

INTRODUCTION TO  
**HEALTH  
SCIENCE  
TECHNOLOGY**

Second Edition



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## Unit 5

# Medical Terminology/Abbreviations

# 5:1 Using Medical Abbreviations

- Shortened forms for convenience
- Usually just letters
- Health care workers are expected to recognize most common abbreviations
- Agencies have their approved lists of abbreviations
  - if not on list, do not use

## 5:2 Interpreting Word Parts

- Impossible to memorize all the medical words individually, so determine meaning of words by breaking it into parts
- These word parts are used over and over in different combinations
- If the word parts are known, then the word can be broken down and interpreted

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# Interpreting Word Parts

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- Prefix:
  - syllable or word placed at the beginning of a word; usually serves to further define the word root
- Suffix:
  - syllable or word placed at the end of the word; usually describes what is happening to the word root
- Word Roots:
  - main words or parts to which prefixes and suffixes can be added

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# Interpreting Word Parts

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- Prefixes and suffixes have set meanings
- When prefixes, suffixes, and/or word roots are joined together, vowels are frequently added
- Common vowels used: a, e, i, ia, io, o, u
- Vowels are not used if the word root or suffix begins with a vowel
  - (NO double O's)

# Interpret this:

- Enterogastritis
  - Enter/o/gastr/it is
    - Enter-intestines
    - Gastr-stomach
    - It is-inflammation of

# Interpret this:

- Enterogastritis
  - Inflammation of the intestines and the stomach

# Abbreviations

- Dosages:
  - Tsp-teaspoon
  - TB-tablespoon
  - mL-milliliters—also noted as cc's
  - Mg-milligrams
  - Tab-tablet
  - Gtts-drops
  - mEq-milliequivalents



# Abbreviations

- Directions
  - BID-twice a day
  - TID-three times a day
  - Q-every
  - Q8h-every 8 hours
  - PO-by mouth
  - PRN-as needed
  - ROM-range of motion
  - ADL-activities of daily living

# Abbreviations

- Diagnosis/disorders
  - MI-Myocardial infarction-heart attack
  - IDDM-Insulin dependent Diabetes mellitus
  - HIV-Human immunodeficiency virus
  - AIDS-Acquired immunodeficiency syndrome
  - TIA-Transischemic attack-"mini stroke"
  - CVA-Cerebrovascular accident-stroke
  - CHF-congestive heart failure
  - COPD-chronic obstructive pulmonary disease
  - MS-multiple sclerosis

# Abbreviations

- Interventions
  - Ht-height
  - Wt-weight
  - TPR-temperature, pulse, respirations
  - NPO-nothing by mouth
  - I & O-intake and output
  - Stat-immediately
  - ECG-electrocardiogram—also seen as EKG
  - CBR-complete bedrest
  - FBS-fasting blood sugar
  - Cath-catheter or catheterize
  - D/c-discontinue

# Abbreviations

- Healthcare workers
  - MD-medical doctor
  - RN-registered nurse
  - LPN-licensed practical nurse
  - PT-physical therapist
  - OT-occupational therapist

# Abbreviations

- Misc
  - CDC-Center for Disease Control
  - FDA-Federal Drug Administration
  - NIH-National Institute of Health
  - Dx-diagnosis
  - HMO-health maintenance organization
  - PPO-preferred provider organization

# Abbreviations not to use

- Qd, qod, qid—can be too easily interchanged
- Cc—may be read as used units—use mL instead
- Lack of a leading zero (.5mg)—may miss decimal point
- Trailing zero (2.0 mg)—may be read without the zero
- Sc or SC or SQ—may be interpreted as SL—sublingual instead of subcutaneous
- AD, AS, AU, OD, OS and OU—write out right ear, left ear, both ears, right eye, left eye and both eyes
- @—may be read as a 2 instead of at
- < or > may be misinterpreted as a 7

# Summary

- Healthcare workers have a unique set of abbreviations and words to communicate medical information
- By learning basic word parts, health care workers may be able to interpret the meaning of a word even if they have never seen it before

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# Summary

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- It is also important to learn correct spellings for word parts so medical terms will be interpreted properly by others