a clot to form in a blood sample
PT	Physical Therapist / Physical Therapy	Healthcare field that focuses on the evaluation and treatment of abnormal physical function related to injury, disability, or other health conditions
PTCA	Percutaneous Transluminal Coronary Angioplasty	A minimally invasive procedure that opens blocked coronary arteries



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PTH	Parathyroid Hormone	Hormone released by the parathyroid glands to control calcium in the blood
PTSD	Post-Traumatic Stress Syndrome	A mental health condition that is triggered by a terrifying event - either experiencing it or witnessing it
PTT	Partial Thromboplastin Time	A blood test used to evaluate the blood's ability to clot by measuring the time to do so in seconds
PUD	Peptic Ulcer Disease	Open sores that develop on the inside lining of the stomach and the upper portion of the small intestine
PVC	Premature Ventricular Contraction	Extra heartbeats that begin in one of the heart's two lower pumping chambers (ventricles) causing a disruption in the regular heart rhythm
QID	Four times a day	
RA	Rheumatoid Arthritis	Chronic, long-lasting autoimmune disease where the immune system attacks healthy cells in the joints by mistake causing joint inflammation and pain
RBC	Red Blood Cell	(Also Known As Erythrocytes) Cells created in the bone marrow to deliver oxygen to the tissues in the body
ROM	Range of Motion	How far and in what direction a joint or muscle can be moved
RSV	Respiratory Syncytial Virus	A common respiratory virus that usually caused mild, cold-like symptoms
RT	Respiratory Therapist / Therapy	A specialized healthcare field that focuses on treating problems with people's lungs and ability to breathe
Rx	Prescription	
SAD	Seasonal Affective Disorder	A type of depression that is related to the changes in season



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SBAR	Situation, Background, Assessment, Recommendation	A technique that provides a framework for communication between members of the healthcare team
SIADH	Syndrome of Inappropriate Antidiuretic Hormone Secretion	A condition in which the body makes too much antidiuretic hormone (ADH) causing the body to retain too much water
SIDS	Sudden Infant Death Syndrome	The unexplained death, usually during sleep, of a seemingly healthy baby less than a year old
SLE	Systemic Lupus Erythematosus	Autoimmune disease in which the immune system attacks its own tissues, causing widespread inflammation and tissue damage in the affected organs
SOB	Shortness of Breath	(Also Known As Dyspnea) Intense tightening in the chest, air hunger, difficulty breathing, breathlessness, or a feeling of suffocation
SSE	Soap Suds Enema	A combination of distilled water and a small amount of soap to irritate the bowels and stimulate a bowel movement
Stat	At Once / Immediately	
STD	Sexually Transmitted Disease	Infections transmitted during vaginal, anal, and oral sex
STI	Sexually Transmitted Infection	Infections transmitted during vaginal, anal, and oral sex
T&S	Type and Screen	The primary pre-transfusion tests performed
T3	Triiodothyronine	A thyroid hormone that plays an important role in the body's control of the metabolism and whose testing can indicate thyroid disorders
T4	Thyroxine	A thyroid hormone that plays an important role in the body's control of the metabolism and whose testing can indicate thyroid disorders
TAH	Total Abdominal Hysterectomy	A surgical procedure that removes the uterus through an incision in the lower abdomen



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TB	Tuberculosis	A potentially serious infectious disease that mainly affects the lungs
TIA	Transient Ischemic Attack	A stroke that lasts only a few minutes as the blood supply to that part of the brain is briefly interrupted
TIBC	Total Iron Binding Capacity	A test that measures the blood's ability to attach itself to iron and transport it around the body
TID	Three times a day	
TMJ	Temporomandibular Joint	A joint that acts like a sliding hinge by connecting the jawbone to the skull
TPN	Total Parenteral Nutrition	Method of feeding that bypasses the GI tract by an IV and supplies all daily nutritional requirements
TSH	Thyroid Stimulating Hormone	(Also Known As Thyrotropin) A hormone that signals the thyroid gland to produce hormones that control metabolism and whose testing can indicate thyroid disorder
TURP	Transurethral Resection of Prostate Gland	A surgical procedure that involves cutting away a section of the prostate to treat urinary problems that are caused by an enlarged prostate
UA	Urinalysis	A test for urine to detect and manage urinary tract infections (UTI), kidney disease, and diabetes
URI	Upper Respiratory Infection	The Common Cold
US	Ultrasound	An imaging method that uses sound waves to produce images of structures within the body
UTI	Urinary Tract Infection	Infection of any part of the urinary system - kidneys, ureters, bladder, and urethra
VS	Vital Signs	Measures the body's basic functions - temperature, heart rate, blood pressure, respiratory rate, and oxygen levels

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WBC	White Blood Cell	(Also Known As Leukocytes) Cells that are a part of the immune system and protect the body from infection
WNL	Within Normal Limits	