

Pharmacy sig codes

74 exam-relevant codes · ⚠ = ISMP error-prone (recognize, never write)

Frequency

Code	Meaning
QD ⚠	once daily — write “daily”
BID	twice daily
TID	three times daily
QID	four times daily
QOD ⚠	every other day — write “every other day”
q12h	every 12 hours
q8h	every 8 hours
q6h	every 6 hours
q4h	every 4 hours
QHS ⚠	at bedtime — write “nightly at bedtime”
QAM	every morning
PRN	as needed
STAT	immediately
TIW ⚠	three times a week — write “3 times weekly”

Timing

Code	Meaning
AC	before meals
PC	after meals
HS ⚠	at bedtime — write “at bedtime”

Route

Code	Meaning
PO	by mouth
SL	sublingual (under the tongue)
IM	intramuscular
IV	intravenous
IVP	IV push
IVPB	IV piggyback
SubQ	subcutaneous
SC ⚠	subcutaneous — write “subcut or subcutaneous”
SQ ⚠	subcutaneous — write “subcut or subcutaneous”
PR	rectally
PV	vaginally
TOP	topically
INH	inhalation
per os ⚠	by mouth — write “PO or 'by mouth'”
AD ⚠	right ear — write “right ear”
AS ⚠	left ear — write “left ear”
AU ⚠	each ear — write “each ear”
OD ⚠	right eye — write “right eye”
OS ⚠	left eye — write “left eye”
OU ⚠	each eye — write “each eye”

Dosage form

Code	Meaning
tab	tablet
cap	capsule
susp	suspension
sol	solution
supp	suppository
ung	ointment
gtt	drop
MDI	metered-dose inhaler

Measurement

Code	Meaning
mL	milliliter
cc ⚠	cubic centimeter (= 1 mL) — write “mL”
L	liter
mg	milligram
g	gram
mcg	microgram
µg ⚠	microgram — write “mcg”
kg	kilogram
mEq	milliequivalent
gr	grain (1 gr = 65 mg)
tsp	teaspoon (5 mL)
tbsp	tablespoon (15 mL)
fl oz	fluid ounce (30 mL)
U ⚠	unit — write “unit”
IU ⚠	international unit — write “unit”

Instructions

Code	Meaning
NPO	nothing by mouth
AAA	apply to affected area
SS ⚠	one half (also read as sliding scale — context decides) — write “one-half or sliding scale, written out”
UD	as directed
DAW	dispense as written
NR	no refills
qs	a sufficient quantity
qs ad	add a sufficient quantity to make
aa	of each
disp	dispense
sig	directions (write on label)
MS ⚠	morphine sulfate — write “morphine sulfate”
MSO4 ⚠	morphine sulfate — write “morphine sulfate”
MgSO4 ⚠	magnesium sulfate — write “magnesium sulfate”

