

# 235-6 – Medical Supplement

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- **61** Medical abbreviations and definitions.
  - Ab - Antibody: A substance in the body which incites immunity to invading organisms.
  - abd - Abdomen.
  - ABDUCTION - Movement of an extremity (arm or leg) away from the middle of the body.
  - ac - Before Meals.
  - ACHONDROPLASIA - Inadequate bone formation resulting in dwarfism.
  - ad lib - Freely; as desired: (Often used with “up” or “activity”).
  - ADL - Activities of Daily Living.
  - AIDS - Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome: Defect in natural immunity which renders a person susceptible to infection and some cancers.
  - AKA - Above Knee Amputation.
  - ALCOHOLISM - Illness where the person is unable to control the beginning of drinking or its termination.
  - ALS - Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis: Commonly known as “Lou Gehrig’s disease”. The symptoms and descriptive designation vary according to part of the nervous system most affected.
  - AMA - Against Medical Advice.
  - AMPUTEE - A person who suffered the loss of a limb due to surgery or accident.
  - ANEURYSM - Sac formed by enlarged portion of a blood vessel; outpouching.
  - ANGINA - Severe attacks of pain in the chest, arm or jaw caused by demands upon an injured heart muscle, and symptomatic of coronary artery disease.
  - ANOXIA - Absence of reduction of oxygen in body tissues below normal levels.
  - ANTABUSE - Chemical substance used to treat alcoholism (disulfiram).
  - ANTERIOR - Situated in front, or forward.
  - AORTA - The great trunk artery that carries blood from the heart to be distributed by branch arteries throughout the body.
  - APHAKIA - Absence of the lens of the eye, causing blindness.

- appt. - Appointment.
- ARDS - Adult Respiratory Distress Syndrome: A form of pulmonary edema (an abnormal accumulation of fluid) that causes acute respiratory failure.
- ARRHYTHMIA - Variation from the normal rhythm of the heart.
- ARTERIOSCLEROSIS (AS or ART.) - Hardening, thickening and blocking of the arteries.
- ARTHRITIS - A chronic inflammatory disease of the joints.
- ASA - Acetylsalicylic Acid (Aspirin).
- ASHD - Arteriosclerotic Heart Disease: See ASCVD.
- ASTHMA - A condition of labored breathing and wheezing, coughing and gasping -- a sense of constriction in the chest.
- ASTIGMATISM - Defective curvature of the surface of the eye, disturbing vision.
- AT-FIB or A-FIB - Atrial Fibrillation: Uncoordinated contraction of the heart muscle; individual muscle fibers take up independent irregular contractions.
- ATAXIA - Loss of coordination/position sense due to faulty function in lower part of brain (cerebellum).
- ATHEROSCLEROSIS - Condition in which plaques (deposits of fatty material) are formed within arteries.
- ATHETOSIS - Repetitive, involuntary movements, due to brain damage (or as a side effect of long-term use of psychotropic medication).
- ATROPHY - Decrease in size; lacking growth.
- AURA - A sensation that may precede an epileptic seizure.
- AV - Atrioventricular: Pertaining to either one of two upper chambers and to either one of two main pumping (lower) chambers of the heart.
- AVR - Aortic Valve Replacement: Valve at the junction of the aorta (or large artery), and the left ventricle of the heart is replaced with an artificial valve.
- bid - Twice a Day.
- BILATERAL - On both sides.
- BKA - Below Knee Amputation.
- BP, B/P - Blood Pressure.
- C - Centigrade: (Temperature written in degrees Centigrade or F - Fahrenheit).
- CARDIAC PACEMAKER - A small electrical device which is surgically implanted into the

body to establish and maintain a normal heart beat.

- c - With.
- CA - Cancer (Carcinoma).
- CABG - Coronary Artery Bypass Graft: (Will often hear it pronounced “cabbage” and/or referred to as simply “bypass”.)
- CAD - Coronary Artery Disease: The loss of oxygen and nutrients to heart tissue because of diminished blood flow.
- CAT SCAN - Computerized Axial Tomography: The electric impulses of x-ray beam are recorded on a mini-computer for reconstruction display of the body in cross-sections.
- CATARACT - An opacity of the eye.
- CBC - Complete Blood Count: Determines the actual number of blood elements in relation to volume and quantifies abnormalities.
- CBS - Chronic Brain Syndrome: The brain shows some degree of irreversible cognitive impairment depending on the site of involvement, the rate of onset and progression, and the duration of the underlying brain tissue dysfunction. (See OBS).
- CC - Chief Complaint.
- cc. - Cubic Centimeter.
- CEREBROVASCULAR - Pertaining to the brain's blood vessels.
- CHF - Congestive Heart Failure: Prolonged impairment of the ability of the heart to maintain an adequate flow of blood to the tissues.
- CNS - Central Nervous System: The brain and spinal cord.
- c/o - Complains of.
- CONGENITAL - Existing at birth; such as a congenital deformity.
- COPD - Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease: Clinically significant, irreversible, generalized airway obstruction. (Examples: emphysema, bronchitis).
- CORONARY ARTERY DISEASE - A condition in which heart arteries become blocked, resulting in damage to portions of the heart muscle.
- CP - Cerebral Palsy: A group of conditions of varying manifestations and degrees, involving impaired motor control. It is a result of brain damage occurring during or before birth due to a lack of oxygen. Characterized by spasticity, athetosis (writhing movements), tremors and loss of muscle tone.
- CPR - Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation: External support of respiration and

emergency oxygenation following apparent cardiac arrest. (Cardiopulmonary refers to heart and lungs).

- CVA - Cerebrovascular Accident: Stroke, resulting from rupture of a blood vessel in or leading to the brain or from a blood clot. Temporary or permanent paralysis due to brain damage may follow. (The paralysis occurs on the side of the body opposite the brain lesion).
- CYANOSIS - A bluish discoloration of the skin and fingernails due to lack of oxygen in the bloodstream.
- DECUBITUS ULCER - A sore produced by excessive pressure on an area, usually over a bony prominence resulting from impairment of circulation and breakdown of tissue.
- DEMYELINATING - A condition which destroys the protective covering around nerve fibers.
- DISABILITY - A physical limitation.
- DJD - Degenerative Joint Disease: A chronic disease involving especially the weight bearing joints. Characterized by overgrowth of bone and impaired function of a joint.
- DKA - Diabetic Ketoacidosis: Accumulation of ketone bodies/acid in the blood and tissues, brought about by excessive glucose and/or lack of insulin. Can lead to diabetic coma.
- Dx - Diagnosis.
- DYSLEXIA - Impaired ability to learn to read.
- DYSPHAGIA - Difficulty in swallowing.
- DYSPLASIA - Abnormal growth or development.
- DYSPNEA - Difficult or labored breathing.
- ECG or EKG - Electrocardiogram: A graphic record of the electric currents generated by the heart.
- EDEMA - Abnormally large amounts of fluid in the body tissues; swelling.
- EEG - Electroencephalogram: (Measurement of brain's electrical activity).
- EMESIS - Vomiting.
- EMPHYSEMA - Inability of the lung to expel air, causing severe breathing difficulties. A chronic, obstructive pulmonary disease.
- ENCEPHALITIS - An infectious disease of the central nervous system, characterized by inflammation of the brain tissue.

- ENDOCRINE GLANDS - Organs that secrete into the circulatory system specific substances (hormones) which influence body processes.
- ENT - Ear, Nose, Throat.
- EOM - Extraocular (Eye) Movement.
- EPILEPSY - Irregular electrical discharge of the brain causing temporary lapse of consciousness known as a seizure; most often controlled by medication.
- ERB'S PALSY (or Paralysis) - Paralysis of a group of muscles of the shoulder and the upper arm. Arm hangs limp, hand rotates inward, and normal movements are lost.
- ETOH - Ethanol (alcohol).
- EXTREMITY - Arm or Leg.
- FBS - Fasting Blood Sugar: A method for finding out how much glucose(sugar) is in the blood prior to the ingestion of food.
- FLEXION - Opposite of extension; to bend.
- FUNCTIONAL CAPACITY - The ability of an organ, or of the body as a whole, to do a certain task.
- FX - Fracture (break).
- GAIT - Manner of walking.
- GI - Gastrointestinal: Pertaining to the stomach and intestine.
- GLAUCOMA - Increasing pressure on the eyeball which may lead to blindness.
- GLUCOSE - A thick, sweet substance (commonly sugar), generally caused by an incomplete breakdown of starch.
- HEMIPARESIS - Partial paralysis of one side of the body.
- h.s. - At Bedtime (hour of sleep).
- HTN - Hypertension: Persistently high arterial blood pressure (the pressure of the blood on the walls of the arteries).
- HYPERTENSION - High blood pressure.
- HYPERTROPHY - Increase in size.
- HYPOGLYCEMIA - Low blood sugar.
- HYPOTENSION - Low blood pressure.
- IDDM - Insulin Dependent Diabetes Mellitus: A chronic condition in which the pancreas makes little or no insulin. The body is then not able to use glucose (blood sugar) for energy and insulin must be injected daily.
- IM - Intramuscular Injection: Injection of a substance into the muscle.

- IMPAIRMENT - Damage resulting from injury or disease.
- INSULIN - A pancreatic hormone for regulating carbohydrate (sugar) metabolism. It is manufactured commercially to supplement a diabetic's lack of natural insulin.
- INVOLUNTARY - Loss of control; without conscious control.
- IV - Intravenous: Infusion within a vein.
- LABILE - Unstable, fluctuating.
- LATERAL - Pertaining to the side; away from the midline.
- LOC - Level of Consciousness: (May occasionally be used with reference to LOSS of consciousness).
- MD - Muscular Dystrophy: Disorder characterized by progressive muscle weakness and wasting. (Not a specific disease, but a group of muscle-destroying disorders).
- M.D. - Doctor of Medicine.
- METABOLISM - A physical and chemical process by which living substance is produced and transformed into energy for the body's maintenance.
- MG - Myasthenia Gravis: A chronic neuromuscular disease characterized by muscular weakness. Usually affects muscles of the head and neck.
- MI - Myocardial Infarction: Severe narrowing or blockage of one or more coronary arteries, cutting off the blood supply (and oxygen) to some part of the heart muscle. It is most commonly referred to as a "Heart Attack".
- MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS - A chronic, progressive disease of the brain and spinal cord which can cause weakness in extremities, loss of coordination, strong jerking movements of arms and legs, euphoria, scanning speech, fatigue. Symptoms vary and can be mild or very severe.
- MUSCULAR DYSTROPHY - See MD.
- MYOPIA - Nearsightedness.
- NARCOLEPSY - A condition marked by sudden uncontrolled attacks of sleep.
- NEURITIS - Inflammation of nerves, which may be accompanied by pain and tenderness, loss of sensation and reflexes and paralysis.
- NEUROLOGIST - Specialist who treats dysfunction in the nervous system.
- NYSTAGMUS - An involuntary rapid movement of the eyeball.
- O or O - "No", none; absent, as in O sx. (No symptoms).
- OBS - Organic Brain Syndrome: Any acute or chronic mental disorder associated with impairment of brain tissue function.

- O.D. - Right Eye.
- O.S. - Left Eye.
- O.U. - Each Eye (or both eyes).
- p - After.
- PAC - Premature Atrial Contractions: Extra Atrial beats.
- PARALYSIS - Loss or impairment of motor function due to a lesion of the neural or muscular mechanism.
- PARAPLEGIA - Total paralysis of legs due to a spinal cord or brain injury.
- pc - After Meals.
- PERRLA - Pupils Equal, Round, Regular, React to Light and Accommodation.
- PHYSICAL THERAPY - A rehabilitative treatment plan prescribed by a doctor and directed toward the development of muscle power and skill
- PHYSIATRIST - A doctor trained in the methods of physical medicine and rehabilitation.
- POLIOMYELITIS (Polio) - A viral infection causing fever, headache, stiff neck and back, deep muscle pain, and sometimes paralysis. New cases are now rare because of vaccine.
- POSTERIOR - Behind; situated in back of.
- PRN, prn - As Occasion Requires, as Necessary or Needed.
- PROSTHESIS - A biomechanical device fitted to the human body to replace a part that is missing due to disease, trauma or congenital malfunction. When referring to the extremities, a prosthetic may be termed an “artificial limb”.
- PTOSIS - Drooping.
- PVC - Premature Ventricular Contractions: A disturbance of rhythm that is often indicative of heart damage or absence of oxygen supply to tissue.
- q or Q - Every or “at”.
- qd or QD - Daily.
- qh, 2, 3, 4, etc. - Every Hour or as Indicated by Number: (Example: q 4 h, q 4 o q 4 hours. All mean every 4 hours).
- qid - Four Times a Day.
- \_\_Q - Quadrant - usually refers to abdomen.
  - LLQ = Left lower quadrant

- LUQ = Left upper quadrant
  - RLQ = Right lower quadrant
  - RUQ = Right upper quadrant
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- qod - Every Other Day.
  - QUADRIPLÉGIA - Complete paralysis below the neck, involving all four extremities.
  - RANGE OF MOTION (ROM) - How a body joint rotates, flexes (bends) or extends in relation to the normal.
  - REHABILITATION - The treatment of and retraining of a disabled individual.
  - RHEUMATOID ARTHRITIS - A systemic disorder of unknown cause in which symptoms and inflammatory change occur in joints and other related structures. This is also marked by atrophy and rarefaction of the bones. The disease tends to be chronic and to produce characteristic crippling deformities. The disease tends to affect larger joints with resultant change in growth and development.
  - Rx or Tx - Treat, Or Treatment.
    - s - Without.
    - ss - One-Half.
  - SBE - Subacute Bacterial Endocarditis.
  - SCHIZOPHRENIA - A group of disorders manifested by disturbances of thinking, mood and behavior. Common characteristics include detachment from reality; disturbances of reasoning and decision-making; and abnormal emotional responses.
  - SCIATICA - Inflammation of a nerve in the hip area causing pain in leg and thigh.
  - SCLEROSIS - Hardening.
  - SOB - Short of Breath.
  - SPASM - A sudden involuntary muscle contraction.
  - SPASTIC - Increased tension of the muscle produced by spasm.
  - SPASTIC HEMIPLEGIA - Hemiplegia with spasms and atrophy.
  - SPINA BIFIDA - A congenital defect of the spine, involving a failure of development of the bony spinous processes. May be associated with a meningocele. The deficit in the bony structure of the spinal column allows the cord and protective fluid to herniate out through the opening, causing complete or partial paralysis below the site.



- SPINAL COLUMN - The series of bones from head to tail bone which enclose and protect the spinal cord and allow the neck and back to bend and turn.
- STRIDOR - A harsh, high-pitched respiratory sound.
- SYNCOPE - Fainting episodes.
- SX - Symptom: Any subjective change from the normal. May be indicative of a disease or disorder.
- TACHYCARDIA - Rapid heart action or beat.
- TB, Tbc - Tuberculosis: A chronic communicable disease caused by the tubercle bacillus. May attack any part of the body, including bone, but has a predilection for the lungs.
- THORAX - Chest.
- TIA - Transient Ischemic Attack Or Episode: Brief, reversible episodes of neurologic dysfunction due to a temporary interruption in blood flow to part of the brain. Can last from a few seconds to several hours and may be considered a warning of an impending stroke. Symptoms usually include sensory and motor disturbances and headache.
- t.i.d. or TID - Three Times a Day.
- TRACHEOSTOMY - Surgical windpipe opening, bypassing throat obstruction.
- TUR - Transurethral Resection (of the prostate gland).
- VERTIGO - Dizziness.
- VISUAL ACUITY - The power to clearly see and discriminate the details and contour of a given object.
- VOCATIONAL THERAPY or REHABILITATION - A treatment plan aimed at evaluating the patient's ability and training him/her in skills that will be useful in employment.
- WPW - Wolff-Parkinson-White Syndrome: A condition in which extra conduction pathways exist, producing attacks of extremely rapid heart beats.
- W/U - Work-Up.

• 62 Common prefixes.

- an- or a-: absence of; without (anoxia-without oxygen)
- blephar-: refers to eyelid
- brady-: slow (bradycardia - slow heartbeat)

- cephal-: head
- cerebr-: brain
- derm-, derma- or dermat-: skin
- dys-: hard, difficult (dyspnea-labored or difficult breathing)
- epi-: outer; upon; over (epidermus-outer layer of skin)
- hepat-: liver
- hyper-: above normal; more than (hyperthermia-above normal temperature)
- hypo-: below normal; deficient (hypoglycemia-low blood sugar)
- hypno-: referring to sleep (hypnotics-drugs to induce sleep)
- macro-: large, enlargement
- mal-: irregular; abnormal (malfunction)
- neuro-: refers to nervous system
- oto-: ear
- proxim-: near; nearest
- pneumo- or pulmo-: lung
- poly-: many, much
- trans-: through; across (transurethral-through the urethra)
- ultra-: excessive; above

• **63** Common suffixes.

- cele: hernia; swelling; tumor (cystocele - herniation of the bladder)
- centesis: incision; puncture (for draining)
- ectomy: removal of
- esthesia: feeling, sensation
- itis: inflammation of (hepatitis - inflammation of the liver)
- oma: tumor
- osis: condition; disease
- otomy: cutting or incision into (arthrotomy - incision into a joint)
- penia: decrease; deficiency of
- plasty: surgical repair (angioplasty-repair of a blood vessel)
- plegia: paralysis
- ptosis: drooping; sagging

• **64** Symbols.

- X FEMALE
- Y MALE

CHANGE TO or "CHANGES IN"

- + POSITIVE
- - NEGATIVE
- 0 or 0 NONE
- # POUND

APPROXIMATELY

- > GREATER THAN
- < LESS THAN
- 1° PRIMARY
- 2° SECONDARY
- i one
- ii two