

The Light Stuff

Section Editor:

Barry Drees
Senior Partner,
Trilogy Writing &
Consulting,
Falkensteinerstrasse 77,
60322 Frankfurt am
Main, Germany
Barry@trilogymwriting.com



Doctor's notes on patient charts: Or be careful what you write and always check it again

The medical profession has a well-deserved reputation for atrocious handwriting, which has undoubtedly led to many mishaps in patient care. Sometimes, however, problems in interpreting doctor's writing, as those of us who have worked on publications know, is their choice of words, word order, or spelling. The following is taken from the internet (and thus I cannot vouch for the veracity of any of these) and claims to be actual unedited doctor's notes. Indeed, I have seen things not very different from these in Case Report Forms from Clinical Studies. It is presented for your consideration and enjoyment, as well as a caution to be careful with your writing.

Taken from: http://www.anvari.org/shortjoke/Jokes_from_Emails/23318_actual-doctors-notes-on-patients-charts.html:

- Patient has chest pain if she lies on her left side for over a year.
- On the 2nd day the knee was better and on the 3rd day it disappeared completely.
- She has had no rigors or shaking chills, but her husband states she was very hot in bed last night.
- The patient has been depressed ever since she began seeing me in 1993.

- The patient is tearful and crying constantly. She also appears to be depressed.
- Discharge status: Alive but without permission.
- The patient refused an autopsy.
- The patient has no past history of suicides.
- Patient has left his white blood cells at another hospital.
- Patient's past medical history has been remarkably insignificant with only a 40 pound weight gain in the past three days.
- Patient had waffles for breakfast and anorexia for lunch.
- The skin was moist and dry.
- Occasional, constant, infrequent headaches.
- Patient was alert and unresponsive.
- She stated that she had been constipated for most of her life, until she got a divorce.
- Both breasts are equal and reactive to light and accommodation.
- Exam of genitalia reveals that he is circus sized.
- The lab test indicated abnormal lover function.
- The patient was to have a bowel resection. However, he took a job as a lawyer instead.
- The pelvic examination will be done later on the floor.
- Large brown stool ambulating in the hall.
- Patient has two teenage children, but no other abnormalities.

Answers to Medical Writing Jumble #7:
NUMBER, TABLET, COUGH, CLAMP
The Mick Jagger fan became a sushi chef so
he could 'roe - n - roll'.