**ENTRADA STYLE GUIDE**

**ENTRADA STYLE GUIDE FOR TRANSCRIPTION EDITING**

**OBJECTIVE**

For the purpose of stylistic consistency, this document has been compiled as a standardized guide for medical transcription editors. “*The AAMT Book of Style for Medical Transcription, Third Edition*,” was referenced, as well as other published industry standards.

**Specific account instructions supersede any standards listed here. This document is not meant to replace client-requested styles.**

**ABBREVIATIONS**

Abbreviations are acceptable as dictated with the exception of the prohibited abbreviations listed below.\*

Entrada Editors shall follow the recommendations of the Institute for Safe Medication Practices, as listed in full, beginning on page 538 of *The AAMT Book of Style.* Those recommendations include the following:

**\*\*\*\*\*** **NO ABBREVIATIONS MAY BE USED IN MEDICATION NAMES\*\*\*\*\***

Not epi, but epinephrine

Not vanc and gent, but vancomycin and gentamicin

Not HCTZ, but hydrochlorothiazide

Not ever “dig” or “didge” for digoxin or digitalis.

Not ever nitro for nitroglycerine

**JCAHO PROHIBITED ABBREVIATIONS**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Prohibited Abbreviation** | **Recommendation to Use** |
| AD | right ear |
| AS | left ear |
| AU | both ears |
| Apothecary units (e.g., grains) | Type out metric equivalent (e.g., mg) |
| cc | mL (abbreviation for milliliters) (This applies to LIQUID measurements only; cc should be used to describe the measurement of solid structures.) |
| D/C or DC | Type out discharge or discontinue |
| d, QD and q.d. | daily, every day |
| QOD | every other day |
| QN | every night/nightly |
| q.h.s. or h.s. | Type out “at bedtime.” |
| sub q, subQ, SQ or SC | Type out subcutaneously, subcut, or subcu. Do Not type as subQ. |
| HS | Type out half strength (HS may be confused with “hour of sleep”). |
| IU, U | International units/units |
| µg | micrograms or mcg |
| Trailing zero (as in: “1.0 mg”) | Never use a trailing zero. Use "1 mg" unless a zero is dictated for specificity. |
| Missing leading zero (as in: “.1 mg”) | Always use a leading zero (as in: “0.1 mg”) |
| ° (Degree symbol) | Spell out “degrees” |
| MS, MSIR, MS0₄ | Type out morphine |
| MgSO₄ | Type out magnesium sulfate |
| TIW or t.i.w. | Type out three times a week. |
| ZnSO₄ | Type out zinc sulfate |

**Important reminders**: Periods should not be used following metric abbreviations, except at the end of a sentence (e.g., mL, mm, mg, kg, etc.). Likewise, an “s” should not be added to metric abbreviations to make plural.

Periods must be used in dosages or directions for medications. Acceptable abbreviations include:

a.c. = before food b.i.d. = twice a day

t.i.d. = 3 times a day q.i.d. = 4 times a day

p.o. = by mouth p.r.n. = as needed

q.4 h. (example) = every 4 hours--Please note the insertion of a space after 4.

For additional questions regarding acceptable abbreviations, consult a reputable reference such as “*Stedman’s Abbreviations, Acronyms, and Symbols*.”

In addition, please refer to the AHDI Book of Style for acceptable abbreviations.

**ACRONYMS**

An acronym, usually formed from the initial letters of a phrase, is an abbreviation that forms a pronounceable word. Acronyms should be written in all capitals, without punctuation.

**Examples:** AIDS, CABG, PERRLA, SMAC, SOAP, TURP.

**ADDRESSES**

When typing addresses, the following format should be followed:

Doctor Name, MD

2134 Any Street

Suite C

(OR Street and Suite [if dictated] may be typed on the same line.)

Brentwood, TN 37027

**NOTE**: Addresses may have been entered into the Referring Physicians List using the format that is preferred by each customer; there is no need to change the formatting.

**AGE FORMAT**

Use numerals to express age, except at the beginning of a sentence.

**Examples:** The patient is a 2-year-old child…

Two-year-old Susie…

The patient is a 2-year 6-month-old child…

**APOSTROPHES**

Use an apostrophe in academic degrees.

**Example:** He has not yet earned his master’s degree.

Use apostrophes to show possession.

Use *‘s* for possessive singular but use *s’* for possessive plural.

**Examples:** The patient’s biopsy was negative.

The medical community is seeking more information from doctors’ investigations into heart disease. (possessive plural)

Use apostrophe in expressions of time and measurement.

Use *‘s* for 1 unit of time used as a possessive adjective.

*1 year’s experience*

Use *s’* for more than 1 unit of time used as a possessive adjective.

*2 months’ history*

*3 days’ time*

HINT: If the possessive form can be replaced with the preposition “of,” without changing the meaning, the apostrophe is correct.

**Example:** The patient is at 30 weeks’ gestation. (The patient is at 30 weeks of gestation.)

She is 3 months pregnant, not She is 3 months’ (of) pregnant.

He has 30 degrees’ flexion. (He has 30 degrees of flexion.)

**BLANKS**

No blanks are allowed in the final draft of any document. If a blank is necessary, the report must be pended to Entrada QA /CR (Customer Review), unless account specifics state otherwise.

**NOTE**: The voice file must be played completely. Do not assume an audio file is blank without listening to it in its entirety.

A blank is designated by 5 underscores and a corresponding audio time stamp noted on the QA / CR note.

Do not place a time stamp within the document.

The following are examples of acceptable blanks:

* Dictation is unintelligible due to poor enunciation, poor quality audio, dictation interrupted or cut off.
* Missing patient demographic information.
* Dictated words are not spelled and cannot be documented.
* If author instructs to leave a blank, with the intention of handwriting an entry at a later date. In this case, the report should be sent to QA / Customer Review for further processing.
* Inconsistent information

**Examples:** - He/she discrepancy.

- Procedure inconsistent with gender (e.g., hysterectomy dictated on a patient identified as a male).

- Right/left discrepancy.

- Conflicting patient identification (e.g., provided medical record number brings up demographic information on George Smith, but author dictates patient’s name as James Herrell).

- Drug dosage not consistent with normal values (e.g., Lanoxin 25 mg).

**Offensive Language**

It is the policy of Entrada to leave a blank to replace any dictation that is deemed inappropriate or offensive. This includes obscenities, racist remarks, profanities, derogatory language, etc. In an effort to protect both the patient and the healthcare facility, any instance of a report being delivered with a blank for this reason should be reported to a supervisor and, subsequently, to the client.

**Exception:** Direct patient quotes that contain offensive language should be transcribed verbatim because of the possibility of a healthcare record being required by a court of law. Any such remarks should be enclosed in quotation marks. All reports should be reported to Entrada QA/CR.

**BRIEF FORMS AND SLANG**

Commonly used dictated brief forms and slang should be expanded unless otherwise noted in the account specifics.

**Examples:** Appy should be transcribed as appendectomy.

Lap chole should be transcribed as laparoscopic cholecystectomy.

Lytes should be transcribed as electrolytes.

A-fib should be transcribed as atrial fibrillation.

V-tach should be transcribed as ventricular tachycardia.

V-fib should be transcribed as ventricular fibrillation.

Pulse ox should be transcribed as pulse oximetry.

O2 sat should be transcribed as O2 saturation.

H&H should be transcribed as hemoglobin and hematocrit.

“Lab” dictated as a heading should be expanded to Laboratory.

Commonly used short forms of tests and procedures may be transcribed as dictated, unless account-specific instructions require expansion.

**Examples:** EKG, MRI, CT scan, PAP smear, sed rate, etc.

**CANCER CLASSIFICATIONS**

Reference: AAMT Book of *Style* and *American Joint Committee on Cancer Staging Manual*.

When expressing TNM staging for malignant tumors, use Arabic numerals without spacing between each delineation (T2N1M0 rather than T2 N1 M0 OR T2, N1, M1)

\*This represents a change in recommendation from that outlined in the 2nd edition of the BOS.

* TNM staging for malignant tumors (tumor size, nodes involved, distant metastasis):

**Examples:** T1N2aM0

TXNXM0

Tis (carcinoma in situ)

TisN0M0

* Cervical cytology: CIN-1 or CIN grade 1
* Clark level: Clark level I – use roman numerals
* Dukes (not Duke’s) classification: Dukes C; Dukes C2.
* Roman numerals for cancer stages: As in stage IIA
* Arabic numerals for cancer grades: As in grade 1
* Lower case the words *stage* and *grade*

**CAPITALIZATION**

Do not capitalize medical specialties or departments, unless part of a proper name.

Do capitalize:

The patient was seen at “Pediatric Associates.” (Proper name.)

The patient was brought to the Vanderbilt Emergency Room. (Proper name.)

Do not capitalize:

The patient was brought to the emergency room. (Not a proper name.)

Exception: Per *AAMT Book of Style*, do capitalize a department name when it is mentioned as an entity.

**Examples**: The patient was monitored by Anesthesia.

The specimen was sent to Pathology.

The patient was sent to Radiology for a chest x-ray.

Do not capitalize generic drugs, i.e., fentanyl, hydrocodone, verapamil, etc.

Do capitalize brand name drugs, i.e., Valium, Procrit, etc.

**CARDIOLOGY, ELECTROCARDIOGRAM LEADS, AND MURMURS**

Electrocardiogram: ECG and EKG are acceptable abbreviations. Transcribe as dictated.

Roman numerals are used to designate bipolar leads (I, II, III).

Limb leads are formatted as aVF, aVR, aVL, etc.

Precordial leads are identified by a capital V followed by Arabic numerals (V1, V2, etc.).

Sequential leads: Repeat the V, and do not use a hyphen (leads V1 through V5), NOT V1 through 5, or V1-V5.

Waves are typed in caps, i.e., Q waves, R waves, T waves, QRS waves – **UNLESS** they are used as adjectives. In that case, they should be hyphenated, i.e., T-wave abnormality.

Complexes, elevations, and depressions are capitalized but not hyphenated, i.e., QS complex, ST elevation, ST depression.

**Exceptions**: ST-T waves, ST-T deviations.

**COLONS**

A colon is used to call attention to the information that follows. A colon should be used to

* Introduce a list or series.

Example: The patient was given prescriptions for the following medications: Lasix, Cardizem, Synthroid, K-Dur, and metoprolol.

* Separate two independent clauses when the second clarifies the first.

Example: The patient had several major health issues: He suffers from diabetes, cardiac decompensation, and COPD.

* Express a ratio.

Example: epinephrine 1:100,000. (Do not use a hyphen to express a ratio.)

* Follow the salutation in a business letter.

**Example:** Dear Dr. Deaver:

(Two spaces follow a colon, except in expressions of ratio.)

**COMMAS**

* A final comma preceding the last item in a series is optional unless its presence or absence changes the meaning.

**Examples:** Ears, nose, and throat are normal. (final comma optional)

No dysphagia, hoarseness, or enlargement of the thyroid gland. (final comma required).

* Use a comma to separate the day of the month from the year.

**Example:** The patient was admitted on November 29, 2005.

NOTE: No comma should be used if the day of the month is not dictated, as in November 2005.

* Use a comma to clarify a preceding phrase.

**Example:** The patient was seen by Dr. Taylor, head of the rehabilitation program.

* Use a comma to set off a parenthetic expression.

**Example:** The patient had severe GERD, not a myocardial infarction, as confirmed by serial cardiac enzymes.

* Use a comma to separate a compound sentence.

Example: The patient had recently traveled to Mexico, and he had symptoms suggestive of acute gastroenteritis.

* Use a comma before and after the state name when preceded by a city name.

Example: The patient moved to Nashville, Tennessee, 10 years ago.

**CONJUNCTIONS**

Correlative conjunctions consist of two elements and must be used in pairs (both…and, not only…but also, either…or, neither…nor).

**NOTE:** When using either…or and neither…nor, match the number of the verb to the number of the nearest subject.

**Examples:** Neither the brother nor the sisters have been ill.

Neither the sisters nor the brother has any symptoms.

**CONTRACTIONS**

No contractions (i.e., don’t, can’t) are allowed in medical reports, even if dictated, unless they are dictated as part of a quote. Please remember, “it’s” is the contraction for “it is.”

**COPIES (Tagged versus non-tagged)**

**Tagged Reports (see Tags)**

* For accounts with a .P:CC tag, please place above the hard coded .P: at the bottom of the report.
* Reports requiring a CC when a .P:CC tag does not exist, must have the copies added after the final .P: and above the editor ID and dictator name.

**Example:**

.P:

cc: Tom Jones, MD

**NOTE: The hard coded final .P: at the bottom of the template signifies the end of all tagged information.** This will be above the editor ID and dictator name. Please do not delete this.

**Non tagged Reports**

Copies should be placed above the signature line unless otherwise specified.

**DATES**

Dates are written in the following format: 01/01/2005 or 12/02/05, NOT 1/1/05, 12/2/05.

In the body of a document, dates should be formatted as follows: 01/01/2005, January 1, 2005, or January 2005.

**NOTE:** When only the month and day are dictated, type in the year ONLY if the correct year can be ascertained.

**NOTE:** When only the month is dictated, type the expanded form of month **(**January, not Jan. and not 01).

Do not use commas when only the month and year are given.

When the month, day and year are given in this sequence, set off the year by commas.

**Example:** She was admitted on January 26, 2006, and discharged on January 27, 2006.

**DECIMALS AND FRACTIONS**

Use decimals for metric measurements and fractions for nonmetric measurements. A zero must be added prior to a decimal dose/metric measurement. A zero must not be added after a decimal point, unless dictated in a specific measurement or lab value.

* 0.5 cm, not 1/2 cm
* 1/2 inch, not 0.5 inch
* 0.25% not 1/4% (and not quarter percent)
* 0.25, 0.5, etc., not .25 or .5

**DIABETES MELLITUS TERMINOLOGY**

IDDM Insulin-dependent diabetes mellitus

NIDDM Non-insulin-dependent diabetes mellitus

Use Arabic numbers: Type 1, IDDM

Type 2, NIDDM

Hyphenate as follows: Insulin-dependent and non-insulin-dependent

**DIAGNOSES**

When “same” is dictated, repeat the entire diagnosis.

Do not number if only one diagnosis is dictated unless account specifics state otherwise.

Use commas in diagnoses to separate the condition from the location on or inside the body.

**Correct**: Laceration, forehead.

**Incorrect**: Laceration forehead.

**NOTE:** Change “diagnosis” to “diagnoses,” if more than one diagnosis is dictated.

**EPONYMS**

Entrada follows the AAMT guidelines with respect to formatting eponyms. Those guidelines state that the possessive form of an eponym should be used in the following circumstances:

* The possessive form **is dictated** (e.g., Down’s syndrome).
* Account specifics require the possessive form.
* When the eponym describes an omitted noun (e.g., He was diagnosed with Alzheimer’s, Down’s, Hodgkin’s).

**Exceptions:**

Apgar score

Down syndrome

Babinski sign

Gram stain

Hodgkin lymphoma

**FOLLOWUP, FOLLOW-UP, AND FOLLOW UP**

According to *The AAMT Book of Style,”* followup” is the preferred noun and adjective form; however, using “follow-up”as an adjective is acceptable.

I will follow up with the patient in 6 months. VERB

I will see the patient in followup. NOUN

I will get a followup MRI. ADJECTIVE

OR

#### I will get a follow-up MRI. ADJECTIVE

**General Rule:** Followup should be transcribed as one word except when used as a verb. The verb form is always two words (follow up).

**HEADINGS AND SUBHEADINGS (Tagged versus non tagged)**

**Example of a report with non-tagged headings and subheadings:**

**NOTE**: Non tagged headings should be transcribed as dictated in the format designated by the account.

HISTORY OF PRESENT ILLNESS

This 45-year-old female presents for…

.

REVIEW OF SYSTEMS

Patient reports weight loss…

PHYSICAL EXAMINATION

General: Weight 145 pounds, height 5 feet 11 inches, blood pressure 120/80,….

HEENT: Head is atraumatic, normocephalic…

Neck: Supple.

**Example of a report with tagged headings (.P:) and non-tagged headings and subheadings:**

**NOTE:** Tagged headings are specific to each account (see Tags).

.P:HISTORY OF PRESENT ILLNESS

This 45-year-old female presents for…

PAST MEDICAL HISTORY

The patient is……..

PAST SURGICAL HISTORY

She has a history of…..

.

.P:REVIEW OF SYSTEMS

Patient reports weight loss…

.P:PHYSICAL EXAMINATION

General: Weight 145 pounds, height 5 feet 11 inches, blood pressure 120/80,….

HEENT: Head is atraumatic, normocephalic…

Neck: Supple.

.P:ASSESSMENT AND PLAN

IMPRESSION

This lady has

PLAN

We will ……

**HOWEVER**

“However” is a conjunctive adverb. When the word *however* is used to join two complete sentences, it should be preceded by a semicolon and followed by a comma.

**Example:** His condition has improved; however, he still cannot be released.

The two independent clauses may also be written as two separate sentences.

**Example:** His condition has improved. He still cannot be released.

“However” may also be used to signify how much. In that instance, it would need no punctuation.

**Example:** However resistant he may be, he cannot be released.

**HYPHENS**

Use a hyphen to combine two or more words that are combined to modify the noun that follows.

**Example:** The patient is a well-developed, well-nourished male.

NO hyphen should be used if such adjectives follow a noun.

Example: The patient was well developed and well nourished.

NOTE: Eliminate the use of hyphens with numeric values and metric units when forming compound modifies (2 cm incision rather than 2-cm incision). See BOS 3rd edition.

Use hyphens in the following instances:

* For clarification (e.g., re-cover or re-create).
  + I will re-cover the chair with new fabric.
  + The patient’s record was mistakenly shredded; therefore, it will be necessary to re-create the files.
* In prefixes using the word self, (e.g., self-care, self-administered medication).
* With proper nouns and numbers (e.g., non-Hodgkin lymphoma, 6-pound baby).
* To identify adjacent intervertebral disk spaces (e.g., the L5-S1 level).

Most compound adjectives beginning with “self” are hyphenated.

* self-exam
* self-directed exercise program
* self-referred to a physician

Most compound adjectives beginning with “post” are not hyphenated.

* postoperative
* posttraumatic
* postreduction
* postpartum

**LABORATORY VALUES**

Urine specific gravity should always be transcribed as a single numeral followed by a period and three additional numerals, i.e., 1.010.

Insert a leading zero and a decimal in metric measurements less than one, i.e., 0.5 rather than .5. Do not drop a dictated zero, which may be used to indicate a very specific value: If “three point zero” is dictated, it should be transcribed as 3.0.

For clarity, the following format should be followed:

* WBC – white blood count (lab test).
* wbc – white blood cells (finding on a lab test).
* RBC – red blood count (lab test).
* rbc – red blood cells (finding on a lab test).

**LATIN TERMS**

The Institute for Safe Medicine Practices (ISMP) states it is now “commonplace” to combine Latin abbreviations with English expressions in medication dosage instructions.

**Examples:** q. day, q. week, q.4 hours, or q.4 h. (a space has been inserted after the numeral 4 in q.4 h. on the advice of the ISMP so that the number is more easily and clearly read. (The term *q. daily* is incorrect.)

Use a comma both before and after a Latin expression.

**Examples:** I will see her when she returns from vacation, i.e., in 2 weeks.

**MACROS/NORMALS**

* The dictator will verbally request by specific name the desired macro at the location where the macro must be inserted.
* The dictator will follow the macro and verbally indicate changes and the location of these changes.
* The macro must be edited to reflect all dictated changes.

**MEASUREMENTS**

Abbreviate all metric units of measure.

**Examples**:

**Correct:** 20 g **Incorrect**: 20 grams or 20 gr.

0.5 mg one-half milligram

3 cm 3 cms or “sonometer,” as sometimes dictated.

**NOTE:** Use mg to indicate milligram (s), whether singular or plural.

Spell out nonmetric units of measure (pound, ounce, inches, feet, yards, mile, etc., unless account specifics state otherwise.

Use a space before and after x when it is used in place of the word “by,” as in 4 x 4.

Do not repeat the unit of measure in measurements, e.g., 2 x 3 cm, not 2 cm x 3 cm.

Do not use a comma to separate two units of measure that describe the same thing.

**Example:** The infant weighed 5 pounds 3 ounces. (Not 5 pounds, 3 ounces).

Do not use apostrophe or quotation marks to indicate feet or inches.

**Example:** He is 5 feet 4 inches tall. (Not 5’4”).

**MEDICATIONS**

All brand names, trade names, and trademark names of medications must be capitalized. Generic medications must not be capitalized unless at the beginning of a sentence.

**NAMES**

Please verify correct physician name spelling through the Referring Physician list associated with the account. Do not guess at spelling! If you are unable to verify any name, please leave a blank and pend to QA/CR.

**NOTE**: It is acceptable to use the patient’s actual name in a report unless account specifics state otherwise.

**NUMBERS**

Numerals stand out from the surrounding text and serve a functional purpose in medical reports, where they should be used almost exclusively as opposed to spelled-out numbers. There are always exceptions to any rule; judgment and discretion are needed when deciding whether to use Arabic numerals or spell out numbers. Arabic numerals should be used exclusively in medical documents, unless a sentence begins with a number.

* Use numerals to express age, except at the beginning of a sentence.

**Examples:** The patient is a 2-year-old child…

Two-year-old Susie…

The patient is a 2-year 6-month-old child…

* Spell out numbers that begin a sentence, or recast the sentence.

**Example:** Ten days ago she began having headaches.

She began having headaches 10 days ago.

* Spell out numbers when they are used as pronouns.

**Examples:** You must do one or the other.

She will go with the two of them.

* Use a numeral when a number is followed by a symbol.

**Example:** 5%, not five %

* Spell out and hyphenate fractions of a whole, when they are dictated without a numeral.

**Example:** He drank one-half gallon of water.

* Use numerals to express mixed fractions.

**Examples:** He is 1-1/2 years old.

She is 35-3/7 weeks pregnant (NOT 35-3/7th weeks).

The mass was 3-1/2 inches in diameter.

He fell approximately 10-1/2 feet.

* Use decimals to express metric measurements.

**Example:** There was a 1.5 cm nodule in the left breast.

* Apostrophes in numbers

1. Use apostrophes to form plural of single letters or numbers, e.g., serial K’s, 4 x 4’s.

2. Do not use apostrophes for the following:

* WBCs, ECGs
* 200s, 50s, 1950s.
* The patient was born in the 1950s. cm, mg. (Not cms, mgs)
* Ordinals (ex. 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, etc.) may be used to show order or position in a series. Ordinals from first through ninth should be spelled out, with numerals used for numbers higher than 10.

**Examples:** This is her second postop visit.

There was a fracture of the right third finger at the first phalanx.

Her growth rate is at the 30th percentile.

* Do not use ordinals in dates.

**Examples:** Dictated: The patient was seen on the 21st of December.

Transcribed: The patient was seen on December 21, 2005.

* Use numerals to express Apgar ratings, and spell out numbers relating to minutes. This format draws attention to the scores.

**Example:** Apgar scores were 6 and 9 at one and five minutes.

* Arabic numerals are preferred by the American Diabetes Association for the designation of diabetes, e.g., type 1 and type 2. (Note: If a client requests Roman numerals, that request should be followed.)
* When two adjacent numbers are dictated, use an Arabic numeral for the number, which should be more strongly expressed.

Example: Darvocet-N 100 one or two q.4 h. p.r.n. for pain. (Dosage more strongly expressed than the number of tablets.)

* Please do not use ‘No.’ in place of the word "number."

Exception: ‘No.’ may be used in the trade name of a product or drug, i.e., Tylenol No. 3.

* When a doctor dictates the number of pills, capsules, tablets that are dispensed to a patient use a hashtag (#) if "number" is dictated before the numerals.

Example: The patient was given Tylenol No. 3, one to two 3 times a day, #30."

Exponentials – Because some clients (and some hospital software) will not allow the use of superscript or subscript characters, exponentials should be transcribed as in the following examples:

**Examples**: RBC 4.7 x 10 to the 6th power.

500 mg per sq m or 500 mg/sq m. (dictated as 500 mg per meter squared).

**Other preferred number formats:**

Salter type II fracture

Factor VIII deficiency

Stages I through IV or stage IA breast cancer.

Grades 1 through 4 prostate cancer.

Functional class 2 heart disease

4-0 silk sutures

Precordial leads V1 through V5

L5-S1 vertebra

Grade 2/6 systolic ejection murmur (unless roman numerals are requested).

Gravida 3, Para 2, Ab 1 or G3, P2-0-1-2.

**Dictated**  **Edited**

four to five 4 to 5 or 4-5

1 to 100,000 1:100,000

Twenty-twenty vision 20/20 vision

BP 120 over 80 BP 120/80

grade 2 over 6 grade 2/6

B positive blood type B positive blood type (not B+)

three point five centimeters 3.5 cm

point 5 centimeters 0.5 cm

ten to 20 percent 10% to 20%

When a dictator says “times three,” type “times three,” or “x3,” (not times 3 or x 3).

**NOTE**: Do not use an X to replace the word “times” if a noun follows the numeral.

Example: Keflex 500 mg b.i.d. for 7 days, not x7 days.

When a dictator says a mass “measured 5 by 10 by 3 centimeters,” type 5 x 10 x 3 cm.”

**OB/GYN TERMINOLOGY**

Obstetric history: Gravida 3, Para 2, Ab 1 or G3, P2, A1

G1, P3-0-1-2 or G3, 3-0-1-2 – NOT 3,0,1,2

Definition: Gravida – number of pregnancies, para – number of births;

abortus – abortions.

Station: 3, +2, 50% - this means the cervix is dilated to 3 cm, the presenting part of the fetus is at the +2 station within the pelvis, and the cervix is 50% effaced.

**PATIENT NAME**

Type the patient’s name in the text of a document as dictated unless stated otherwise in the account specifics.

**PERCENT SYMBOL**

The percent symbol may be used immediately following a numeral only, with no space between the numeral and the percent symbol. Spell out the word percent when there is no numeral immediately preceding the term.

**Examples:** The patient had a 50% chance of surviving surgery.

There was a several percent difference between the two.

Repeat the percent symbol when expressing a range.

**Example:** There is a 40% to 50% chance of recurrence.

**PLUS**

Write out the word “plus” when it means “more than.”

* She is at 40-plus-weeks’ gestation.
* She is 35-plus-weeks pregnant.
* There was 2+ pitting edema.
* He had 2+/5 peripheral pulses.

**PUNCTUATION**

* Space once after a comma, semicolon, or period.
* Space twice after a colon except when expressing a ratio.

**QUOTATION MARKS**

Quotation marks are only used to indicate a dictated quote. Always place commas and periods inside quotation marks.

**Example:** The patient stated, “The itching is driving me crazy,” and she scratched her arms throughout our meeting.

Direct patient quotes that contain offensive language should be transcribed verbatim because of the possibility of a healthcare record being required by a court of law. Any such remarks should be enclosed in quotation marks. All reports should be reported to Entrada QA/CR. (See also Blanks).

**RANGES**

The word “to” or a hyphen may be used when indicating a range of numbers. Please do not use a colon.

**Examples: She will be seen for followup in 3 - 4 weeks.**

**There was a 30% to 50% chance of recurrence.**

Blood pressure readings: In a range of blood pressure readings, please type out the word “over.” Do not use a virgule (/).

**Example**: 110-120 over 70-80

110 to 120 over 70 to 80

Do not use a hyphen if the following conditions are present:

* Either value is a number less than zero.
  + Example: Base excess is minus 3 (not -3).
* Either value includes a symbol (percent sign, virgule, etc.)
* Either value contains a decimal or colon.
* Either value contains more than 3 digits.
* The phrase “from…to,” “between….and,” or “from…through” is used.

**RATIOS**

* Use a colon to separate numeric values in ratios. Do not use a virgule (/).

**Example:** Dictated: One to one hundred thousand.

Transcribed: 1:100,000

* Use a virgule (/), a hyphen, or the word “to” in expressions that do not contain a numeric value.

**Examples:** male/female ratio

FEV/FVC ratio

**SEMICOLONS**

A semicolon indicates a pause in text that is stronger than a comma, but not a complete stop, as would be indicated by a period. Common uses of a semicolon include the following:

* To separate two complete sentences when a conjunction (and, but, or) is not used.

**Example:** The patient was late; he had been stalled in traffic.

* To separate a series of entries that contain internal commas (e.g. drug names/dosing schedules).

**Example:** Lortab 7.5 mg b.i.d., #5 given; Cipro 1 b.i.d. x10 days.

* To introduce a transitional expression when it joins two complete sentences.

**Examples**: He tried his best; however, he could not complete the test.

The patient was ill; therefore, he had to cancel his planned trip.

**SYMBOLS**

Please **do not use** the symbols shown below.

* Degree (°)
* Superscript (m2)
* Subscript (CO2)
* Trademark (TM)
* Ampersand (&)
* Accent mark (`)

The percent symbol (%) may be used.

**TAGS (TDD = TEMPLATE-DRIVEN DICTATION)**

Tags are coded headings, identified by the prefix .P: that correspond with particular fields of a template within the electronic medical record (EMR).

* A tagged heading consists of .P:HEADING (dot capital P colon no space valid heading in all caps).
* Each tagged heading will be requested by the dictator using the word “Tag”. For example: “tag Physical Exam”
* Tags may be entered by using the appropriate shortcut within EditOne or creating specific TDD entries into Autocorrect or productivity enhancement software.
* Tags are specific to each client and must not be duplicated within a document.
* At the beginning of each field, the .P: will serve as both the “beginning code” for that tagged heading and as the “ending code” for the tagged heading that preceded it, thus signifying the start of a new field in the EHR template.
* All dictated information **must** fall under a tagged heading.
* The patient’s name will autopopulate at the top of the report. The dictator’s name and editor’s ID will autopopulate at the bottom. This is not tagged information and will not be included within a tagged field.

**NOTE: The hard coded final .P: at the bottom of the template signifies the end of all tagged information.** This will be above the editor ID and dictator name. Please do not delete this.

**TIME FORMATTING**

The word “o’clock” should be dropped when reference is made to minutes past the hour, i.e., 4:30 p.m., not 4:30 o’clock.

The word “o’clock” should be used when describing the location of a lesion, i.e., The breast mass is located at 4 o’clock.

**TIME SPAN**

Preferred formats:

* One month’s history or a one-month history
* A few months’ time
* An hour’s delay or a one-hour delay
* A 2 weeks’ vacation or a 2-week vacation
* The patient is at 36-3/7 weeks’ gestation

**VERBATIM**

Good judgment should be exercised to ensure the report is complete, comprehensible, and consistent. Every effort should be made to maintain a dictator’s stylistic form. Minor dictated errors in grammar and verb tense should be corrected. However, one must never guess, interpret, add to, or interject one’s personal style to what may have been dictated.

**VERB TENSE**

**AGREEMENT OF SUBJECT AND VERB -** See the AHDI Book of Style, 3rd edition, rule 5.3, Agreement-Subjects & Verbs, pages 90-98.

* The verb must agree in number with the subject of a sentence (a noun or pronoun). A singular verb must be used with a singular subject, a plural verb with a plural subject.
* Subject-verb agreement must be corrected if dictated incorrectly.

**Example: Dictated:**The rash on the arms have not yet responded to medication.

**Transcribe:**The rash on the arms has not yet responded to medication.

* For verb tense, be consistent throughout a paragraph unless the dictator is referring to a specific time frame.
* When a compound subject is joined by the word “and,” the verb must be plural even if the word closest to the verb is singular.

**Example**: No masses and adenopathy are felt.

Hemoglobin and hematocrit are 14 and 40, respectively.

###### VIRGULES

Avoid using more than one virgule (/) per expression.

**Examples:** 5 mL/tsp per day **not** 5 mL/tsp/day.

4 mg/kg per minute **not** 4 mg/kg/min.

82 beats per minute **not** 82 beats/min (min is not an accepted abbreviation)

**Exception:** More than one virgule per expression may be used in chemotherapy protocols.

Dates: A virgule is preferred, rather than a hyphen

Fractions: A virgule is used to express fractions; however, a fraction used as an adjective should be spelled out in full.

**Examples:** one-half normal saline, two-thirds full, etc.

Blood pressure values: See under Ranges.