



Medical Coding Learner's Guide to Common Abbreviations

Why Abbreviations Matter in Medical Coding

In the fast-paced world of healthcare, abbreviations are essential tools used by providers, facilities, and insurers to communicate medical information quickly and efficiently. For medical coders, understanding these abbreviations is critical—not just for accuracy, but also for compliance and proper reimbursement. Misinterpreting even a single abbreviation can lead to coding errors, claim denials, or compliance issues.

This guide includes a system-by-system list of some of the most used medical abbreviations that coders are likely to encounter. While not a complete list, it serves as a practical starting point to help learners build abbreviation literacy and feel more confident when reviewing clinical documentation. Becoming familiar with these terms will support accurate code assignment and strengthen your foundation as a medical coding professional.

Contents

Integumentary System Abbreviations	2
Musculoskeletal System Abbreviations.....	2
Respiratory System Abbreviations.....	2
Cardiovascular System Abbreviations	3
Urology Abbreviations.....	3
OB/GYN Abbreviations	3
Pathology Abbreviations	4
Radiology Abbreviations	4
Office & Preventive Visit Abbreviations.....	4
Anesthesia Abbreviations	5
General Charting Abbreviations	5

Integumentary System Abbreviations

- SK: Seborrheic Keratosis
- AK: Actinic Keratosis
- BCC: Basal Cell Carcinoma
- SCC: Squamous Cell Carcinoma
- BX: Biopsy
- I&D: Incision and Drainage
- ED&C: Electrodessication and Curettage
- CRYO: Cryotherapy
- F/U: Follow-Up
- WNL: Within Normal Limits

Musculoskeletal System Abbreviations

- OA: Osteoarthritis
- Fx: Fracture
- ROM: Range of Motion
- ORIF: Open Reduction Internal Fixation
- RICE: Rest, Ice, Compression, Elevation
- HNP: Herniated Nucleus Pulposus
- RA: Rheumatoid Arthritis
- PT: Physical Therapy
- CS: Corticosteroid
- TTP: Tender to Palpation

Respiratory System Abbreviations

- COPD: Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease
- PNA: Pneumonia
- SOB: Shortness of Breath
- PE: Pulmonary Embolism
- CXR: Chest X-Ray
- ABG: Arterial Blood Gas
- CPAP / BiPAP: Airway Support Therapies
- ETT: Endotracheal Tube

- PFT: Pulmonary Function Test
- SpO₂: Oxygen Saturation

Cardiovascular System Abbreviations

- HTN: Hypertension
- MI: Myocardial Infarction
- AFib: Atrial Fibrillation
- CAD: Coronary Artery Disease
- EKG: Electrocardiogram
- BP: Blood Pressure
- HR: Heart Rate
- Trop: Troponin
- BNP: B-type Natriuretic Peptide
- ASA: Aspirin

Urology Abbreviations

- BPH: Benign Prostatic Hyperplasia
- UTI: Urinary Tract Infection
- ED: Erectile Dysfunction
- IC: Interstitial Cystitis
- PSA: Prostate-Specific Antigen
- UA / UCx: Urinalysis / Urine Culture
- KUB: Kidney, Ureter, Bladder X-ray
- Cysto: Cystoscopy
- TURP: Transurethral Resection of Prostate
- Foley: Foley Catheter

OB/GYN Abbreviations

- LMP: Last Menstrual Period
- EDD: Estimated Due Date
- GTPAL: Gravida, Term, Preterm, Abortions, Living
- NST: Non-Stress Test
- NSVD: Normal Spontaneous Vaginal Delivery
- C/S: Cesarean Section
- Pap: Papanicolaou Test
- PCOS: Polycystic Ovary Syndrome

- LEEP: Loop Electrosurgical Excision Procedure

Pathology Abbreviations

- Bx: Biopsy
- IHC: Immunohistochemistry
- FNA: Fine Needle Aspiration
- FS: Frozen Section
- C&S: Culture and Sensitivity
- HPF: High-Power Field
- Pos / Neg: Positive / Negative
- WNL / NAD: Within Normal Limits / No Abnormality Detected

Radiology Abbreviations

- XR: X-ray
- CT: Computed Tomography
- US: Ultrasound
- PET: Positron Emission Tomography
- AP / LAT: Anteroposterior / Lateral
- IVC: Intravenous Contrast
- Fx: Fracture
- Eff: Effusion
- WNL / NAD: Within Normal Limits / No Abnormality Detected
- R/O: Rule Out

Office & Preventive Visit Abbreviations

- OV: Office Visit
- SOAP: Subjective, Objective, Assessment, Plan
- HPI: History of Present Illness
- ROS: Review of Systems
- PE: Physical Exam
- CBC: Complete Blood Count
- Pap: Papanicolaou Test
- A&P: Assessment and Plan

Anesthesia Abbreviations

- GA: General Anesthesia
- MAC: Monitored Anesthesia Care
- LA: Local Anesthesia
- EPI: Epidural
- SpO₂: Oxygen Saturation
- ETCO₂: End-Tidal Carbon Dioxide
- BP: Blood Pressure
- HR: Heart Rate
- EKG: Electrocardiogram
- ASA: American Society of Anesthesiologists

General Charting Abbreviations

- Pt: Patient
- Dx: Diagnosis
- Tx: Treatment
- Rx: Prescription
- Hx: History
- SHx / FHx: Social / Family History
- F/U: Follow-Up
- RTC: Return to Clinic
- WNL: Within Normal Limits
- NAD: No Acute Distress
- PO / IV / IM / SQ: Medication Routes
- BID / TID / QID / PRN: Dosing Frequencies
- D/C: Discontinue or Discharge
- T/C / R/O: To Consider / Rule Out