

The Book of Style for
Medical Transcription, 3rd Ed.
Workbook

The Association for Healthcare Documentation Integrity

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How to Use This Book

This workbook is designed to be used as a supplemental study guide in coordination with *The Book of Style for Medical Transcription*, 3rd edition—either in print format or online subscription, alone or through Benchmark KB. Students and practitioners should coordinate the practical application exercises in this chapter with those corresponding chapters in the Book of Style.

Each chapter contains chapter objectives to help educators, particularly, align the objectives in the corresponding Book of Style with course objectives for transcription style as established by their educational programs as well as those in the AHDI Model Curriculum. In addition to objectives, virtually all chapters in this text offer the following practical applications:

- Tips and strategies for creating flashcards and ancillary study materials to augment the approach to this information.
- Multiple-choice questions provided in each chapter are designed to assist the student and/or practitioner with applying standards outlined in this text to questions of a type and format similar to those that would be encountered on AHDI credentialing examinations. Answers to these questions can be found at the end of each chapter.
- Proofreading exercises that allow the reader to apply the principles of style outlined in the chapter to simulated editing scenarios where identification of error is critical to quality assurance in a transcription setting. Answers to these exercises can be found at the end of each chapter.
- Corresponding dictation practice via dictated .mp3 files housed on the CD-ROM that accompanies this text. Early chapters that focus on the legal record, formatting, privacy, and security do not have accompanying dictation exercises. Answers to the dictation practice exercises can be found in Appendix A in the back of the book as well as on the CD-ROM itself.

You'll note that chapters 25-28 of the Book of Style are not addressed in this text. These industry trends and standards chapters represent information greatly subject to change given the rapid evolution of technology and the constantly changing standards for documentation and data exchange that exist in the industry. MTs should maintain professional membership in AHDI to stay abreast of these trends, drivers, and changes on the horizon for our sector.



Punctuation

Learning objectives for this chapter:

- ✓ Understand and apply *Book of Style* (BOS) standards related to all forms of punctuation, particularly the complex rules for comma placement to separate and to set off.
- ✓ Accurately identify these standards via multiple-choice questions that prepare you for AHDI credentialing examinations.
- ✓ Apply your knowledge of these standards to proofreading/editing exercises that prepare you for practical application in the workplace and on AHDI credentialing examinations.

Introduction

Punctuation marks serve a vital role in sentence construction. They are relationship indicators when word order alone is not sufficient to convey meaning. Without major punctuation, there would be no visual boundaries around the written word to guide the reader from one concept, or idea, to the next. Without punctuation, documentation would be a visual mess.

As a medical transcriptionist, you will be tasked with accurately punctuating the sentences dictated to you; the knack of incorporating this into the natural flow of your transcription will develop over time. This area of transcription can be particularly frustrating to the MT, since physicians do not always dictate sentence flow in a manner that facilitates clean punctuation, and many will attempt to dictate punctuation where it should not be placed.

This is one of the few areas in the report where MTs are encouraged *not* to rely on physician direction. As with spelling, physicians cannot always be relied upon to provide accurate direction with documentation. Many will attempt to dictate punctuation as part of the report. Occasionally, you will encounter a dictator who possesses the language skills that might make this helpful. However, this is not always the case. A physician, whose primary skill set lies in the clinical arena, cannot be relied upon to have advanced writing skills, and it is the MT's responsibility to ensure that punctuation is judiciously applied to the patient record.

Knowledge of punctuation rules and a very clear understanding of applying these rules will be essential to producing a quality document. An MT who is relying on a vague or "general" understanding of punctuation will encounter difficulty in this area. For example, some people are under the mistaken impression that commas should be placed anywhere that you "pause" in the sentence. An MT will quickly discover that this rule is impossible to apply to dictation that is delivered by providers who either chronically pause throughout their dictation or *never* pause from the moment they begin a report until they sign off from it.

There are many clear rules governing the placement of punctuation in formal writing. MTs should avoid the random and haphazard placement of punctuation, particularly commas, and begin to develop a substantive ability to analyze sentences; determine the role and function of the words, phrases, and clauses within those sentences; and apply punctuation therein with informed confidence.

Tips and Strategies for this Chapter:

- *Read the chapter thoroughly, highlighting or underlining references that are unfamiliar to you, paying particular attention to highlighted examples demonstrating inclusion and omission of key punctuation marks.*
- *Practice identifying the placement or omission of punctuation marks, especially commas, in sample clinical reports or the answer keys for your transcription module, providing standards-driven rationale for each omission and inclusion to help you better understand the why behind placement of commas in written language.*
- *Familiarize yourself with the chapter index found in the margin on the first page of this chapter in your BOS (pages 103-104) and practice navigating the chapter using the index.*

Exam Prep Assessment

Apply your understanding and knowledge of Chapter 6 to the multiple-choice exam prep questions below.

1. Use a period:
 - A. at the end of a direct question.
 - B. after numbers in an enumerated list when they are enclosed in parentheses.
 - C. with lowercased abbreviations and acronyms.
 - D. with abbreviated metric units of measure.

2. Which represents correct use of quotation marks?
 - A. Did he say he "needed his pain medication"?
 - B. He is a well-developed, well-nourished male standing 6'2" tall.
 - C. The patient complained of a "funny feeling" in her legs.
 - D. All of the above.

3. A *suspensive* hyphen is used correctly in which of these sentences?
 - A. She complained of 4- to 6-weeks of intermittent headaches.
 - B. She complained of a 4-6 week history of intermittent headaches.
 - C. She complained of 4-to-6 weeks of intermittent headaches.
 - D. She complained of a 4- to 6-week history of intermittent headaches.

4. Use a question mark:
 - A. at the end of an indirect question.
 - B. at the end of a direct question.
 - C. when the physician dictates "questionable" in relation to the diagnosis.
 - D. All of the above.

5. A *separating* comma is needed in which of the following sentences?
 - A. Despite having 9/10 pain on arrival to the ER the patient refused medication for pain.
 - B. This 52-year-old black male presented to my office for consultation.

- C. Initial laboratory workup revealed a WBC of 2200.
 - D. Today we will get a CBC before she leaves the office.
6. Use commas to separate:
- A. laboratory values of a single panel or test.
 - B. direct dialogue from the rest of the sentence.
 - C. chromosome number and sex chromosome in a genetic expression.
 - D. All of the above.
7. Which is correct?
- A. Her time on the treadmill was 13-minutes, 43-seconds.
 - B. Her time on the treadmill was 13 minutes 43 seconds.
 - C. Her time on the treadmill was 13 minutes, 43 seconds.
 - D. Her time on the treadmill was 13-minutes 43-seconds.
8. All of these are conditions for using a hyphen in a range expression *except*:
- A. Decimals and/or commas do not appear in the numeric values.
 - B. Neither value is accompanied by a symbol.
 - C. Neither value contains three or more digits.
 - D. Neither value is a negative.
9. Which is a correct fractional expression?
- A. 3-1/2 feet
 - B. one fourth completed
 - C. 6 1/4 inches
 - D. 2-1/2-pounds
10. Use a virgule (/) for the word *per* when:
- A. the construction involves at least one English unit of measure.
 - B. at least one element includes a specific numeric quantity.
 - C. at least one element includes a fractional expression.
 - D. None of the above.

11. Which is transcribed correctly?

- A. The patient says she has been compliant with her medications, however her husband questions this.
- B. The patient says she has been compliant with her medications, however, her husband questions this.
- C. The patient says she has been compliant with her medications; however her husband questions this.
- D. The patient says she has been compliant with her medications; however, her husband questions this.

12. All of the following are correct expressions of a compound modifier *except*:

- A. up-to-date immunizations.
- B. doctor-patient relationship.
- C. lovely sounding voice.
- D. severely damaged tissue.

13. Which of the following is punctuated correctly?

- A. The patient was brought to the OR, and after being placed in the dorsal lithotomy position, was prepped and draped in the usual sterile fashion.
- B. The patient was brought to the OR, and, after being placed in the dorsal lithotomy position, was prepped and draped in the usual sterile fashion.
- C. The patient was brought to the OR and after being placed in the dorsal lithotomy position was prepped and draped in the usual sterile fashion.
- D. The patient was brought to the OR and after being placed in the dorsal lithotomy position, was prepped and draped in the usual sterile fashion.

14. A hyphen is used appropriately in all of the following *except*:

- A. There was a jagged, 3-inch laceration on the anterior calf that required reapproximation and closure in the ER.
- B. She progressed rapidly through end-stage labor and delivered a healthy baby boy weighing 7-pounds 4-ounces.
- C. There was a well-circumscribed nodular lesion on her right upper arm with a 1.5 cm diameter.
- D. He described his work over the weekend as "back-breaking."

15. Which eponym is expressed correctly?

- A. Right and left Jackson Pratt drains were placed to assist with postoperative drainage.
- B. Her past medical history is significant for diagnosis with Epstein Barr virus during her sophomore year in college.
- C. EMS report indicates that the patient was unresponsive and exhibiting Cheyne-Stokes breathing when rescue arrived.
- D. The patient was taken to the OR with non-pathological intracapsular femoral neck fracture for Austin-Moore hemiarthroplasty.

Proofreading/Editing

Correct the punctuation errors in each of the sentences below.

1. She has right sided hemiparesis, atrial fibrillation and diabetes.
2. After eating oysters at a party 2 days ago she began to have bowel distention and this has rapidly increased today.
3. Examination of the left lower extremity reveals 1+ swelling, however, there is no dependent edema present on examination.
4. Because he became combative, violent and abusive Security had to be involved in subduing the patient and haloperidol 5 mg and Ativan 2 mg IM was used to help control the patient.
5. RECOMMENDATION: Hydration analgesia and observation, and if stone does not pass within 72 hours [or less], I would recommend the patient for ureteroscopy stone-basketting and ultrasonic lithotripsy.
6. She was found to have a sebaceous cyst that on the surface of the back appeared to be slightly less than 2-cm in diameter but, after incision and excavation, it was found to have a subcutaneous diameter of nearly 8 cm.
7. When asked if she had a history of drug abuse she replied "Are you kidding"?
8. Because of heavy bleeding, that has repeatedly decreased the hematocrit to the 26% to 28% range, and which interferes with her quality of life and ability to work, the patient has requested TAH which will be carried out at this time.

9. At the present time there is no nodule irregularity or active lesion and the biopsy site is well healed.
10. On her previous visit the patient was given multiple options for managing her chronic plantar fasciitis such as custom shoe inserts to be worn while working on her feet, which she states she has just started wearing, exercises to strengthen the plantar fascia, and wearing night splints to keep the fascia extended, which she says she tried to do for several nights but could not tolerate their weight and bulk while sleeping.

Answer Key—Chapter 6

Refer to the answer keys below for answers to practical application exercises for this chapter.

Exam Prep Assessment

- | | |
|------|-------|
| 1. C | 9. A |
| 2. C | 10. B |
| 3. D | 11. D |
| 4. B | 12. C |
| 5. A | 13. C |
| 6. D | 14. B |
| 7. B | 15. C |
| 8. C | |

Proofreading/Editing

1. She has right-sided hemiparesis, atrial fibrillation, and diabetes. (*Comma optional but preferred after "fibrillation"*)
2. After eating oysters at a party 2 days ago, she began to have bowel distention, and this has rapidly increased today.

3. Examination of the left lower extremity reveals 1+ swelling; however, there is no dependent edema present on examination.
4. Because he became combative, violent, and abusive, Security had to be involved in subduing the patient, and haloperidol 5 mg and Ativan 2 mg IM was used to help control the patient. (*Comma optional but preferred after "violent"*)
5. RECOMMENDATION: Hydration, analgesia, and observation, and if stone does not pass within 72 hours (or less), I would recommend the patient for ureteroscopy, stone-basketting, and ultrasonic lithotripsy. (*Commas optional but preferred after "analgesia" and "stone-basketting"*)
6. She was found to have a sebaceous cyst that on the surface of the back appeared to be slightly less than 2 cm in diameter, but after incision and excavation, it was found to have a subcutaneous diameter of nearly 8 cm.
7. When asked if she had a history of drug abuse, she replied, "Are you kidding?"
8. Because of heavy bleeding that has repeatedly decreased the hematocrit to the 26% to 28% range and which interferes with her quality of life and ability to work, the patient has requested TAH, which will be carried out at this time.
9. At the present time there is no nodule irregularity or active lesion, and the biopsy site is well healed.
10. On her previous visit the patient was given multiple options for managing her chronic plantar fasciitis such as custom shoe inserts to be worn while working on her feet, which she states she has just started wearing; exercises to strengthen the plantar fascia; and wearing night splints to keep the fascia extended, which she says she tried to do for several nights but could not tolerate their weight and bulk while sleeping.

Transcription Practice

Complete the Transcription Practice exercises for Chapter 6 on the CD-ROM included with this text. Answers to these exercises can be found in Appendix A at the back of this book.