

Johns Hopkins Medicine Style

(Last Revised March 20, 2018)

Use the *Associated Press Stylebook* and *Webster's New World College Dictionary, Fourth Edition*, as the standard for style, punctuation, spelling preference, hyphenation, etc. The listing below reflects a few departures from AP style typically used in Hopkins' print and electronic publications, as well as other areas that, while they are not departures from AP style, still require special attention. Also, please note that these guidelines apply strictly to press releases, news stories and other articles. Ads, brochures and legal contracts may require some deviation from these guidelines.

A

acronyms In most cases, use an acronym only if there is a second reference. Exceptions from *AP Stylebook* include FBI and CIA. An acronym should appear in parentheses after the word(s) spelled out in the first reference. Do not capitalize the words from which an acronym is derived (*intensive care unit, ICU; computed tomography, CT; magnetic resonance imaging, MRI*) unless it is a proper noun.

adviser

advisory

Affordable Care Act

ages Use numerals (*a 5-year-old boy; John Smith was 30; a man in his 20s; a 2-hour-old infant*)

alcohol use disorder, person with alcohol use disorder

all right

Alzheimer's disease

ampersand Do not use as a substitute for the word *and*. Use only when it is the official part of a name (AT&T, *U.S. News & World Report*)

anticancer

area code Use a hyphen, not parentheses, to separate from the rest of a phone number (*410-955-2902*). This is a departure from AP style.

attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder

autoimmune

B

bacteria Names of bacteria should be in italics, except in press releases.

Baltimore City

Baltimore City Hospitals (earlier name of what is now Johns Hopkins Bayview Medical Center; when Hopkins bought City Hospitals, the name changed for a while to Francis Scott Key Medical Center before becoming Bayview)

biopharmaceutical

biopsy The procedure of removing and examining tissue, cells or fluids from a living body. Do not use as a verb. Observations are made on the biopsy specimen, not on the biopsy itself.

Right: *A biopsy of the mass was done.*

Wrong: *The mass was biopsied.*

Right: *Results of the biopsy were negative.*

Wrong: *The biopsy was negative.*

Blalock

bloodstream

board certified, board-certified Use board certified when it comes after a verb. *She is board certified in surgery.* Use board-certified if being used as an adjective before a noun. *She is a board-certified surgeon.*

board of trustees, the board, the trustees, a trustee

C

captions Such terms as *top, bottom, left, right, above, below, from left*, or *clockwise from left* usually precede the phrase identifying the object or person. Italics generally are not used. Use commas, not colons. With a group of people, begin with *from left*. With two people, the person on the left is generally indicated: *Bill Jones, left, and Bob Smith*, unless clear: *Bill Jones and Mary Smith*.

caregiver

chairman, chairwoman The gender-neutral “chair” is making its way into common usage, though many do regard it as a piece of furniture. Do not use “chairperson” unless it is an organization’s formal title for an office.

check up (v.) *The nurse will check up on the patient next week.*

checkup (n.) *The patient will come for a checkup next week.*

child care, child care center

co-insurance

compared with, compared to “Compared with” should be used when juxtaposing two or more items to illustrate similarities or differences. “Compared to” should only be used when two or more items are similar.

comprise A transitive verb that means to contain, to include all, to embrace; it takes a direct object.

Right: *The United States comprises 50 states.*

Right: *The United States is composed of 50 states.*

Wrong: *The United States is comprised of 50 states.*

co-opted Not coopted.

copay

cost-effective

co-worker

cure Do not use this when in reference to our ability to cure a disease overall or definitely cure an individual of a disease that may reoccur later.

D

data a plural noun that normally takes a plural verb and plural pronoun (*these data show*). Medical and scientific journals nearly always consider the word to be plural. Consult the AP Stylebook, under **collective nouns**, for exceptions. If you’re still in doubt, you can’t go wrong sticking with the plural verb.

dates Use AP style.

The event occurs on Dec. 25, 2002, at 4 p.m.

The building is slated for completion in December 2002.

Spell out months in dates when in a formatted list.

day care, day care center

dean’s office

degrees (academic) Use lowercase and spell out (*master's degree in public health*). Common abbreviations: *M.D., Ph.D., M.A., Sc.D.* Do not use degrees after names in social media posts.

Dr. Use before names in social media posts. Do not use degrees after names when using "Dr."

Department of Emergency Medicine

dietitian

Down syndrome

drop-down menu

drug use disorder, person with drug use disorder

E

Eastern Shore

editor-in-chief, physician-in-chief, surgeon-in-chief

e-learning

email

emergency department, emergency room Lowercase and spell out on first reference. ED or ER are OK on second reference. Use emergency room only for external material.

end-user

Epic Epic is the name of the electronic medical record software used by health care providers at Johns Hopkins. It is not an acronym.

Epic "physician champion"

eradicate Do not use when talking about cancer.

esthetic dentistry

etc. Set off with commas (*rats, mice and men, etc.*)

F

FDA-approved Hyphenate in all instances

Fell's Point

follow up (v.) *The doctor will follow up with the patient next week.*

follow-up (n.) *The study included a six-month follow-up.*

follow-up (adj.) *The patient's follow-up appointment is next week.*

Francis Scott Key Medical Center (former name of Johns Hopkins Bayview Medical Center)

full-time (adj.) *He has a full-time job.*

full time (adv.) *He works full time.*

fundraiser, fundraising

We hired a fundraiser.

We held a fundraiser.

We started a fundraising campaign.

Fundraising is difficult.

G

gender affirmation No hyphen, including as a compound adjective, unless needed for clarity.

go-live

Grand Rounds

Greater Baltimore

Gyn/Ob Using all uppercase (*GYN/OB*) suggests that the letters are acronyms, not abbreviations.

H

half Use *one and one-half* in formal or scientific context; *one and a half* in more conversational contexts

Halsted

hand-washing

headlines Uppercase the first and last words and all nouns, pronouns, adjectives, verbs, prepositions with five letters or more, adverbs, demonstratives (*this, that*, etc.) and

subordinating conjunctions (*if, because, as, that, etc.*). Articles and coordinating conjunctions, prepositions four letters or fewer, *with* and *to* are lowercased. With hyphenated words, first elements are always capitalized; subsequent elements are capitalized unless they are articles, prepositions, coordinating conjunctions: (*Twentieth-Century Literature, Out-of-Fashion Initiatives, A Run-in with Authorities*, but *Avoiding a Run-In*, because *in* is the last word in the title).

For subheads that are full sentences or questions in web material, capitalize only the first word.

Use single quotation marks in headlines, if quotation marks are required. Italics are OK to use in headlines.

health care Two words in all contexts unless the words are closed up in an organization's name (*Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations; Johns Hopkins HealthCare*)

Health care is costly.

Health care costs are rising.

HIPAA On first reference, spell out Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). For internal communications, HIPAA is acceptable in all uses.

historic, historical Precede with *a*, not *an*

house staff

I

Inc. Do not precede with a comma (*J.C. Penney Co. Inc. has announced . . .*)

infinitives Splitting is acceptable, though not preferable. Sometimes splitting is necessary (*She expected the nurses' salaries to more than double in the coming decade.*)

in utero, in vitro, in vivo Do not italicize

intensive care unit Spell out on first reference

internet, the net, intranet

IV acceptable only on second reference for intravenous (contrary to AP)

J

the Joint Commission (lowercase "the")

Jr. Do not precede with a comma. *John Jones Jr. was named head of . . .*

L

lifesaving

listserv

log-in, log-on, log-off (adj) Use your *log-on name*.

log in, log on, log off (verb) Use your *password when you log on*.

M

Marfan syndrome

M.B.A.

M.D.

M.D./Ph.D. program

M.D.s

medical jargon According to the American Medical Association style manual, words or phrases that are peculiar to conversations among medical personnel (*left chest, right heart*) are inappropriate in scientific writing.

Right: *The patient received a heart transplant.*

Wrong: *The patient was transplanted.*

medications Capitalize the marketed name (e.g., Belviq). Lowercase the generic, or chemical, name (e.g., lorcaserin). The trademark symbol is not needed.

millions When writing a range, always use “million” after each number. *The program will cost \$12 million to \$14 million.*

multimillion

N

New York Times No “The” before the name.

NIH When using the acronym, no “the” is needed before it.

Nobel Prize Contrary to AP style, capitalize the area in which the prize is awarded. Example: Nobel Prize in Chemistry.

noninvasive

numbers Spell out one through nine, and use figures for 10 and up.

Exceptions:

Ages are always figures. *The house is 1 year old; the girl is 15 years old; the 101-year-old rule.*

Percents and percentages are always figures. *7 percent, 8.5 percent, 100 percent, 4 percentage points*

-For a range, always use the word percent after both the first and second number.
10 percent to 22 percent

Weights are always figures. *The baby weighed 8 pounds, 2 ounces. The nurse gave the patient a 10 milligram dose of Percocet.*

O

OK (not *okay*)

on-call (adj.); on call (adv.): *The on-call nurse is not on call today.*

one-on-one, not *1:1*

online

open-heart surgery

operating room

orthopaedics

Osler Medical Residency Training Program Otolaryngology–Head and Neck Surgery The department name uses an en dash, not a hyphen.

P

Parkinson's disease

patient- and family-centered care

payers

percent Use the word in copy. Use the symbol (%) in tables.

PGY-1, PGY-2, PGY-3, etc. Use a hyphen and arabic, not roman, numerals (2, not II) to abbreviate a postgraduate year of study.

phase I, phase II, phase III trial

Ph.D.

Ph.D.s

phone numbers Use a hyphen to separate the area code from the number: *410-955-1500*. This is a departure from AP style.

postdoctoral, postdoc

premedical, premed

preoperative

preventive (not *preventative*)

principal investigator

Q

R

rankings Contrary to Associated Press style, use *#1*, *#2*, etc., not *No. 1* or *No. 2*.

road map

row house

R.N.

R.N.s

S

sickle cell disease Also note that there is a treatment but no cure.

smartphone

so-called (adj) *a so-called bigwig*

so called (adv.) *The bigwig, so called because he had the corner office . . .*

Do not use quotation marks (*the so-called “bigwig”* or *the “so-called” bigwig*)

staff A singular noun. Can use *staff members* with a plural noun.

state abbreviations Write out the name of all states, even when paired with a city. In datelines, the state abbreviations (*Md.*, *Va.*, *Pa.*, etc.) should still be used. Use two-letter postal abbreviations (*MD*, *CT*, *TN*) only in mailing addresses.

state of Maryland

the States

SuccessFactors no space

super-user

surgical-site infection

T

time Follow AP style (*9 a.m.*, etc.)

time frame

time sheets

titles of compositions Use italics for titles of blogs, books, pamphlets, periodicals and newspapers, movies, television shows, poems, plays, paintings, video game names and long musical compositions. Use quotation marks for titles of articles, book chapters, report titles, exhibitions and song titles. Blog titles and mobile app names should be in standing caps.

toolkit

touch screen (n.), touch-screen (adj.)

type 1 diabetes, type 2 diabetes (not *Type I* or *Type II*)

24/7

U

undertreated

URL Do not underline a URL in copy. Do not include `http://` or `www.` in a URL if the link works without it.

United States or U.S. (n. or adj.) It's *US* in headlines (no periods).

U.S. News & World Report

1. “America’s Best” should always be in quotes
2. The rankings are only for The Johns Hopkins Hospital (not the Health System, not Johns Hopkins Medicine, etc.)
3. It’s OK to say The Johns Hopkins Hospital is ranked best in Maryland, but not in the city, the county, the tristate area, etc.
4. Adhere to the magazine’s nomenclature for specialty rankings.
5. In ads that talk about the *U.S. News* rankings, do not include information about other rankings, awards or distinctions. This rule does not apply to noncommercial material and press releases.
6. Contrary to Associated Press style, use #1, #2, etc., not *No. 1* or *No. 2*.

username

V

W

Wayfinding

Website addresses Never include http. Do not include www unless necessary.

Western Maryland

work-up

World Wide Web, web, website

X

X-ray

Y

YouTube

Z

ZIP code

Correct Use of the Johns Hopkins Names

In an organization as complex as Johns Hopkins Medicine, it's not surprising when people are confused about when to use what name. It's legally important to use the various Hopkins names correctly, whether it's in a contract, a website, printed materials (including books and papers) or public speaking.

Please note that these guidelines aren't meant to replace the Johns Hopkins Medicine brand and graphic standards, found at <http://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/graphicstandards>.

When to capitalize *the*

When referring to legal entities (e.g., The Johns Hopkins University, The Johns Hopkins Hospital and The Johns Hopkins Health System Corporation), you must capitalize *The* in the name.

When referring to a school within The Johns Hopkins University, use lowercase *the* in a running copy sentence; for example, "The course is offered by the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine." However, when referring to one of the university's schools (possessive), use upper case *The*; for example, "She is a faculty member in The Johns Hopkins University's School of Medicine."

The Johns Hopkins Health System Corporation

This name refers only to the single legal entity employing 1200+ people who support several legal entities with services that include, among others, Legal, Finance, Human Resources and Compliance.

Johns Hopkins Health System

This term does not refer to the legal entity The Johns Hopkins Health System Corporation.

Johns Hopkins Health System refers to several entities, including The Johns Hopkins Health System Corporation itself and its wholly owned subsidiaries, including:

- The Johns Hopkins Hospital
- Johns Hopkins Bayview Medical Center
- Johns Hopkins Community Physicians
- Johns Hopkins Employer Health Programs (EHP)
- Howard County General Hospital
- Johns Hopkins All Children's Hospital
- Sibley Memorial Hospital
- Suburban Hospital

The other five hospitals, aside from The Johns Hopkins Hospital, should be called members, not entities or affiliates.

Johns Hopkins HealthCare LLC and The Johns Hopkins Home Care Group Inc. are not part of the group of entities referred to as the Johns Hopkins Health System because The Johns Hopkins Health System Corporation owns only 50 percent of each of these entities. These two legal entities are, however, part of the group of entities referred to as Johns Hopkins Medicine (see below).

The Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine is not part of the group of entities referred to as the Johns Hopkins Health System.

It is critical to identify the actual legal entity(ies) in contracts and in applications for grants, licenses, etc.

Johns Hopkins Medicine

This term does not refer to a legal entity.

Johns Hopkins Medicine refers to the vehicle through which internal operational activities and external initiatives are coordinated. Although it is not a legal entity, it includes the following principal entities:

- Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine
- The Johns Hopkins Health System Corporation
- The Johns Hopkins Hospital
- Johns Hopkins Bayview Medical Center
- Johns Hopkins Community Physicians
- Johns Hopkins Employer Health Programs (EHP)
- Howard County General Hospital
- Johns Hopkins HealthCare
- Johns Hopkins Home Care Group and subsidiaries
- Johns Hopkins Medicine International
- Johns Hopkins All Children's Hospital
- Sibley Memorial Hospital
- Suburban Hospital

Johns Hopkins Medicine should be used when referring to all of the above entities collectively.

It is critical to identify the actual legal entity(ies) in contracts and in applications for grants, licenses, etc.

Johns Hopkins Medical Institutions

This term does not itself refer to a legal entity.

This term is an internal term and is sometimes used to refer collectively to:

- Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine
- The Johns Hopkins Hospital
- Johns Hopkins University Bloomberg School of Public Health
- Johns Hopkins University School of Nursing

Sometimes this term also is used to refer to more schools/entities than these four; however, use of this term for that purpose is discouraged.

It is critical to identify the actual legal entity(ies) in contracts and in applications for grants, licenses, etc.

Johns Hopkins Institutions

This term is an internal term and does not itself refer to a legal entity.

This term is sometimes used to refer collectively to all of the following principal entities:

- The Johns Hopkins University
- The Johns Hopkins Health System Corporation
- The Johns Hopkins Hospital
- Johns Hopkins Bayview Medical Center
- Johns Hopkins Community Physicians
- Johns Hopkins Employer Health Programs (EHP)
- Howard County General Hospital
- Johns Hopkins HealthCare
- Johns Hopkins Home Care Group Inc. and subsidiaries
- Johns Hopkins Medicine International
- Johns Hopkins All Children's Hospital
- Sibley Memorial Hospital
- Suburban Hospital

It is critical to identify the actual legal entity(ies) in contracts and in applications for grants, licenses, etc.

BUILDINGS

98 North Broadway
550 Building
929 Building (in Eager Park, includes graduate student housing)
1830 Building
2024 Building
Alfred Blalock Building
Anne and Mike Armstrong Medical Education Building (*per Fund for Johns Hopkins Medicine, 2/11/16*)
Anne M. Pinkard Building (school of nursing)
Billings Administration Building
Bloomberg School of Public Health, school of public health
Bond Street Annex
Bunting Family and Jacob and Hilda Blaustein Family Cancer Research Building (Johns Hopkins Kimmel Cancer Center, also called CRB I)
CMSC (formally Johns Hopkins Children's Center)
Carnegie Building
Children's House
David H. Koch Cancer Research Building (Johns Hopkins Kimmel Cancer Center; also called CRB II)
David Rubenstein Child Health Building (Rubenstein Child Health Building, Rubenstein Building on second mention)
Denton A. Cooley Fitness & Recreation Center
Edward D. Miller Research Building, Miller Research Building (formally known as Broadway Research Building)
Hackerman-Patz House
Halsted Building
Hampton House
Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Building, including the Johns Hopkins Kimmel Cancer Center
Hunterian Laboratory for Surgical and Pathological Research
Hurd Hall (space)
Immunogenetics Laboratories
Joanne Rockwell Memorial House
John G. Rangos Sr. Building, Rangos Building
Johns Hopkins Federal Credit Union
Kennedy Krieger Institute
MRI Building
Marburg Building (Brady Urological Institute)
Maumenee Building
Meyer Building (Psychiatry, Rehabilitation)
Nelson/Harvey Building
Osler Building
Outpatient Center

Park Building
Pathology Building
Phipps Building
Physiology-Biophysics Building
Preclinical Teaching Building (PCTB)
Richard Starr Ross Research Building, Ross Research Building
Skip Viragh Outpatient Cancer Building
Thomas B. Turner Building
Traylor Research Building
William H. Welch Medical Library
Wilmer Eye Institute
Wood Basic Science Building
Woods Research Building (Wilmer)

The Johns Hopkins Hospital East Baltimore medical campus addresses

The official legal address of record:

The Johns Hopkins Hospital
600 N. Wolfe St.
Baltimore, MD 21287

*The above address is for departments or centers not in Zayed or Bloomberg:
Blalock Building, Carnegie Building, Halsted Building, Brady Urological Institute,
Marburg Building, Maumenee Building, Meyer Building, Nelson/Harvey Tower and
Osler Building*

The Johns Hopkins Hospital

1800 Orleans St.
Baltimore, MD 21287

*The Johns Hopkins Hospital main entrance is located at 1800 Orleans St. Patients and
visitors enter through the Sheikh Zayed Tower or Bloomberg Children's Center.*

Johns Hopkins Outpatient Center

601 N. Caroline St.
Baltimore, MD 21287

Johns Hopkins Wilmer Eye Institute

The Johns Hopkins Hospital
600 N. Wolfe St.
Baltimore, MD 21287

Johns Hopkins Kimmel Cancer Center

The Johns Hopkins Hospital
401 N. Broadway
Baltimore, MD 21287

Wilmer Eye Institute Bendann Surgical Pavilion

The Johns Hopkins Hospital
400 N. Broadway
Baltimore, MD 21287

Rubenstein Child Health Building – Harriet Lane Clinic

Johns Hopkins Harriet Lane Clinic
200 N. Wolfe St.
Baltimore, MD 21287

Garages

Caroline Street Garage (Patient/staff)
McElderry Garage (Patient/staff)
Orleans Street Garage (Patient)
Rutland Garage (Staff)
Washington Street Garage (Staff)
Weinberg Garage- Kimmel Cancer Center parking only

Spaces

Albert H. Owens Jr. Auditorium
Chevy Chase Bank Conference Center (Zayed Tower)
Arcade Conference Room (Zayed Tower)
Schaffer Auditorium (Bloomberg Children's)
Hurd Hall
Turner Auditorium
Tilghman AuditoriumTurner Concourse
Weinberg Ceremonial Lobby

Newer Clinical Buildings

The new clinical tower is named in honor of Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan
Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan Tower
Sheikh Zayed Tower

The Johns Hopkins Children's Center tower is named The Charlotte R. Bloomberg
Children's Center

*The Johns Hopkins Children's Center is located in The Charlotte R. Bloomberg
Children's Center.

INSTITUTES, SCHOOLS, ETC.

the Armstrong Institute for Patient Safety and Quality, Armstrong Institute

the Brady Urological Institute of The Johns Hopkins Hospital, Johns Hopkins Brady Institute, the Brady Institute

the Johns Hopkins Brain Science Institute, Brain Science Institute, BSi

the Johns Hopkins Heart and Vascular Institute

the Johns Hopkins Institute for Basic Biomedical Sciences, IBBS

the Johns Hopkins Institute for Cell Engineering, ICE

the Johns Hopkins McKusick/Nathans Institute of Genetic Medicine

the Wilmer Eye Institute at Johns Hopkins, Johns Hopkins Wilmer Eye Institute, Wilmer Eye Institute, Wilmer
Wilmer - Robert H. and Clarice Smith Building, Smith Building, and Wilmer Bendann Surgical Pavilion

Skip Viragh Center for Pancreatic Cancer Clinical Research and Patient Care

Johns Hopkins Bayview Medical Center (always on first mention), Johns Hopkins Bayview, Hopkins Bayview or the medical center (on second reference)

the Johns Hopkins Children's Center, Johns Hopkins Children's, the Children's Center (the Johns Hopkins Children's Center is located in The Charlotte R. Bloomberg Children's Center building)

Howard County General Hospital, (not simply "Howard County"), Howard County General on second mention, HCGH

Johns Hopkins Harriet Lane Clinic, Harriet Lane Clinic

the Johns Hopkins Center for Innovation in Quality Patient Care, Center for Innovation in Quality Patient Care, Center for Innovation

the Johns Hopkins Outpatient Center, the Outpatient Center

the Johns Hopkins Kimmel Cancer Center, the Sidney Kimmel Comprehensive Cancer Center at Johns Hopkins (first reference in donor materials and *Hopkins Medicine* magazine), Johns Hopkins Sidney Kimmel Comprehensive Cancer Center, Johns Hopkins Kimmel Cancer Center, Kimmel Cancer Center, the Cancer Center, the Johns

Hopkins Kimmel Cancer Center at Sibley Memorial Hospital, the Johns Hopkins Kimmel Cancer Center at Suburban Hospital.

Johns Hopkins Community Physicians

Johns Hopkins HealthCare

Johns Hopkins Home Care Group, the Home Care Group, Home Care

Johns Hopkins Medicine International

Johns Hopkins in Singapore

the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, the Bloomberg School of Public Health, the school of public health, JHSPH

the Johns Hopkins University School of Nursing, the school of nursing

DEPARTMENTS, DIVISIONS, DIRECTORS, ETC.

the Department of Medicine, the Department of Radiology and Radiological Science, the radiology department (the department, in later reference)

the Division of Cardiology

Departments have directors, not chairs. Only committees are headed by chairs.

Divisions have chiefs or directors (their choice).

Head—always lowercased—is an appropriate neutral word, as either a noun or a verb, for any such position.

The Department of Neurology and the Department of Neurosurgery are two separate departments.

NAMES AND TITLES

courtesy titles In general, do not use courtesy titles such as Mrs., Mr., Dr. Courtesy titles may be used in obituaries, bios and “Dear Colleague” letters.

formal titles Capitalize a formal title when it comes before a name (*Dean John Jones; Professor of Biology James Smith*). Lowercase a formal title after a name (*John Jones, dean of the School of Medicine; James Smith, a professor of biology*). Capitalize a named professorship both before and after a name (*Distinguished University Professor of Biology James Smith; James Smith, Distinguished University Professor of Biology*). Do not capitalize occupational descriptions (*lobbyist John Johnson*).

Avoid *Jr., Sr., III*, etc., except in bylines and in signature lines on letters; to distinguish among people who might be confused with each other; in donor or directory lists; in references to widely known individuals whose names are always rendered with such a designation (Sammy Davis Jr.)

Avoid middle initials, except in bylines and signature lines on letters. Do use to distinguish among people with the same first and last names (*John P. Gearhart* in urology; *John D. Gearhart* in Gyn/Ob); in donor or directory lists, in references to widely known individuals whose names are always rendered with a middle initial (*Edward D. Miller*)

Use a comma to set off both sides of degrees (*John Smith, M.D., is coming for dinner*).

Use quotation marks for nicknames (*R. Robinson “Bricks” Baker*).

With two initials in a name, there should be no space between them (*William S.B. Lee*)

PUNCTUATION

apostrophe Use with Johns Hopkins: When the sense truly is one of belonging and no article precedes Johns Hopkins, use an apostrophe after the s: *Johns Hopkins’ legacy, the Johns Hopkins legacy; Johns Hopkins’ medical school, the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine.*

Don’t use an apostrophe when Hopkins is used as an adjective (*Hopkins nurses*)

brackets Use to set off clarifying words inserted in a direct quote. (*She said, “I’ll be back at 3 [a.m.] to get my things.”*)

comma Use commas to separate elements in a simple series, but do not use a comma before the concluding conjunction (*The flag is red, white and blue*). Use the last comma if an element of the series requires a conjunction. Understanding the meaning of the series is key.

Right: *He works with medical students, urology residents, and fellows in surgery and pathology.*

Wrong: *He works with medical students, urology and pathology residents, and gives lectures.*

Right: *He works with medical students and urology and pathology residents, and gives lectures.*

Use a comma before a conjunction in a compound sentence. (*The doctor’s office was sparsely furnished, and it was located on the basement level.*)

dashes Use em dashes (the length of three hyphens) to denote an abrupt change in thought or to set off a series within a phrase. (*He blew in the office like he usually does—the door whacks the wall—and told me I could talk to him while he was packing. Everyone—co-workers, supervisors, patients—can “Catch a Shining Star.”*) In press releases and layouts with narrow columns, and in all online material, set off em dashes with spaces on either side. Otherwise, do not insert spaces between the dash and the words. Commas or dashes are frequently more effective than parentheses to set off incidental material.

Use en dashes (the length of two hyphens) to separate date, time, page, age and other ranges (*Dec. 3–5, pages 27–31, 3–5 p.m., children age 3–5*)

hyphen and compound words When a compound modifier (two or more words that express a single concept) precedes a noun, use hyphens to link all the words in the compound except the adverb *very* and all adverbs that end in *ly*. (a well-known physician, a very good time, a highly trained lab tech, an easily remembered rule).

points of ellipsis Treat an ellipsis as a three-letter word, constructed with three periods and a space before the first and after the last. When the ellipsis ends a sentence, use four periods: three for the ellipsis plus the sentence-ending period.

single quotation marks Use in headline when double quotes would be used in text (*Herman ‘Babe’ Ruth Dies*).

Do not use within double quotes when the speaker is making an informal remark or asking a rhetorical question (“*At the time, people said, How ridiculous!*”)

GRAMMAR POINTERS

dangling modifiers A participial phrase at the beginning of the sentence must refer to the subject of the sentence.

Right: *To hear her talk, one would think she charted a course in elementary school.*

Wrong: *To hear her talk, she charted a course in elementary school.*

Right: *Young and inexperienced, he thought the job would be easy.*

Wrong: *Young and inexperienced, the task appeared easy to him.*

which and that The nondefining *which* is used in nonessential clauses. Because it is parenthetical, the clause is set off with commas (*The radiologist read the CT scan, which showed a tear in the liver, and conferred with the attending*). The defining *that* is used for essential clauses, which are not set off with commas (*The CT scan that showed a tear in the liver concerned the radiologist*).

OTHER RULES

Don’t classify people by their diseases. For example, we would say “people with diabetes,” not “diabetics.”

Avoid using the informal “Hopkins,” unless it’s being used in a direct quote.