

UNACCEPTABLE ABBREVIATIONS

Do NOT initiate orders without clarification (Rev 01/04)

Dangerous Abbreviation/Dose Expression	Intended Meaning	Misinterpretation	Correction
Zero after decimal point (1.0mg)	1 mg	May be interpreted as 10mg if the decimal point is not seen	Do not use terminal zeros for doses expressed in whole numbers.
No zero before decimal dose (.5mg)	0.5mg	Can look like 5 mg	Always use a zero before a decimal when the dose is less than a whole number
IU	International Unit	Mistaken as IV (intravenous) or 10 (ten)	Write "international unit"
U	Unit	Read as a zero (0) or a (4) causing a 10 fold overdose or greater (4U seen as 40 or 4u seen as 44)	Unit has no acceptable abbreviation. Use unit.
µg	Microgram	Mistaken as "mg" when handwritten	Use microgram
OD OOD	Once daily and every other day	Mistaken for each other. The period after the Q can be mistaken for an "I" and the "O" can be mistaken for "I"	Write "daily" and "every other day"
SSRI	Sliding scale regular insulin	Mistaken as selective-serotonin reuptake inhibitor	Spell out "sliding scale (insulin)"
MgSO ₄	Magnesium Sulfate	Misread as MSO ₄ or Morphine Sulfate	Write out Magnesium Sulfate
MS / MSO ₄	Morphine Sulfate	Mistaken as MgSO ₄ or Magnesium Sulfate	Write out Morphine Sulfate
TIW	Three times a week	Mistaken as three times a day or twice a week	Write out three times a week. Suggest to give specific days of the week.

