

Basic Medical Terminology

A & P—anatomy and physiology
abd—abdominal
a.c.—before meals
AD—right ear
ADL—activities of daily living
adm—admission
afeb—afebrile, no fever
AKA—above the knee
alt dieb—alternate days (every other day)
am—morning
AMA—against medical advice
amb—ambulate, walk
AMI—acute myocardial infarction
amt—amount
AOx3—alert and oriented to person, time, and place
approx—approximately
ARDS—acute respiratory distress syndrome
AS—left ear
asap (ASAP)—as soon as possible
as tol—as tolerated
ATD—admission, transfer, discharge
AU—both ears
bid—twice a day
bil, bilateral—both sides
BK—below knee
BKA—below the knee amputation
bl—blood
bl wk—blood work
BLS—basic life support
BM—bowel movement
B/P—blood pressure
bpm—beats per minute
BR—bed rest
BS—breath sounds
c—with
C—Celsius degree
c-spine—cervical spine
CA—cancer
CAD—coronary artery disease
cal—calorie
cath—catheter
CC—chief complaint
CCU—coronary care unit, critical care unit
CHD—coronary heart disease
CHF—congestive heart failure
CHO—carbohydrate
chol—cholesterol
cl liq—clear liquid

c/o—complains of
COPD—chronic obstructive pulmonary disease
CPK—creatine phosphokinase
CPR—cardiopulmonary resuscitation
CPT—chest physical therapy
CVA—cerebrovascular accident (stroke)
d/c—discontinue
DAT—diet as tolerated
DC—discontinue or discharge
diff—differential
DNR—do not resuscitate
DOB—date of birth
Dx—diagnosis
ED—emergency department
EENT—eyes, ears, nose, throat
est—estimated
ER—emergency room
ETA—estimated time of arrival
exam—examination
F- Fahrenheit degree
FBS—fasting blood sugar
FBW—fasting blood work
FF (F, FI)—force fluids
FH—family history
ft—foot
f/u - follow-up
FUO—fever of undetermined origin
Fx—fracture
FWB - full weight-bearing
GB—gallbladder
GI—gastrointestinal
gtt(s)—drop(s)
H₂O- water
HDL—high-density lipoprotein
hr (h)—hour
HIV—human immunodeficiency virus
H&P—history and physical
HR—heart rate
hs—hour of sleep, bedtime
ht—height
Hx—history
IBS—irritable bowel syndrome
I & O—intake and output
ICU—intensive care unit
Inc - incontinent
inj—injection
isol—isolation
K+—potassium
KCl—potassium chloride
KUB—kidney, ureter, bladder
L—lumbar
lac—laceration
lab—laboratory
LDL—low-density lipoprotein

liq—liquid
LOC—level of consciousness
lt—left
meds—medications
MI—myocardial infarction
min—minute
MN—midnight
MS—morphine sulfate, multiple sclerosis
NVD—nausea, vomiting, diarrhea
no—complaints
neg—negative
NKA—no known allergies
noc (t)—night
NPO—nothing by mouth
NWB—non-weight-bearing
O2—oxygen
oint—ointment
OOB—out of bed
ORTH—orthopedics
ortho—correct, right (bones)
os—mouth
OS—left eye
OT—occupational therapy
OU—both eyes
oz—ounce
p—after
P—pulse
pc—after meals
PE—physical exam, pulmonary embolism
per—by or through
PH—past history
pm—between noon and midnight
po—by mouth
postop, PostOp—postoperative
pp (p.p.)—postprandial (after eating)
preop, PreOp—before surgery
prn—as needed, whenever necessary
pt—patient, pint
PT—physical therapy
PWB—partial weight-bearing
Px—physical exam, prognosis
q—every
qd—every day
qh—every hour
q2h, q3h, ...—every two hours, every three hours, ...
qhs—every night at bedtime
qid—four times a day
qns—quantity not sufficient
qod—every other day
qs—quantity sufficient
r (R)—rectal
R (resp)—respirations, rectal
reg—regular
RO—reality orientation

ROM—range of motion
rt—right
Rx—take (prescription)
s—without
S & S—signs and symptoms
ss—1/2
SB—small bowel
sc—subcutaneous
SL—sublingual
SOB—shortness of breath
SQ, sub q—subcutaneous
stat—immediately
SVN—small volume nebulizer
Sx—symptoms
T—temperature, thoracic
tab—tablet
TCDB—turn, cough, deep breath
temp (T)—temperature
tid—three times a day
TMJ—temporomandibular joint
tol—tolerated
TPR—temperature, pulse, respirations
trach—tracheotomy, tracheostomy
UA—urinalysis
unc.—unconscious
ung—ointment
unk—unknown
ur—urine
URC—usual, reasonable, customary
URI—upper respiratory infection
US—ultrasonic
UTI—urinary tract infection
V fib—ventricular fibrillation
V tach—ventricular tachycardia
vag—vaginal
VC—vital capacity
vit—vitamin
vo—verbal order
vol—volume
V/S—vital signs
WA—while awake
WBC—white blood cell/count
w/c—wheelchair
WNL—within normal limits
wt—weight
y/o—year(s) old