

# Hartford Hospital “DO NOT USE” ABBREVIATIONS

(APPROVED BY THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE MEDICAL STAFF COUNCIL 12/1/03)

Abbreviation or Dose Expression	Intended Meaning	Misinterpretation	USE:
ug	microgram	Mistaken for “mg” when handwritten	Use “mcg”
U or u	unit	Read as a zero (0) or a four (4), causing a 10 fold overdose or greater (ex. 4U seen as “40” or 4u seen as 44”)	“Unit” has no acceptable abbreviation – spell out “unit.”
IU	international unit	Misread as IV (intravenous) or 10 (ten)	Use “international units.”
Trailing Zero ( 1.0 mg )	1 mg	Misread as 10 mg if the decimal point is not seen	Do not use terminal zeros for doses expressed in whole numbers.
Lack of Leading Zero ( .5 mg)	0.5 mg	Misread as 5 mg if the decimal point is not seen	Always use zero before a decimal when the dose is less than a whole unit.
QD, q.d., qd, QOD, q.o.d., qod	Varies	“Q “ and “O” can be mistaken for an “I.”	Write out “daily”, or every other day
CA, Ca	Calcium	calcium chloride or calcium gluconate?	Include salt form in order
CPZ	Chlorpromazine	Compazine® (prochlorperazine)	Spell out complete drug name
dopa	dopamine	dobutamine	Spell out complete drug name
epi	Epinephrine	epidural	Spell out complete drug name
levo	Levophed	Levaquin ®, levodopa	Spell out complete drug name
MSO4, MgSO4, MS	Varies	magnesium sulfate can be confused for morphine sulfate or vice versa	Spell out complete drug name
neo	Neosynephrine	neostigmine	Spell out complete drug name
nitro	Nitroglycerine	nitroprusside	Spell out complete drug name
ZnSO4	Zinc Sulfate	morphine sulfate	Spell out complete drug name