



Math Study Strategies

Math for Nursing Basic Rules for Reading Physician Prescription

To read correct a prescription as well as a label for the medication on hand the nurse needs to be familiar with the following rules:

- ❖ Understanding the meaning of the unit of measure (length, weight, volume, time, temperature, flow rate, etc.)
- ❖ Understanding the meaning of prefixes for unit of measures (kilo, milli, centi, micro, etc)
- ❖ Recognizing the correct abbreviations (mL, kg, gr, mcg, gtt, etc.)
- ❖ Knowing that quantity is written in arabic numerals (1, 2, 3, etc.)
- ❖ Knowing that a full space is used between the numeral and the abbreviation (ex: 0.5 mL not 0.5mL)
- ❖ Knowing that fractional parts usually are written as decimal fraction (0.5 mL not $\frac{1}{2}$ mL)
- ❖ Knowing that zero need to be placed in front of the decimal point to avoid confusion (ex: 0.5 mL not .5mL.)
- ❖ Knowing that unnecessary zeros are omitted to avoid misreading (ex: 0.5 mL not 0.50mL.)
- ❖ Understanding that 1 mL = 1 cc.
- ❖ Understanding that if the unit of measure is expressed on a lower scale the numer will be larger.
- ❖ Recognizing the method and time of administration for medication, the relationship between prescription and body weight or body surface area, number of doses to be administered and the type of syringes, or other devices to be used.