

Common medical abbreviations

AMA—against medical advice
BLS—basic life support
BM—bowel movement
CAOX3—conscious, alert, oriented to person, place, and time (no decreased level of consciousness)
cc—cubic centimeters
CC—chief complaint
c/o—complaint of
CPAP—continuous positive airway pressure
DA—drug abuse
D/C—discontinue
DCAP-BTLS—deformities, contusions, punctures/penetrations, burns, tenderness, lacerations, swelling
DOB—date of birth
DX—diagnosis
ENT—ear, nose, and throat
FX—fracture
GSW—gunshot wound
H/A—headache
HEENT—head, ears, eyes, nose, throat
I & D—incision and drainage
IV—intravenous. The delivery of fluids and/or medication into the blood stream via a needle inserted into a vein
LOC—loss of consciousness or level of consciousness
MVA—motor vehicle accident
MOI—mechanism of injury; manner in which injuries occur; actions or objects that cause trauma injury to a patient
N&V—nausea and vomiting
PERL—pupils equal and reactive to light
R/O—rule out
ROM—range of motion
Rt—right
Rx—prescription, treatment, or therapy
̄—without (sine)
S&S—signs and symptoms
SL—sublingual (under the tongue)
SOB—shortness of breath
Stat—immediately (statim)
Sx—symptoms
T—temperature
TPR—temperature, pulse, respirations
TX—treatment
VS—vital signs
WNL—within normal limits
yo—year old

Common medical terminology

Anterior—front
Antiemetic—medication to control vomiting
Caudad—toward the feet, opposite of cranial
Crackles—low-pitched bubbling sounds produced by fluid in the lower airways; often described as either fine or coarse
Cranial—toward the head
Cyanosis—slightly bluish, grayish, slate-like, or dark purple discoloration of the skin caused by a deficiency of oxygen and excess of carbon dioxide in the blood
Diaphoretic—sweating
Distal—the most distant of two or more things; opposite of proximal
Dorsal—the back
Emesis—vomit
Febrile—denoting or relating to fever
Glasgow Coma Scale—standardized rating system used to evaluate the degree of consciousness impairment based on eye opening, motor response, and verbal response; points are scored
Hyper—above or high
Hypo—below or low
Inferior—below; opposite of superior
Intubation—the insertion of a tube into a hollow organ such as the trachea (to get air to the lungs)
Lac—laceration
Lateral—typically refers to the outer side of a body part; opposite of medial
Medial—towards the middle
Narcan—(naloxone) reverses the effects of other narcotic medicines; may be used to treat narcotic drug overdose
Patent airway—an open, unblocked airway
Perfusion—state of adequate supply of oxygen and nutrients to the tissues; ability of the circulatory system to distribute blood containing nutrients and oxygen to the tissues
Pertinent negative—absence of a sign or symptom that helps substantiate or identify a patient's condition
Pertinent positive—presence of a sign or symptom that helps substantiate or identify a patient's condition
Posterior—behind
Prone—lying face down
Proximal—toward the beginning, the nearer of two or more items; opposite of distal
Rales—a crackling or bubbling sound in the lungs
Shock—failure of the circulatory system to perfuse tissues
Stridor—abnormal, high-pitched, musical sound caused by an obstruction in the trachea or larynx, usually heard during inspiration
Subcutaneous—under the skin
Superior—above; opposite of inferior
Superficial—on the surface or shallow, as opposed to deep
Supine—lying on the back, face up
Tachycardia—condition in which the heart contracts at a rate greater than 100 beats per minute
Tracheostomy (also referred to as tracheotomy)—an incision made in the neck to allow the passage of air directly into the trachea to reach the lungs
Ventral—the front
Void—urinate