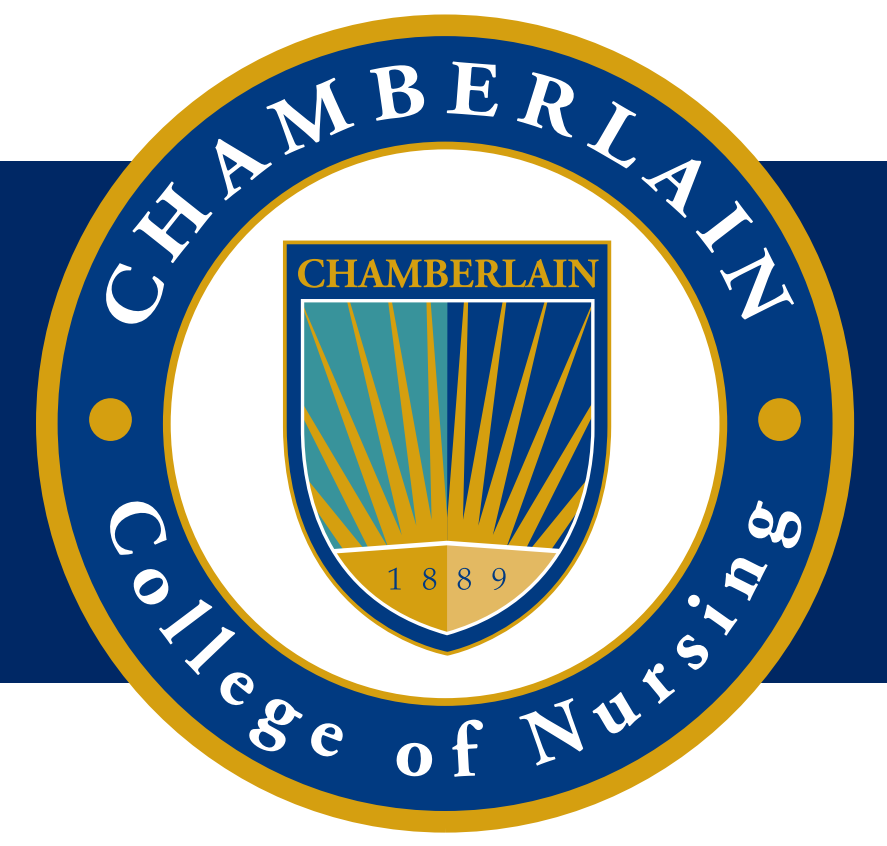


# GRAMS VS. MILLIGRAMS: A FATAL MISTAKE



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## Abstract

Medication errors are preventable events in patient care. With medical errors being one of the leading causes of inpatient and outpatient deaths, the nursing community has implemented several safety initiatives for improving medication practices. Medication errors occur for many reasons, including: poor communication, improper documentation, illegible handwriting, similar medications and high patient-to-nurse ratios. Despite the safety initiatives, the nursing community still uses the incorrect abbreviation of 'gm' for grams rather than the International Standard of Unit (ISU) approved abbreviation 'g.' The proper usage of the abbreviation of grams not only allows for a universal acceptance but also decreases the possibility of a fatal medication error that could have been prevented. Identifying the possibility of a dyslexic-related mistake will help evade fatal errors in patient care. Making a dyslexic medication error with 'gm' to 'mg' or visa-versa could make drug 1,000 times less effective or worse, more potent. It is important for nurses to consider every possibility that may lead to a medical error that could have been prevented. It is also crucial for nurses to be prepared to practice in all careers and fields. Medication errors are preventable and it is vital for nurses to follow established guidelines to protect against fatal errors and predict where they may occur.

## Literature Review: Dyslexia

- Dyslexia has been reported to be the most common disability ranging from mild to severe (Sanderson's-Mann, 2005)
- One does not need to be diagnosed with dyslexia to have a dyslexic episode (Sanderson-Mann, 2005)
- According to Sanderson-Mann (2005) the general population, including nurses, has reported a dyslexic episode at one point in their career. This can be exceptionally dangerous to pediatric patients since the potential for adverse drug events is three times higher than in adults (Joint Commission, 2008).
- According to The Joint Commission (2008), medication dosing errors are more common in pediatrics than adults due to weight-based dosing calculations and fractional dosing

## Benefits to Nursing

- To eliminate the possibility of medical errors due to a dyslexic episode
- To utilize the correct form of abbreviation of grams
- To promote the transition of nursing into other professions and careers
- To show consistency within the nursing community and minimize confusion

## Learning Objectives

### Learners will be able to:

- Ensure the usage of the proper abbreviation of grams (g) in nursing practice
- Identify the predictors of medication errors related to improper abbreviation of grams

## Literature Review: Nursing in our Community

Nursing has become a very diverse practice that has been utilized by corporations, military branches, advisors for state and federal jobs and NASA. According to the International Standard of Units (ISU), 'Gm' is the abbreviation for gigameter (NIST, 2008). Although giga-meter is unlikely to be utilized in nursing practice, the potential for errors still exists. Using the universally approved abbreviation promotes optimal communication across all careers, particularly with those working with NASA or other astronautical engineers where 'Gm' could be confused with giga-meters (NIST, 2008). It's important for nursing to promote consistency across all careers.

## Reference

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Taylor, B., & Thompson, A. (2008, March 5). The International System of Units (SI). Retrieved August 1, 2014, from <http://physics.nist.gov/Pubs/SP330/sp330.pdf>

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# MK-0814-051-A STTI Rising Star - Brandon De Horta POSTER

**Date** 08/22/14   **Printed At** 100%   **Agency** PF  
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### Job info

<b>Element</b>	Poster	<b>Pages</b>	1 pg
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<b>Bleed</b>	26 x 38"	<b>Notes</b>	Uploaded to LCP 8.28.14

### Approvals

	APPROVED	APPROVED W/CHANGES	DENIED	DATE	INITIALS
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### Pub Info

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3-Year BSN Copy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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