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PHARMACEUTICAL TERMINOLOGY

Fifth lecture

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Read the text, translate and pick up the new pharmaceutical terms

The language of prescription was unique in Great Britain some half a century ago when all the names of drugs were Latinized. It was possible because the physician used only dosed drugs. Today all prescriptions are written in English. The only Latin which is used is few traditional abbreviations in the direction to the pharmacist and on the label.



A more serious problem is the naming of drugs. In the old days, drugs had only one official name and drug companies did not have many trade names. At present, each drug has at least three names. They are the chemical name, the so-called generic name, and trade name. The chemical name is difficult to use and remember except for the simplest drugs because of its length and complexity.

The trade or brand name is the private property of the drug company. Most drugs have several trade names because each company producing the drug gives it a different name. It is common practice to capitalize the first letter of a trade name.

The generic or official name is shorter than the chemical name. It is public property and any drug manufacturer may use it. There is only one generic name for each drug. The majority of physicians use trade names in prescriptions. Generic name should be used as the language of prescription. It is known to the specialists of medicine and pharmacy and it is not known to general public. For example, ampicillin is the generic name of a well-known antibiotic; alpha-aminobenzyl P- its chemical name; Omnipen, Penbritin, Polycillin, etc. are its trade names.

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Dosage. It goes without saying that a prescription cannot be written without a very good knowledge of the dose effects of drugs. Each drug has its own dose specification dependent on pharmacological properties, metabolism of the drug. It should have the following information:

1. Name and address of the physician and his telephone number. The title M.D. (Medical Doctor) should follow the physician's name to indicate that he or she is a physician.
2. Usually at the top - patient's name, address, age and the date.
3. Symbol Rx. This is about the same as "Dear Sir" on top of a letter. It comes from Latin and means a command for a patient "you take".

4. The body of the prescription contains the name of the drug and the dose.
5. Under the body of the prescription should be written the directions to the pharmacist. It is called subscription. In modern prescriptions it consists only of the form of the medicine (powder, tablet, capsules, etc.) and the number of units.
6. The directions to the patient as to how he should take the medicine. It is called the label or "signature".