

DRUG SUFFIXES CHEAT SHEET

—SORTED BY DRUG TYPE—

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A suffix is the ending of a word, placed after the word's stem, which often communicates meaning. Drug suffixes are commonly used to group drugs based on the drug's action.

BLOOD PRESSURE MEDICATIONS

Drug Classification	Suffix	Examples	Action
ACE Inhibitors	-pril	captopril lisinopril	Reduce blood pressure by dilating blood vessels, thus reducing the heart's workload.
Beta Blockers	-lol	atenolol metoprolol propranolol	Reduce blood pressure by slowing the heart rate and reducing myocardial contractility. They are most often given for hypertension and chronic heart failure.
Calcium Channel Blockers	-dipine	amlodipine nifedipine	Relax blood vessels, therefore increasing blood supply and oxygen to the heart and reducing the heart's workload while lowering blood pressure.
Angiotensin-II Receptor Blockers	-sartan	losartan valsartan	Inhibit blood vessel constriction, helping blood vessels relax, which lowers blood pressure.

ADDITIONAL CARDIOVASCULAR MEDICATIONS

Drug Classification	Suffix	Examples	Action
Potassium-Sparing Diuretics	-actone	spironolactone aldactone	Increase the fluid excreted by the kidneys, while retaining potassium in the body. Reduces cardiovascular congestion and edema that results from CHF. They also lower blood pressure.
Thiazide Diuretics	-thiazide	hydrochlorothiazide	Increase fluid and potassium excreted by the kidneys. Reduces cardiovascular congestion and edema that results from CHF. They also lower blood pressure.
Antilipidemics	-statin	atorvastatin simvastatin	Reduce LDL cholesterol and lower risks from cardiovascular disease.
Thrombolytics	-ase	streptokinase alteplase (tPA)	"Clot busters" that break down clots that lead to heart attacks or strokes, to restore blood flow to the obstructed area.



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ANTIBIOTIC MEDICATIONS

Drug Classification	Suffix	Examples	Action
Tetracyclines	-cycline	tetracycline doxycycline	Broad spectrum antibiotics that treat bacterial infections.
Aminoglycosides	-mycin -micin	gentamicin tobramycin	
Fluoroquinolones	-floxacin	ciprofloxacin levofloxacin	

GASTROINTESTINAL MEDICATIONS

Drug Classification	Suffix	Examples	Action
Antiemetics	-azine	promethazine	Treat and prevent nausea and vomiting.
Proton Pump Inhibitors	-prazole	lansoprazole omeprazole	Anti-ulcer drugs that reduce gastric acid production.
H2-receptor Antagonists (H2 Blockers)	-tidine	cimetidine famotidine	Block the action of histamine in the stomach, decreasing the production of stomach acid.

RESPIRATORY MEDICATIONS

Drug Classification	Suffix	Examples	Action
Bronchodilators	-terol -phylline	albuterol levabuterol theophylline	Dilate the bronchi and bronchioles, decreasing resistance in the airway and increasing airflow to the lungs. Often used for asthma and COPD.
Antihistamines	-ine	diphenhydramine loratadine brompheniramine	Treat allergy symptoms, such as sneezing, runny nose, itching, and hives, caused by histamine activation.



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DEPRESSION AND ANXIETY MEDICATIONS

Drug Classification	Suffix	Examples	Action
Benzodiazepines	-pam -lam	alprazolam diazepam lorazepam	Treat anxiety; prolonged use may lead to physical dependence.
Tricyclic Antidepressants	-triptyline	amitriptyline nortriptyline	Treat depression, bipolar disorder, anxiety, OCD, and other mood disorders.
Selective Serotonin Reuptake Inhibitors (SSRIs)	-pram -ine	fluoxetine sertraline citalopram	Block or delay the reabsorption of serotonin; used to treat major depressive disorders and anxiety disorders

ADDITIONAL MEDICATIONS

Drug Classification	Suffix	Examples	Action
Local Anesthetics	-caine	lidocaine xylocaine	Prevent the transmission of nerve impulses or pain without causing unconsciousness.
Corticosteroids	-sone -lone	dexamethasone prednisone methylprednisolone	Anti-inflammatory drugs used to control many different inflammation-related symptoms.
Meglitinides	-ide	repaglinide nateglinide glyburide glipizide	Lower blood glucose levels by triggering the production of insulin; used to treat type 2 diabetes.
Sulfonylureas			

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