

# Organism Naming Conventions

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The [SNOMED International Editorial Guide](#) includes naming conventions that apply to all SNOMED CT concepts. However, additional principles apply to the naming of concepts in the Organism hierarchy, and these differ from the general naming conventions, so it's important to be familiar with the detailed rules found in the [Organism Naming Conventions](#) section of the SNOMED International Editorial Guide.

- When considering a name, the first task is to consider if whether the concept represents an organism or taxonomic group of organisms that have a scientific name in the Linnaean taxonomy e.g. *Escherichia coli* (organism) or Genus *Escherichia* (organism) or Family *Enterobacteriaceae* (organism).
- The fully specified name (FSN) of organism concept names are officially recognized Linnaean taxonomic classes and include a designation of rank including but not limited to Phylum, Order, Suborder, Class, Family, Genus, and subspecies.
- The official names of organisms may include abbreviations such as "subg." (Kingdom Plantae) and "subsp." and "subgen." (Domain Bacteria), but abbreviations are prohibited in FSNs and so should be spelled out fully.
- Non-Linnaean categories of organisms are identified with FSNs that contain a staining property, a physiological characteristic (that the organism requires oxygen) and a description of the organism's morphology (that it is rod-shaped). These are among the properties used in a laboratory to determine the identity of a bacterial organism in a specimen, culture, or isolate. e.g Gram-negative aerobic rod (organism) or Deoxyribonucleic acid virus (organism)
- Accepted references outlined in the [Microbiology](#) section of these guidelines provide the appropriate current name, taxonomic definition and synonyms of the organism concept required.