

# AMA Manual of Style

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## Organisms and Pathogens

Harriet S. Meyer

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Intemperate language should not be used in any discussion or writing which involves zoological nomenclature, and all debates should be conducted in a courteous and friendly manner. Code of Ethics, International Code of Zoological Nomenclature(p124) I know the scientific names of beings animalculous. W. S. Gilbert | Scientific names are labels used in place of lengthy descriptions. A scientific name corresponds to a set of formally defined attributes. The meanings of scientific names are internationally understood. Vernacular names or common names are also labels. Vernacular names seen in medical publications include fungi, prokaryotes, meningococcus, and St John's wort. Vernacular names cannot be assumed

## Biological Nomenclature

AMA Manual of Style Committee

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Scientific names are labels used in place of lengthy descriptions. A scientific name corresponds to a set of formally defined attributes. The meanings of scientific names are internationally understood. Vernacular names or common names are also labels. Vernacular names seen in medical publications include fungi, prokaryotes, meningococcus, and St John's wort. Vernacular names cannot be assumed to correspond to formally defined sets of attributes and vary by region and language. In scientific writing, scientific names should be used when the labeled entity verifiably corresponds to the set of attributes associated with the scientific name, at least at first mention. Subsequently

## Bacteria: Additional Terminology

Harriet S. Meyer

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There is no “official” classification of bacteria... [B]acterial classifications are devised for micro- biologists, not for the entities being classified. Bacteria show little interest in the matter of their classification. D. J. Brenner, J. T. Staley, and N. R. Krieg(p31) ... the majority of bacteria in nature have not been grown or characterized. R. G. E. Murray and John G. Holt(p2) For general guidelines on biological nomenclature that apply to bacteria, see , Biological Nomenclature. Rules for bacterial nomenclature are found in the International Code of Nomenclature of Bacteria. Sources of bacterial names available on the Web are the List of Prokaryotic

## Virus Nomenclature

Harriet S. Meyer

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Viruses evolve rapidly.... [A]denovirus, for example, may produce 250 000 DNA molecules in an infected cell.... Leslie Collier and John Oxford(p12) Taxonomy lies at the uneasy interface between biology and logic. L. Andrew Ball(p3) If you wanted to call one of your children home for dinner would you go into the street and shout “Homo sapiens”? Michael A. Drebot, Eric Henchal, Brian Hjelle, et al(p2468) Most medical articles describe concrete viral entities and, therefore, use the common (vernacular, informal) names of viruses (eg, cytomegalo-virus, Hantaan virus, orthopoxviruses). To indicate taxonomic groups, formal virus names are used (eg, Human herpesvirus 5, Hantaan virus, the genus

## Prions

Harriet S. Meyer

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The following are disease names and abbreviations of spongiform encephalopathies, (Do not confuse “kudu” and “kuru.”) The infectious agents of TSEs are known as TSE agents or prions. The term prion (from “proteinaceous infectious particle”) reflects the agents' proposed association or identity with spongiform encephalopathy related pathologic proteins. Follow author preference for the terms TSE agent and prion. Proteins related to spongiform encephalopathies in humans are designated as follows: The last term refers to a transgenic mouse line with a proline to leucine mutation at residue 101 (see also , Nucleic Acids and Amino Acids). For prion-related genes, see ,