

Prescription Abbreviations

Time & Frequency

Abbreviation	Meaning	Sig Example
q	Every	Take 1 tablet q6h (every 6 hours)
qAM	Every morning	Take 1 tablet qAM
qPM	Every evening	Take 1 tablet qPM
qhs	Every night at bedtime	Take 1 capsule qhs
qam	Every morning	Take 1 tab qam with food
qod	Every other day	Take 1 tablet qod
qd or q.d.	Once daily	Take 1 tab qd
bid or b.i.d.	Twice daily	Take 1 tab bid
tid or t.i.d.	Three times daily	Take 1 capsule tid
qid or q.i.d.	Four times daily	Apply ointment qid
q4h	Every 4 hours	Take 2 tablets q4h
q6h	Every 6 hours	Take 1 capsule q6h
q8h	Every 8 hours	Take 1 tab q8h
q12h	Every 12 hours	Take 1 tab q12h
stat	Immediately	Take 1 tablet stat for chest pain
prn	As needed	Take 1 tab prn for pain
q__h prn	Every __ hours as needed	Take 1 tab q6h prn for headache
ac	Before meals	Take 1 capsule ac
pc	After meals	Take 1 capsule pc
hs	At bedtime	Take 1 tablet hs
ud	As directed	Use 1 puff ud
qwk	Every week	Take 1 tablet qwk
biw	Twice a week	Take 1 capsule biw
tiw	Three times a week	Take 1 tablet tiw
qh	Every hour	Instill 1 drop qh in left eye
sig	Directions	–

Route of Administration

Abbreviation	Meaning	Sig Example
i.d.	Intradermal	Inject 0.1 mL i.d. once for TB test
IM	Intramuscular	Inject 1 mL IM every 12 hours
IV	Intravenous	Administer 500 mL IV over 1 hour
PO	By mouth (oral)	Take 1 tablet PO twice daily
SC or SQ or SubQ	Subcutaneous	Inject 10 units SC before meals
Inj	Injection	Inj 1 mL SC daily

Ear-Related

Abbreviation	Meaning	Sig Example
gtt	Drop	Instill 1 gtt in affected ear tid
gtts	Drops	Instill 3 gtts in affected ear bid
Otic	For the ear	Apply otic drops as directed
AD	Right ear (auris dextra)	Instill 3 drops in AD twice daily
AS	Left ear (auris sinistra)	Instill 2 drops in AS at bedtime
AU	Both ears (auris utraque)	Instill 4 drops in AU every 8 hours

Eye (Ophthalmic)

Abbreviation	Meaning	Sig Example
gtt	Drop(s)	Instill 1 gtt in affected eye q8 hours
OD	Right eye (oculus dexter)	Instill 1 drop OD twice daily
OS	Left eye (oculus sinister)	Instill 1 drop OS at bedtime
OU	Both eyes (oculi uterque)	Instill 2 drops OU every 4 hours

Dosage Form

Abbreviation	Meaning	Sig Example
cap	Capsule	Take 1 cap PO daily
tab	Tablet	Take 1 tab PO twice daily
gtt	Drop(s)	Instill 2 gtt in each eye twice daily
supp	Suppository	Insert 1 supp rectally at bedtime
sol	Solution	Take 10 mL of sol PO every 8 hours
susp	Suspension	Shake well and take 1 tsp of susp PO twice daily
elix	Elixir	Take 2 tsp of elix PO every 6 hours
syr	Syrup	Take 5 mL of syr PO three times a day
ung	Ointment	Apply a thin layer of ung to affected area daily
crm	Cream	Apply crm to rash BID
lot	Lotion	Apply lot to skin twice a day
soln	Solution (topical/oral)	Rinse mouth with 10 mL of soln and spit
inhal	Inhaler	Inhale 2 puffs via inhal every 4 hours PRN
MDI	Metered Dose Inhaler	Use 1 puff via MDI every 6 hours
neb	Nebulizer solution	Neb 1 vial QID
troche	Lozenge	Dissolve 1 troche in mouth TID
patch	Transdermal Patch	Apply 1 patch to skin every 72 hours
pwd	Powder	Apply powder to feet daily
spr	Spray	Spr 2 sprays into each nostril once daily
film	Oral film (e.g., buccal)	Place 1 film on tongue once daily
inj	Injection	Inj 1 mL SC every morning
liq	Liquid	Take 10 mL of liq PO once daily
chew tab	Chewable Tablet	Chew 1 chew tab after meals
ODT	Orally Disintegrating Tab	Place 1 ODT on tongue and allow to dissolve

Dry Weight Units

Abbreviation	Unit	Equivalent	Sig Example
Mcg or µg	Microgram	1 mcg = 0.001mg	Give 400 mcg PO once daily
mg	Milligram	1 mg = 1,000mcg	Take 500 mg PO BID
g or gm	Gram	1 g = 1,000mg	Take 1 g PO daily
kg	Kilogram	1 kg = 1,000g	Dose: 10 mg/kg body weight
gr	Grain	1 grain ≈ 65 mg	Take 1 gr tablet TID (rare/old use)
oz (avoirdupois)	Ounce (weight)	1 oz = 28.35g	Apply 1 oz ointment to affected area
lb	Pound	1 lb = 16 oz = 453.6g	Pediatric dose based on 20 lb weight
dr or ʒ	Dram	1 dram ≈ 1/16 oz ≈ 1.77g	Mix 1 dr into 100 mL of water

Liquid Weight Units

Abbreviation	Meaning	Metric Equivalent	Sig Example
gtt(s)	Drop(s)	Varies (commonly ~0.05 mL) Or 20 drops pr ml	Instill 2 gtt in each eye QID
mL	Milliliter	1 mL = 1 cc	Take 5 mL PO every 6 hours
cc	Cubic centimeter	1 cc = 1 mL	Inject 1 cc IM once daily
tsp	Teaspoon	1 tsp = 5 mL	Take 1 tsp PO TID
tbsp	Tablespoon	1 tbsp = 15 mL	Take 1 tbsp PO BID
oz	Ounce	1 oz = 30 mL	Drink 1 oz PO at bedtime
fl oz	Fluid ounce	1 fl oz = 30 mL	Take 2 fl oz PO every 4 hours
pt	Pint	1 pt = 473 mL	Drink 1 pt water after prep
qt	Quart	1 qt = 946 mL	Take 1 qt prep night before procedure
gal	Gallon	1 gal = 3,785 mL	Take 1 gal of prep solution over 4 hours
L	Liter	1 L = 1,000 mL	Drink 1 L of oral rehydration solution daily