

# STEDMAN'S ABBREVIATIONS, ACRONYMS & SYMBOLS

## EXPLANATORY NOTES

### Organization

All terms listed are referred to and treated as abbreviations, regardless of any formal designations such as initialisms, acronyms, symbols, short form, or other such terms, adhering to the same sequence, style, and format throughout. Abbreviations are represented as singular. To form a plural, add a lower case s.

#### **AVM**

arteriovenous malformation

#### **AVMs**

arteriovenous malformations

Expansions, too, are singular, except when plural is needed for sense, or if there is an irregular plural:

#### **mm**

millimeter

muscles [plural]

#### **phal**

phalanges [plural]

phalanx [singular]

Most abbreviations are formed by the first letter of each word in the expansion, frequently ignoring articles (a, an, the). Words containing "of" frequently have two abbreviations, one with an O and one without:

#### **DB**

date of birth

#### **DOB**

date of birth

Gene and protein names do not always adhere this pattern.

#### **TSHR**

thyrotropin-receptor [gene]

**CROSS REFERENCES:** Terms having more than one abbreviation are cross-referenced, with the reference appearing in parentheses, following italicized *See also*.

#### **O**

obese (*See also* OB)

obesity (*See also* OB, OBS)

obstetric (*See also* OB, OBS, obst, obstet)

obstetrics (*See also* OB, OBS, obst, obstet)

#### **OB**

obese (*See also* O)

obesity (*See also* O, OBS)  
obstetric (*See also* O, OBS, obst, obstet)  
obstetrics (*See also* O, OBS, obst, obstet)

**OBS**

obesity (*See also* O, OB)  
obstetric (*See also* O, OB, OBS, obst, obstet)  
obstetrics (*See also* O, OB, OBS, obst, obstet)

**obst**

obstetric (*See also* O, OB, OBS, obstet)  
obstetrics (*See also* O, OB, OBS, obstet)

**obstet**

obstetric (*See also* O, OB, OBS, obst)  
obstetrics (*See also* O, OB, OBS, obst)

**VARIANT ABBREVIATIONS:** Variant abbreviations are treated as separate main entries. In rare cases they may be shown as one main entry with the two terms separated by a comma. For complex terms, special notation is used:

**CN I [CN 1]**

first cranial nerve [olfactory]

**CN II [CN 2]**

second cranial nerve [optic]

**CN XII [CN 12]**

twelfth cranial nerve [hypoglossal]

**ABBREVIATIONS CONTAINING RANGES:** Many otherwise identical abbreviations have numerical or alphabetical designators. Rather than listing each one independently, we use the range format, as shown above. Unlike the example above, some abbreviations have a designator attached, directly or with a hyphen. The format will then be:

**NRG1–NRG4**

neuregulin 1–4 [protein]

**TIMP-1–TIMP-3**

tissue inhibitor of metalloproteinase 1–3

Again, only the letters and numerals of the *first* term of a range are considered in sequencing.

## FORMAT AND STYLE

Each entry consists of a boldface abbreviation, below which is listed its expansions, which are the meanings or, in some instances, interpretations of the individual letters of the abbreviation. Expansions are in alphanumeric order as above, indented, and in lightface. Italics denote genus and/or species. Titles of print publications and compendia are also italicized.

### **ABG**

addictive behavior group  
air-bone gap  
aortoiliac bypass graft  
arterial blood gas  
axiobuccogingival

**CAPITAL LETTERS, LOWER CASE LETTERS, MIXED CASE:** Correctness does not depend upon case for the majority of abbreviations. It is perfectly acceptable to have all capital letters, all lower case letters, and/or mixed case letters denoting the same expansion.

### **EX**

example

### **ex**

example

### **Ex**

example

For this reason, to avoid repetition or confusion, Stedman's has selected a representative term, wherever possible, to consolidate the multiplicity of upper, lower, and mixed case into a single upper case abbreviation.

### **ex**

example

If your institution prefers lower case or mixed case, those are acceptable formats, with the following exceptions:

**TECHNICAL AND STANDARDIZED ABBREVIATIONS:** Specific abbreviations, case-dependent, are required in technical fields. See below for specific information. Entries that reflect standardized international nomenclature will stand alone and/or have red font.

### **K<sub>w</sub>**

dissociation constant of water

### **kW**

kilowatt

### **KWAV**

Kwatta virus

### **kWh**

kilowatt-hour

**kW-hr**  
kilowatt-hour

**GENUS/SPECIES:** Formal representation is initial capital letter and italic font to represent genus, with species in lower case italic. General reference to a microorganism is in lower case roman font.

**MOTT**  
mycobacteria other than tubercle (*Mycobacterium tuberculosis*)

**RATIO:** Abbreviations involving ratios have two formats. One is a standard letter-for-letter abbreviation including "r" for ratio.

**SNR**  
signal:noise ratio (*See also* S:N)

The other uses a colon representing the word "to" in both the main entry and the subentries.

**S:N**  
sample:negative control ratio  
signal:noise ratio (*See also* SNR)  
speech:noise ratio

**LATIN TERMS:** Upper case Latin abbreviations require no periods; lower case do. These are represented as separate main entries in this edition:

**TID**  
three times a day  
**t.i.d.**  
three times a day

**ETYMOLOGY:** Terms derived from foreign languages are accompanied by etymology information enclosed in square brackets:

**PM**  
post meridiem [afternoon, evening] [L. *post meridiem*] (*See also* p.m.)  
postmortem [after death] [L. *post mortem*] (*See also* p.m., post)

## Special Features

**MULTIPLE EXPANSIONS:** This edition has eliminated the parenthetical format used in previous editions. Except in rare cases, each inflection of a term is listed separately.

**EEG**  
electroencephalogram

electroencephalograph  
electroencephalography

**OGTT**

oral glucose tolerance test  
oral glucose tolerance testing

**EXPANDED OR EXPLANATORY INFORMATION:** For terms that may be unclear out of context, or need extra information to point towards specialty or application, we have put such explanatory information in brackets, usually at the end of the expansion.

**SAF**

self-articulating femoral [hip prosthesis]

**DANGEROUS ABBREVIATIONS:** In keeping with the Institute for Safe Medication Practices (ISMP) and The Joint Commission directives regarding *Do Not Use* and *Dangerous* abbreviations, such terms are designated with . Only those terms in active use on the *Do Not Use* and *Dangerous* abbreviation lists are so marked. Your institution may request that you also Do Not Use the terms that are listed as anticipated to be approved in the future. In such an instance, please follow your institution's guidelines.

**DRUG ABBREVIATIONS:** For additional precaution in medication safety, most drug abbreviations, other than those marked as dangerous or as slang, have been removed from this edition.

**ACCEPTED-USE ABBREVIATIONS:** Stedman's has gathered terms from across the globe, from a wide variety of scientific and medical sources, and consolidated them into this comprehensive reference. The Joint Commission's directive indicates each institution is to provide employees with instructions on proper use of abbreviations. An abbreviation included in this edition may be acceptable to one hospital, but not permissible in another setting. The vast numbers of abbreviations (with more coined daily) limits the effectiveness of creating a one-size-fits-all approved abbreviation list.

Please note that the *Do Not Use* and *Dangerous* abbreviations were originally directed at hand-written drug orders. In practice, the restrictions on these terms were universally applied to all abbreviations in all types of medical documents for the past several years. Many of the terms included on the *Do Not Use* list have not received such approval. Hospitals allow abbreviations in certain portions of certain documents--the "certain" part being specific to that hospital. One term now modified from the original *Do Not Use* restriction is c.c., cubic centimeter as it pertains to some laboratory measurements and pathology specimens in general, and the prostate gland in particular. It is acceptable to quantify a prostate specimen's measurements in cubic centimeters, or c.c.

Again, your institution may have specific terms on its internal *Do Not Use* list, and that takes precedence over Stedman's.

**SCIENTIFIC NOTATION:** Standardized terms requiring specific-case abbreviations

**UNITS OF MEASURE**

ampere	A	
becquerel	Bq	
celsius	C	
coulomb	C	
curie	Ci	
Fahrenheit	F	
farad	F	
joule	J	
liter	L	[SI formal unit is l, but upper case is preferred because of confusion with numeral 1 or I, and the letter I]
gray	Gy	
henry	Hz	
newton	N	
pascal	Pa	
siemens	S	
tesla	T	
volt	V	
watt	W	

**AMINO ACID ABBREVIATIONS:** Each amino acid has 2 recognized abbreviations; a trivial name and a letter symbol. The essential amino acids are:

<b>Amino Acid</b>	<b>Trivial Name</b>	<b>Symbol</b>
alanine	Ala	A
asparagine	Asn	N
cysteine	Cys	C
glutamic acid	Glu	E
histidine	His	H
arginine	Arg	R
aspartic acid	Asp	D
glutamine	Gln	Q
glycine	Gly	G
isoleucine	Ile	I
leucine	Leu	L
lysine	Lys	K
methionine	Met	M
phenylalanine	Phe	K
proline	Pro	P
serine	Ser	S
threonine	Thr	T
tryptophan	Trp	W
tyrosine	Tyr	Y
valine	Val	V