

**St. Michael's**

Inspired Care.  
Inspiring Science.

## **St. Michael's Style Guide**

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At St. Michael's Hospital, we follow *The Canadian Press Stylebook* for writing and editing. CP style is used by journalists throughout Canada as a comprehensive reference for grammar, punctuation, word usage and clear writing. CP style is also commonly used by government offices, businesses, web sites and communications professionals.

## **UPDATE November 2013**

Effective immediately:

- The basic science component of the research organization will be known as the Keenan Research Centre for Biomedical Science (Keenan Research Centre is an acceptable second or subsequent reference, but not KRC). When referring to the centre and the hospital together, it is the Keenan Research Centre for Biomedical Science **of** St. Michaels Hospital. The director of the centre is Dr. Ori Rotstein.
- The Emergency Department becomes the Slaight Family Emergency Department.

Our boilerplate is amended to read:

≈

The authority for CP spelling is the *Canadian Oxford Dictionary*. When Oxford gives alternative spellings, use the first one listed.

St. Michael's, like many organizations, makes some exceptions to CP style to reflect our particular history and corporate culture. But those exceptions are – and should remain – rare.

### **Exceptions:**

1. **Health care** is two words, whether used as a noun or an adjective
2. Capitalize not just universities and colleges (University of Toronto, Humber College), but also their departments (Faculty of Medicine). On second reference, the university (lower case) or the faculty (lower case)
3. Also capitalize formal names of departments or programs within the hospital. On second reference, the program, the department, etc.
4. Use the title Dr. for MDs, other licensed health care professionals as well as PhDs. This is a significant departure from CP style and accepted usage in non-academic settings, where readers assume Dr. refers to licensed health care professionals. In Ontario that means chiropractors, physicians, dentists, optometrists and podiatrists. In external communications it is important to clarify when someone is a PhD. Dr. is the only honorific we use so we also use it in subsequent references to an individual.
5. Given our Roman Catholic roots, we upper case the sacraments and rituals such as Mass, Holy Communion and Eucharist

### **Most common style issues**

#### Adverbs ending in ly

- Adverbs ending in –ly are not followed by a hyphen. The –ly alerts readers that the word that follows is modified: a brightly lit room is correct, not a brightly-lit room

#### Adviser

- Not advisor. But advisory is correct.

#### Ampersand (&)

- Use only when part of the formal, legal name of an organization. It is not an acceptable replacement for the word “and,” except when necessary for space reasons in PowerPoint presentations or on Twitter, for example.

### Canadian spellings

- We spell words such as colour, labour and rigour with the "u" and words such as centre with the "re." The exception is when an organization formally spells its name differently, such as Color Your World or the Centers for Disease Control.
- It's defence and offence not defense and offense
- Double the l at the end of words when adding a suffix: travelled, rivalled
- Gynecology not gynaecology
- Pediatrics not paediatrics
- Hemorrhage
- program, not programme, a CP exception to Canadian spellings

### Capitalization

- People like to capitalize Titles and Departments because it makes them look More Important. In fact, it is the power of the message or the language that conveys importance; when in doubt, do not capitalize.

### Checklist

- One word, as in surgical checklist

### Commas

- CP does not use the Oxford or serial comma that precedes the conjunction in a list of three or more items unless necessary to avoid confusion. For example: men, women, children and pets is correct. Women, children, and pets is not.

### Dates

- Never abbreviate days of the week.
- When referring to a specific date, all months are abbreviated except for March, April, May, June and July.
- You don't need to add th/rd after dates, i.e. it's Nov. 23, not 23<sup>rd</sup> or Dec. 4, not Dec. 4<sup>th</sup>.
- The correct style for a date would be Monday, Dec. 14, 2013 -- and there would be another comma after 2013 if it were followed by more words in the same sentence. If using just the month and the year: The building opened in May 2011 (no comma).

### Emergency Department

- ED acceptable on second reference when the context is clear.  
Emergency Room or ER are American terms

### Fundraising

- Fundraiser and fundraising, one word

### Internet terms

- email (no hyphen)
- Internet (capitalized) but intranet (lower case)
- online, one word, no hyphen
- SMHTube, our new video-sharing system, all one word and an exception to the no-SMH rule
- website
- YouTube

### Li Ka Shing Knowledge Institute

- When referring to the entire building: The Li Ka Shing Knowledge Institute, made up of the Keenan Research Centre and the Li Ka Shing International Healthcare Education Centre, of St. Michael's Hospital
- To be used when referring to the component parts: The Keenan Research Centre in the Li Ka Shing Knowledge Institute of St. Michael's Hospital. The Li Ka Shing International Healthcare Education Centre in the Li Ka Shing Knowledge Institute of St. Michael's Hospital. The Centre for Faculty Development at St. Michael's Hospital.
- To be used when indicating parking: Underground parking is available below the Keenan Research Centre in the Li Ka Shing Knowledge Institute of St. Michael's Hospital
- To be used when referencing the name/location of key internal spaces:

The west lobby: the Keenan Research Centre lobby

The east lobby: the Li Ka Shing International Healthcare Education Centre lobby

Main floor E136: the CIBC Hall

The Allan Waters Family Simulation Centre

The Alan Waters Family Auditorium

Room 204: the Vendors Partnership Room

Room 211: the Bill Morneau and Nancy McCain Classroom

Second-floor central space: the Bernie and Mildred Syron Exhibit Hall

Rooms 240 and 241: the Tony and Anne Arrell Classrooms  
The Scotiabank Health Sciences Library  
The John and Jocelyn Barford KT Lounge (third floor)  
The Susan Crocker and John Hunkin KT Lounge (fifth floor)  
The AstraZeneca Canada KT Lounge (seventh floor)

### Mannequin

- CP is silent on this one, so the default is the Oxford Canadian Dictionary.
- The first definition for mannequin is a model of a human body. The first definition for manikin is little person, which isn't the idea we're trying to convey.

### Measurement

- Use metric for most measurements.
- Spell out terms such as kilogram, metre and gram

### Medical terms

- In general, don't capitalize diseases, conditions, symptoms, tests or treatments, except when proper names are part of the term such as Alzheimer's disease or German measles

### More than or over

- More than \$1,000 was spent, not over \$1,000 was spent. Over is used when something is flying over something else.

### Names on second reference

- On first reference, she is Mary Smith. On second reference she is Smith, no matter how much we like her or how well we know her. If she is Dr. Mary Smith, she is Dr. Smith on second reference.

### Numbers

- Write out the numbers one to nine; use numerals for all others – except at the beginning of sentences, when all numbers are written out.
- Use commas to set off numbers of four or more, i.e 1,000 not 1000

### PowerPoint

- One word, capitalized because it is a trademark.

### Quotation marks

- Quotation marks always go outside other punctuation:
- “I’m going to the store,” she said. NOT: "I'm going to the store", she said.

### Religion

- The Bible
- Thomas Cardinal Collins in formal communication (His Emminence Thomas Cardinal Collins in a letter), but Cardinal Thomas Collins is acceptable in news releases, newsletters, etc.
- A Roman Catholic priest generally goes by Father, although for formal communications, including letters, use Rev. (not the Rev., not Rev’d)
- A Catholic parish may have several priests, but only one pastor, who is in charge of the parish. The priest in charge of a cathedral is a rector.
- Other Christian clergy use the title Rev.

### St. Michael’s 3.0 (formerly the Queen-Victoria Redevelopment Project)

- When referring to *Inspire 2018*, it should be rendered in italics whenever possible except when it is part of a headline.

### St. Michael’s Hospital

- St. Michael's Hospital on first reference.
- On second and subsequent references, St. Michael's or the hospital (not Hospital). In quotes and in casual, affectionate use, St. Mike's may be appropriate.
- Never use SMH in external communications, except when necessary on Twitter or other digital channels. Avoid when possible in internal communications.
- Similarly, Board of Directors on first reference, but subsequently the board (lower case). St. Michael’s Hospital Foundation, and then the foundation.
- When referring to the hospital president and CEO externally, use Dr. Robert Howard (Dr. Howard on second reference). Internally, use Dr. Bob Howard or, when appropriate, just Bob.
- The Slight Family Emergency Department

### Time

- 1 p.m. (not 1 pm or 1:00 p.m.); 1:25 a.m., noon, midnight -- don't use o'clock.

### Titles

- Capitalize formal titles directly preceding a name. Lower case them when standing alone, i.e. the president of the hospital, or when used after the name. Hospital President Dr. Robert Howard, but Robert Howard, president of the hospital.
- Avoid using long titles in front of someone's name. In general, don't use a title longer than three or four words in front of the name; put it after.
- Don't use honorifics such as Mr., Mrs., Ms. or Miss (see Dr. under exceptions)
- vice-president is hyphenated
- RN and MD are capitalized, regardless of whether they are used before or after a name.

### University of Toronto

- On second reference, it's the university. U of T is also acceptable when appropriate, such as in quotes or internal communications.

### Vitamins

- vitamin (lower case) B (upper case) or B-12 (hyphenate if combining a letter and a number)

## **Grammar Tips**

### Its vs. It's

These two little words confuse a lot of people.

It's is a contraction for it is or it has.

Its is a possessive pronoun meaning of it or belonging to it (the neuter version of his or her).

A simple test: If you can replace it[']s in your sentence with it is or it has, then your word is it's. Try plugging her into your sentence where you think

its belongs. If the sentence still works grammatically (if not logically) then your word is indeed its.

Pronoun agreement: Him and her don't equal their

Pronouns must agree with their antecedents. The most common pronoun agreement errors occur when a plural pronoun is used to replace a singular noun. Singular words such as every, each, someone, anyone, nobody, either and neither may seem plural so it's tempting to use plural pronouns in their place.

Incorrect:

Every patient should remember their health card.

"Every patient" is grammatically singular yet the pronoun "their" is plural.

Correct (use singular pronoun)

Every patient should remember his or her health card.

Or (rewrite the sentence)

All patients should remember their health cards.