

# PRESCRIPTION




# PRESCRIPTION

**“A Prescription is an order written by a physician, dentist, or veterinarian to a pharmacist to compound and dispense a specific medication for the patient”.**

**An important feature of a prescription is that it contains directions for the patient to follow when taking the drug and directions for the pharmacist about what type of dosage form to be dispensed.**

## Format of prescription

Prescriber's name      license no. (Professional degree)	
Address Office telephone numbers	
Patient's name	Date
Address	
	
Drug name and strength, Quantity	
WARNING	PRESCRIBER'S SIGNATURE
	Prescriber's other identification data

## PARTS OF A PRESCRIPTION

1. Date
2. Name & age of the patient
3. Superscription
4. Inscription
5. Subscription
6. Signatura
7. Renewal instruction
8. Signature, address and registration number of the prescriber

1. **Date** - Date on the prescription helps the pharmacist to know when the medicine was last dispensed. In the case of habit forming drug the date prevents the misuses of the drug.
2. **Name and age of the patient** - By name of the patient the prescription can be identified. Age of the patient is especially required for child patients.
3. **Superscription** - It is represented by a Latin symbol  $\mathcal{R}_x$  which means "take thou" or "you take".
4. **Inscription** - This is the main part of the prescription. It contains the name of the prescribed medicaments.
5. **Subscription** - In this part the prescriber gives directions to the pharmacist regarding the dosage form to be dispensed.
6. **Signatura** - It is usually written as "Sig". In this part the prescriber gives direction to the patients. The instructions may include
  - The quantity to be taken
  - The route of administration
  - The frequency and timing of the administration
  - Other special instructions

## Sources of error in prescriptions

1. Abbreviation
2. Name of the drug
3. Strength of the preparation
4. Dosage form of the drug prescribed
5. Instructions to the patient
6. Incompatibilities

1. **Abbreviation:** It is preferable to avoid this types of misleading abbreviations.

E.g. 'SSKI' is the abbreviated term of 'Saturated Solution of Potassium Iodide'.

2. **Name of the drugs:** Names of some drugs (especially the brand names) either sounds alike or looks alike (SALA). So any error in the name of a drug will lead to major danger to the patient.

E.g. Althrocin – Eltroxin, Acidin – Apidin etc.

3. **Strength of the preparation:** Drugs are available in the market in various strengths. So a drug must not be dispensed if the strength is not written in the prescription.

Ex. Paracetamol tablet 500mg should not be dispensed when no strength is mentioned in the prescription.



4. **Dosage form of the drug prescribe:** Many drugs are available in more than one dosage forms.

Ex. Liquid, tablets, injections or suppositories. The dosage form intended for the patient must be mentioned in the prescription.

5. **Instructions to the patient:** Some times the instruction for a certain preparation is either omitted or mentioned partially. The quantity of the drug to be taken, the frequency and timing of administration and route of administration should be mentioned clearly.

6. **Incompatibilities:** It is essential to check that there is no pharmaceutical or therapeutic incompatibilities in the prescription. If more than two medicines are prescribed then it is the duty of the pharmacist to see whether their interactions will produce any harm to the patient or not.

Ex. Tetracycline should not be taken with milk or antacid.



# HANDLING OF PRESCRIPTION

- ◆ The following procedures should be adopted by the pharmacist while handling the prescription for compounding and dispensing:
  - (i) Receiving
  - (ii) Reading and checking
  - (iii) Collecting and weighing the materials
  - (iv) Compounding, labelling and packaging

- (I) **Receiving:** The prescription should be received by the pharmacist himself/ herself. While receiving a prescription from a patient a pharmacist should not change his/her facial expression that gives an impression to the patient that he/she is confused or surprised after seeing the prescription.
  
- (II) **Reading and checking:** Reading the prescription and checking for Legality, Legibility, Completeness and correctness.
  - ◆ **A. Legality:** A prescription is legal when:
    - ✓ It is written (can also be typed) by a R.M.P
    - ✓ Signed by the R.M.P
    - ✓ Has all the information required to be contained with respect to parts of prescription.
  - ◆ **B. Legibility:** Legibility is a problem requiring alertness and critical judgment on the part of the pharmacist. Careless handwriting and similarity in spelling of names of different drugs add to the difficulty.

Example – Prednisone and Prednisolone, Digoxin and Digitoxin, when handwriting is illegible, the best thing to do is to contact the physician over the phone and confirm.

**(III ) Collecting and weighing:** material Before compounding a prescription, gather all essential items from shelves or drawers and place them on the left side of the balance. After measuring, keep each material on the correct side of the balance. After compounding the prescription, the ingredients are returned to their original shelves/drawers. While compounding the label of every container of material should be checked thrice in the following manner:

- (i) When collected from the shelves/drawers.
- (ii) When the materials are measured.
- (iii) When the containers are replaced back to the shelves/drawers.

**(IV) Compounding, labeling and packaging:** Compounding should be done one at a time. Compounding on a clean table is best. Clean and dry all essential equipment. The preparation should be made as directed by the doctor or as specified in the pharmacopoeia or formulary. The compounded medicine should be put in a suitable container with the proper label. The pharmacist should describe the manner of administration, usage, and storage of the prescription to the patient.

Thank  
you!