



# Department of Surgery

## NYU Langone Medical Center

### Bellevue Hospital Center

### *Dangerous Abbreviations*

Abbreviation/Dose Expression	Intended Meaning	Misinterpretation	Correction
IU	International Unit	Mistaken as IV or 10	Write "international unit"
U or u	Unit	Read as a zero (0) or a four (4), causing a 10 fold overdose or greater (4U seen as "40 or 4u seen as 44".	Use "unit"
MSO4 MgSO4 MS	Morphine sulfate Magnesium sulfate	Confused for one another – Can mean morphine sulfate or magnesium sulfate	Write "morphine sulfate" or "magnesium sulfate"
QD or q.d.	Everyday	Mistaken as q.i.d., especially if the period after the "q" or the tail of the "q" is misunderstood as an "i".	Use "daily"
QOD or q.o.d.	Every other day	Misinterpreted as "q.d." (daily) or "q.i.d" (four times daily) if the "o" is poorly written.	Use "every other day".
Zero after decimal point (1.0)	1 mg	Misread as 10 mg if the decimal point is not seen	Do not use terminal zeros for doses expressed in whole numbers.
No zero before decimal point (.5)	0.5 mg	Misread as 5 mg	Always use zero before a decimal when the dose is less than a whole unit.