**COPY** STYLE GUIDE

* Do not use the series comma. (E.g., “I have a bike, a car and a truck” rather than “…a bike, a car, and a truck.”) With few exceptions, we only use a comma after “and” if it is followed by a new subject-verb pairing.
* Do not superscript ordinals. Good = 1st. Bad = 1st.
* 3D, not 3-D.
* Numbers below 10 are spelled out in English. Numbers 10 and above are Arabic (1,2,3,4...). EXCEPTION: Date- and time-related numbers. So, 4 years, 3 months, 2 weeks, 1 day.
* Punctuation goes inside of quotation marks. (E.g., Such tissues are scraped intentionally to remove cells, which we call “abrasion.’”).
* Do not capitalize specialties, illnesses, conditions, positions or anything that isn’t a proper noun.
* Titles are only capitalized when used as the title. (E.g, Dr. Smith is a doctor and medical director of X. Also, President Donald J. Trump is the president.) Some diseases and procedures are proper nouns, like Pap smear and Barrett’s Esophagus. But most are all lower-case, such as cancer, emphysema, headache, club foot, stroke, etc. Also, surgery, excision, therapy, removal, implantation, laminectomy, craniotomy and so on.
* Like suffixes, prefixes do not automatically make a word hyphenated. Use “noninvasive” rather than “non-invasive.” Use “postsurgical” rather than “post-surgical.” Most prefixes do NOT have a hyphen. Examples: “restore,” “reserve,” “nonplussed,” “reestablish.”). When in doubt, look it up.
* Don’t start sentences with “but” and “and.” While they can help achieve a conversational tone (a primary HS goal), they have proven to be not worth the trouble they can cause with clients. Avoid them except in the rarest occasions, and never use them in B2C pieces.
* When using dashes for appositives, use an emdash (—). Only use an endash (–) for very wide typeface for which emdashes are simply too wide. Never include a space before or after the emdash.
* Hyphenate compound adjectives when the meaning would be unclear or awkward without the hyphen. Do not hyphenate compound adjectives when the hyphen will add awkwardness.
* Italicize journals, newspapers and magazines.
* One space after periods, not two. *Be sure to run a find/replace to change two spaces to just one.*
* Do not use the periods in MD, DO, DDS, PT, DPT, PhD, AuD, etc., except when it is requested or a stated client preference. Do use the periods in Dr., Jr., Mr., Mrs.. etc.
* Avoid using semicolons, including using them correctly. They blow people’s minds
* Contractions should be considered with utmost care. They have presented a lot of problems historically with clients. While they can contribute to the conversational tone we need, they have largely been proven to not be worth it.
* In headlines, when initial-caps are commonly used, do not capitalize articles these:
* *a*
* *an*
* *the*
* *to*
* *on*
* *for*
* Words that end in –ly do not require a hyphen after them. E.g.: minimally invasive, not minimally-invasive; highly trained, not highly-trained.

*– end –*