

Acronyms & Abbreviations

Patient medical records include a lot of information. One part of the record are the notes. Medical notes are written by providers to manage your care and communicate with other providers. These notes are not written using everyday language. Below are a list of acronyms and abbreviations often used. For additional help with unfamiliar medical terms, visit medlineplus.gov.

Abbreviation	Stands for	More information
ABG	Arterial blood gases	A test that can be used to detect lung diseases.
ACE	Angiotensin converting enzyme	Drugs called ACE inhibitors are used to treat high blood pressure, heart failure, diabetes and kidney diseases.
ACL	Anterior cruciate ligament	Commonly injured part of the knee.
ADHD	Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder	A behavior disorder.
AFIB	Atrial fibrillation	A disturbance of the rhythm of the heart.
AIDS	Acquired immunodeficiency syndrome	Infection caused by human immunodeficiency virus.
ALP	Alkaline phosphatase	A blood test that checks for liver or bone damage.
ALS	Amyotrophic lateral sclerosis	Also known as Lou Gehrig's Disease; a progressive neurodegenerative disease that affects nerve cells in the brain and spinal cord.
ALT	Alanine aminotransferase	A blood test that checks for liver damage.
AMD	Age-related macular degeneration	An eye problem.
AMI	Acute myocardial infarction	Heart attack.
AODM	Adult onset diabetes mellitus	Type 2 diabetes.

Acronymns & Abbreviations, cont.

Abbreviation	Stands for	More information
AST	Aspartate aminotransferase	A blood test that checks for liver disease.
AVM	Arteriovenous malformation	A defect in the circulatory system.
BID	Twice a day	Often used when writing prescriptions or indicating how often the medicine is needed.
BMI	Body mass index	A measure of how weight based on height.
BP	Blood pressure	The force of your blood pushing against the walls of your arteries.
BPH	Benign prostatic hypertrophy	Enlargement of the prostate gland.
BRCA	Breast Cancer Gene	People with the gene may be at increased risk for breast or ovarian cancer.
BUN	Blood urea nitrogen	A blood test to look for kidney problems.
CA	Cancer OR Calcium	
CA-125	Cancer antigen 125	A blood test to measure cancer activity.
CABG	Coronary artery bypass graft	A type of heart surgery.
CAD	Coronary artery disease	A common type of heart disease.
CAT	Computerized axial tomography	A type of x-ray.
CBC	Complete blood count	A blood test that measures many properties of blood cells.
CHD	Congenital heart disease or defect	Problems with the heart that were present at birth.
CHF	Congestive heart failure	A condition that affects the pumping action of heart muscles.
CMV	Cytomegalovirus	A common virus.
CNS	Central nervous system	The brain and spinal cord.
COPD	Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease	A lung disease that makes it hard to breathe.
CPK	Creatine phosphokinase	A blood test that checks for injury or stress with heart, brain or muscle tissue.

Acronymns & Abbreviations, cont.

Abbreviation	Stands for	More information
CPR	Cardiopulmonary resuscitation	An emergency procedure used when heart beating or breathing stops.
CRF	Chronic renal failure	Failure of the kidneys
CRP	C-reactive protein	A blood test to check for inflammation or heart problems.
CSF	Cerebrospinal fluid	A fluid that surrounds the brain and spinal cord
CVA	Cerebrovascular accident	A stroke or "brain attack"
CXR	Chest x-ray	A diagnostic test that uses radiation to make images of the lungs.
D&C	Dilatation and curettage	A surgical procedure on the uterus.
DJD	Degenerative joint disease	Another name for arthritis.
DM	Diabetes mellitus	A disease that affects how the body turns food into energy.
DTP	Diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis	A vaccine for three diseases.
DVT	Deep-vein thrombosis	A blood clot.
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.
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 way to diagnose problems in the liver, gallbladder, bile ducts and pancreas.
ESR	Erythrocyte sedimentation rate	A blood test that helps diagnose or monitor inflammation.
ESRD	End-stage renal (kidney) disease	When the kidneys no longer work as they should to meet the body's needs.

Acronymns & Abbreviations, cont.

Abbreviation	Stands for	More information
FSH	Follicle stimulating hormone	A hormone made in the pituitary gland.
GERD	Gastroesophageal reflux disease	When gastric acid from the stomach flows up into the food pipe or esophagus.
GI	Gastrointestinal	Another term for your digestive system.
GFR	Glomerular filtration rate	A blood test that looks at kidney function.
GU	Genitourinary	The urinary and genital organs.
HAV	Hepatitis A virus	A virus that causes one type of liver disease.
HBV	Hepatitis B virus	A virus that causes one type of liver disease.
HCT	Hematocrit	A blood test that looks at the percent of red blood cells.
HCV	Hepatitis C virus	A virus that causes one type of liver disease.
HDL	High density lipoprotein	A type of cholesterol, also known as "good" cholesterol.
HGB	Hemoglobin	A blood test measurement.
HIV	Human immunodeficiency virus	The virus that causes AIDS.
HPV	Human papilloma virus	A sexually transmitted infection.
HRT	Hormone replacement therapy	Medications containing hormones to replace ones not made by the body.
HTN	Hypertension	High blood pressure.
IBD	Inflammatory bowel disease	A name for long-lasting digestive disorders such as ulcerative colitis and Crohn's disease.
IBS	Irritable bowel syndrome	A disorder that affects the lower digestive tract.
ICD	Implantable cardioverter defibrillator	A device that detects abnormal heartbeats and can shock the rhythm back to normal.
ICU	Intensive care unit	Special hospital unit.
IDDM	Insulin-dependent diabetes mellitus	Type 1 diabetes.

Acronymns & Abbreviations, cont.

Abbreviation	Stands for	More information
IM	Intramuscular	A type of injection placed into a muscle.
IUD	Intrauterine device	A birth control device placed into the uterus.
IV	Intravenous	A type of injection placed into a vein.
IVP	Intravenous pyelogram	An x-ray test of the urinary system.
LDL	Low density lipoprotein	A type of cholesterol, also known as "bad" cholesterol.
LFT	Liver function tests	A group of blood tests that give information about the liver.
MI	Myocardial infarction	Heart attack.
MMR	Measles, mumps, and rubella	A vaccine for three diseases.
MRI	Magnetic resonance imaging	A type of imaging test.
MRSA	Methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus	A type of infection.
MS	Multiple sclerosis	A disease of the nervous system
NG	Nasogastric	A tube that goes from the nose to the stomach.
NIDDM	Non-insulin dependent diabetes mellitus	Type 2 diabetes.
NKDA	No known drug allergies	
NSAID	Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drug	A type of drug to help with pain and inflammation.
OCD	Obsessive-compulsive disorder	A common, chronic disorder where the person has uncontrollable reoccurring thoughts and behaviors.
PAD	Peripheral arterial disease	A disease where plaque builds up in arteries.
PAP	Papanicolau	A screening test to look for cervical problems.
PAT	Paroxysmal atrial tachycardia	A type of irregular heartbeat.
PET	Positron emission tomography	An imaging test that looks at how tissues and organs work.
PFT	Pulmonary function test	A test that measures how well the lungs work.

Acronymns & Abbreviations, cont.

Abbreviation	Stands for	More information
PID	Pelvic inflammatory disease	Infection and inflammation of the female reproductive organs.
PMS	Premenstrual syndrome	A group of symptoms that may happen before a woman's period.
PPD	Purified protein derivative	A skin test for tuberculosis.
PRN	As needed	Often used when writing prescriptions or indicating how often the medicine is needed.
PSA	Prostate specific antigen	A protein made by cells of the prostate gland.
PT	Prothrombin time	A measure of how long it takes blood to clot.
PTH	Parathyroid hormone	A hormone that regulates the calcium in blood.
PTSD	Post-traumatic stress disorder	An disorder caused by a traumatic event.
PTT	Partial thromboplastin time	A measure of how long it takes blood to clot.
PUD	Peptic ulcer disease	A type of sore in the stomach or top of the small intestine.
PVC	Premature ventricular contraction	Extra heartbeats that start in one of the heart's lower chambers.
QID	Four times a day	Often used when writing prescriptions or indicating how often the medicine is needed.
RA	Rheumatoid arthritis	A type of joint disease.
RBC	Red blood cell	A type of blood cell.
RSV	Respiratory syncytial virus	A virus that causes cold-like symptoms that can be serious for infants and older adults.
Rx	Prescription/Treatment	
SAD	Seasonal affective disorder	Depression related to change in seasons.
SIDS	Sudden infant death syndrome	Unexplained death of a child under one year of age.
SLE	Systemic lupus erythematosus	A disease simply known as lupus.
SOB	Shortness of Breath	

Acronymns & Abbreviations, cont.

Abbreviation	Stands for	More information
STD	Sexually transmitted disease	
T3	Triiodothyronine	A hormone made by the thyroid.
T4	Thyroxine	A hormone made by the thyroid.
TB	Tuberculosis	A disease that affect the lungs and other parts of the body.
TAH	Total abdominal hysterectomy	Removal of the uterus and cervix through the lower abdomen. The ovaries and fallopian tubes may also be removed.
TIA	Transient ischemic attack	A small stroke caused by a clot or blockage in the brain.
TIBC	Total iron binding capacity	A test that measures the amount of iron in your blood.
TID	Three times a day	Often used when writing prescriptions or indicating how often the medicine is needed.
TMJ	Temporomandibular joint	The joint that connects the jaw to the side of the head.
TORCH	Stands for a group of infections that may cause problems for babies	A newborn will have this test to check for infections. Sometimes the mother also needs the test.
TSH	Thyroid stimulating hormone	A hormone made by the brain that helps your thyroid work.
TURP	Transurethral resection of prostate gland	An operation to remove parts of the prostate gland
URI	Upper respiratory infection	Another name for the common cold.
UTI	Urinary tract infection	Infection of the bladder and/or kidneys.
XRT	Radiotherapy	Therapy that uses radiation to control or kill malignant cells, usually for cancer.
WBC	White blood cell	A type of blood cell.

For more abbreviations, acronymns and commonly used terms, visit medlineplus.gov, the official website for the U.S. National Library of Medicine.