

[Potentially] Acceptable Abbreviations on Prescription Health Product Labels in Canada

Abbreviation	Intended Meaning	Sources	AGREE?	DISAGREE?	COMMENTS (risk of miscommunication, alternative abbreviations, etc.)
ABBREVIATED DRUG NAME SUFFIXES					
CR	controlled release	Health Canada's Drug Product Database, Ontario Drug Benefit Formulary, ISMP's List of Products with Drug Name Suffixes, Chermak TE, Lambert BL. JAPhA. 2009;49(3):399-406, Shultz J, Stroscher L, Nenshi Nathoo S, et al. Can J Hosp Pharm. 2011;64(4):246-251			
EC	enteric coated	Health Canada's Drug Product Database, Ontario Drug Benefit Formulary, ISMP Safety Alert (2010 Jan/Feb), ISMP's List of Products with Drug Name Suffixes			
ER	extended release	Health Canada's Drug Product Database, Ontario Drug Benefit Formulary, ISMP Safety Alert (2010 Jan/Feb), ISMP's List of Products with Drug Name Suffixes, Chermak TE, Lambert BL. JAPhA. 2009;49(3):399-406, Shultz J, Stroscher L, Nenshi Nathoo S, et al. Can J Hosp Pharm. 2011;64(4):246-251			
LA	long-acting	Health Canada's Drug Product Database, ISMP Canada Safety Bulletin (2014 Dec 18), Ontario Drug Benefit Formulary, ISMP's List of Products with Drug Name Suffixes, Chermak TE, Lambert BL. JAPhA. 2009;49(3):399-406			
ODT	orally disintegrating tablet	Health Canada's Drug Product Database, CDER Guidance for industry: best practices in developing proprietary names for drugs, Ontario Drug Benefit Formulary, ISMP's List of Products with Drug Name Suffixes			
SR	slow or sustained release	Health Canada's Drug Product Database, Ontario Drug Benefit Formulary, ISMP's List of Products with Drug Name Suffixes, Chermak TE, Lambert BL. JAPhA. 2009;49(3):399-406, Shultz J, Stroscher L, Nenshi Nathoo S, et al. Can J Hosp Pharm. 2011;64(4):246-251			
XL	extended release	Health Canada's Drug Product Database, ISMP's List of Products with Drug Name Suffixes, Chermak TE, Lambert BL. JAPhA. 2009;49(3):399-406			
XR	extended release	Health Canada's Drug Product Database, CDER Guidance for industry: best practices in developing proprietary names for drugs, ISMP's List of Products with Drug Name Suffixes, Chermak TE, Lambert BL. JAPhA. 2009;49(3):399-406			
ROUTES OF ADMINISTRATION					
PO	by mouth	HSE Code of Practice for Healthcare Records Management, Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care List, Standard Abbreviation List of the Hospital Authority of Hong Kong			
IM	intramuscular	Health Canada's Drug Product Database, ISMP's List of Products with Drug Name Suffixes, WHO's Management of Drugs at Health Centre Level – Training Manual, European Guideline on the readability of the labelling and package leaflet of medicinal products for human use, HSE Code of Practice for Healthcare Records Management, Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care List, Standard Abbreviation List of the Hospital Authority of Hong Kong			
IV	intravenous	Health Canada's Drug Product Database, ISMP's List of Products with Drug Name Suffixes, WHO's Management of Drugs at Health Centre Level – Training Manual, European Guideline on the readability of the labelling and package leaflet of medicinal products for human use,			

		HSE Code of Practice for Healthcare Records Management, Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care List, Standard Abbreviation List of the Hospital Authority of Hong Kong			
PR	per rectum	HSE Code of Practice for Healthcare Records Management, Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care List, Standard Abbreviation List of the Hospital Authority of Hong Kong			
PV	per vagina	HSE Code of Practice for Healthcare Records Management, Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care List, Standard Abbreviation List of the Hospital Authority of Hong Kong			
MEASURES OF STRENGTH					
kg	kilogram	Canadian Weights and Measures Act, ISMP's Principles of designing a medication label for community and mail order pharmacy prescription packages, ISMP's Draft Guidelines for the Safe Electronic Communication of Medication Information, HSE Code of Practice for Healthcare Records Management Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care Guideline			
g	gram	Health Canada Guidance – Labelling of Pharmaceutical Drugs for Human Use, ISMP's Principles of designing a medication label for community and mail order pharmacy prescription packages, ISMP's Draft Guidelines for the Safe Electronic Communication of Medication Information, WHO's Management of Drugs at Health Centre Level – Training Manual, HSE Code of Practice for Healthcare Records Management, Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care			
mg	milligram	Health Canada Guidance – Labelling of Pharmaceutical Drugs for Human Use, CAN/CSA-Z264.2-99 - Labelling of drug ampoules, vials, and prefilled syringes, ISMP's Principles of designing a medication label for community and mail order pharmacy prescription packages, ISMP's Draft Guidelines for the Safe Electronic Communication of Medication Information, WHO's Management of Drugs at Health Centre Level – Training Manual, HSE Code of Practice for Healthcare Records Management, Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care			
mcg	microgram	Health Canada Guidance – Labelling of Pharmaceutical Drugs for Human Use, ISMP Canada's Do Not Use List, Document for Industry – Good Label and Package Practices Guide for Prescription Drugs, CDER's Guidance for industry: safety considerations for container labels and carton labeling design to minimize medication errors, ISMP's Principles of designing a medication label for community and mail order pharmacy prescription packages, ISMP's Draft Guidelines for the Safe Electronic Communication of Medication Information, ISMP's list of error-prone abbreviations, symbols and dose designations			
L	litre	Canadian Weights and Measures Act, ISMP's Principles of designing a medication label for community and mail order pharmacy prescription packages, HSE Code of Practice for Healthcare Records Management, Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care List			
mL	millilitre	Canadian Weights and Measures Act, Health Canada Guidance – Labelling of Pharmaceutical Drugs for Human Use, CAN/CSA-Z264.2-99 - Labelling of drug ampoules, vials, and prefilled syringes, Document for Industry – Good Label and Package Practices Guide for Prescription Drugs, NCPDP Recommendations and Guidance for Standardizing the Dosing Designations on Prescription Container Labels of Oral Liquid Medications, ISMP's Principles of designing a medication label for community and mail order pharmacy prescription packages, WHO's Management of Drugs at Health Centre Level – Training Manual, HSE Code of Practice for Healthcare Records Management, NHS Design for patient safety: guidelines for the safe on-screen display of medication information, Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care			
mEq	milliequivalent	CAN/CSA-Z264.2-99 - Labelling of drug ampoules, vials, and prefilled syringes, ISMP's Principles of designing a medication label for community and mail order pharmacy prescription packages, ISMP's Draft Guidelines for the Safe Electronic Communication of Medication Information,			

		Health Quality and Safety Commission New Zealand			
mg/kg	milligram per kilogram	Health Canada Guidance – Labelling of Pharmaceutical Drugs for Human Use, WHO's Management of Drugs at Health Centre Level – Training Manual			
mg/m ²	milligram per metre squared	Health Canada Guidance – Labelling of Pharmaceutical Drugs for Human Use			
mol	mole	Canadian Weights and Measures Act			
mmol	millimole	CAN/CSA-Z264.2-99 - Labelling of drug ampoules, vials, and prefilled syringes, ISMP's Principles of designing a medication label for community and mail order pharmacy prescription packages, ISMP's Draft Guidelines for the Safe Electronic Communication of Medication Information, HSE Code of Practice for Healthcare Records Management, Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care			
ppm	parts per million	The International System of Units (SI)			
DOSAGE FORMS					
amp	ampoule	WHO's Management of Drugs at Health Centre Level – Training Manual			
cap	capsule	WHO's Management of Drugs at Health Centre Level – Training Manual, Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care List			
inj	injection	Ontario Drug Benefit Formulary, Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care List			
oint	ointment	Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care List			
supp	suppository	WHO's Management of Drugs at Health Centre Level – Training Manual, Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care List			
tab	tablet	WHO's Management of Drugs at Health Centre Level – Training Manual, Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care List			
susp	suspension	Ontario Drug Benefit Formulary			
OTHER ABBREVIATIONS					
BMI	body mass index	HSE Code of Practice for Healthcare Records Management			
BSA	body surface area	HSE Code of Practice for Healthcare Records Management			
DIN	drug identification number	Health Canada Guidance – Labelling of Pharmaceutical Drugs for Human Use, CAN/CSA-Z264.2-99 - Labelling of drug ampoules, vials, and prefilled syringes			
EXP	expiry date	Health Canada Guidance – Labelling of Pharmaceutical Drugs for Human Use, Document for Industry – Good Label and Package Practices Guide for Prescription Drugs, European Medicines Agency. Appendix IV			
Lot	lot number	Health Canada Guidance – Labelling of Pharmaceutical Drugs for Human Use, Document for Industry – Good Label and Package Practices Guide for Prescription Drugs, European Medicines Agency. Appendix IV			
Lot No.	lot number	Health Canada Guidance – Labelling of Pharmaceutical Drugs for Human Use, Document for Industry – Good Label and Package Practices Guide for Prescription Drugs			
Rx	prescription	WHO's Management of Drugs at Health Centre Level – Training Manual			
JA	January	CAN/CSA-Z264.2-99 - Labelling of drug ampoules, vials, and prefilled syringes, Document for Industry – Good Label and Package Practices Guide for Prescription Drugs, CSHP Drug packaging and labelling: Guidelines for manufacturers			
FE	February	CAN/CSA-Z264.2-99 - Labelling of drug ampoules, vials, and prefilled syringes, Document for Industry – Good Label and Package Practices Guide for Prescription Drugs, CSHP Drug packaging and labelling: Guidelines for manufacturers			
MR	March	CAN/CSA-Z264.2-99 - Labelling of drug ampoules, vials, and prefilled syringes, Document for Industry – Good Label and Package Practices Guide for Prescription Drugs, CSHP Drug packaging and labelling: Guidelines for manufacturers			
AL	April	CAN/CSA-Z264.2-99 - Labelling of drug ampoules, vials, and prefilled syringes, Document for Industry – Good Label and Package Practices Guide for Prescription Drugs, CSHP Drug packaging and labelling: Guidelines for manufacturers			
MA	May	CAN/CSA-Z264.2-99 - Labelling of drug ampoules, vials, and prefilled syringes, Document for Industry – Good Label and Package Practices Guide for Prescription Drugs, CSHP Drug packaging and labelling: Guidelines for manufacturers			
JN	June	CAN/CSA-Z264.2-99 - Labelling of drug ampoules, vials, and prefilled syringes, Document for Industry – Good Label and Package Practices Guide for Prescription Drugs,			

		CSHP Drug packaging and labelling: Guidelines for manufacturers			
JL	July	CAN/CSA-Z264.2-99 - Labelling of drug ampoules, vials, and prefilled syringes, Document for Industry – Good Label and Package Practices Guide for Prescription Drugs, CSHP Drug packaging and labelling: Guidelines for manufacturers			
AU	August	CAN/CSA-Z264.2-99 - Labelling of drug ampoules, vials, and prefilled syringes, Document for Industry – Good Label and Package Practices Guide for Prescription Drugs, CSHP Drug packaging and labelling: Guidelines for manufacturers			
SE	September	CAN/CSA-Z264.2-99 - Labelling of drug ampoules, vials, and prefilled syringes, Document for Industry – Good Label and Package Practices Guide for Prescription Drugs, CSHP Drug packaging and labelling: Guidelines for manufacturers			
OC	October	CAN/CSA-Z264.2-99 - Labelling of drug ampoules, vials, and prefilled syringes, Document for Industry – Good Label and Package Practices Guide for Prescription Drugs, CSHP Drug packaging and labelling: Guidelines for manufacturers			
NO	November	CAN/CSA-Z264.2-99 - Labelling of drug ampoules, vials, and prefilled syringes, Document for Industry – Good Label and Package Practices Guide for Prescription Drugs, CSHP Drug packaging and labelling: Guidelines for manufacturers			
DE	December	CAN/CSA-Z264.2-99 - Labelling of drug ampoules, vials, and prefilled syringes, Document for Industry – Good Label and Package Practices Guide for Prescription Drugs, CSHP Drug packaging and labelling: Guidelines for manufacturers			
SUN	Sunday	Australian Commission on Safety and Quality and Health Care Guideline			
MON	Monday	Australian Commission on Safety and Quality and Health Care Guideline			
TUE	Tuesday	Australian Commission on Safety and Quality and Health Care Guideline			
WED	Wednesday	Australian Commission on Safety and Quality and Health Care Guideline			
THU	Thursday	Australian Commission on Safety and Quality and Health Care Guideline			
FRI	Friday	Australian Commission on Safety and Quality and Health Care Guideline			
SAT	Saturday	Australian Commission on Safety and Quality and Health Care Guideline			