READ THE ENDING · KNOW THE CLASS · CATCH THE DANGER

DRUG SUFFIX FIELD GUIDE

Most generic drug names end in a class stem. Learn the stem and a med list becomes a history.

ENDING	CLASS	EXAMPLES	WHY EMS CARES
HEART + BLOOD PRESSURE			
-olol	**Beta blocker**	*metoprolol, carvedilol*	Brady, low BP; **may hide shock tachycardia**
-pril	**ACE inhibitor**	*lisinopril, enalapril*	Angioedema (even years in), hypotension, high K+
-sartan	**ARB**	*losartan, valsartan*	Hypotension, high K+; angioedema less common
-dipine	**Calcium channel blocker**	*amlodipine, nifedipine*	Hypotension, reflex tachycardia, ankle edema
-osin	**Alpha-1 blocker**	*tamsulosin, doxazosin*	Orthostatic hypotension, syncope, falls
-afil	**PDE-5 inhibitor**	*sildenafil, tadalafil*	**No nitro**: 24 h sildenafil, 48 h tadalafil
nitro- / -nitrate	**Nitrate**	*nitroglycerin, isosorbide*	Angina history; hypotension, headache
-statin	**Statin (cholesterol)**	*atorvastatin, simvastatin*	Flag for heart or vascular history
-semide / -etanide	**Loop diuretic**	*furosemide, bumetanide*	CHF flag; dehydration, low K+, dysrhythmias
-thiazide	**Thiazide diuretic**	*hydrochlorothiazide*	Dehydration, low Na+ and K+
BLOOD THINNERS			
-xaban	**Factor Xa inhibitor**	*apixaban, rivaroxaban*	**Bleeding**; minor head strike = high suspicion
-gatran	**Thrombin inhibitor**	*dabigatran*	Same bleeding risk as -xaban
-parin	**Heparin**	*heparin, enoxaparin*	Bleeding; often home injections after a clot
-grel / -grelor	**P2Y12 antiplatelet**	*clopidogrel, ticagrelor*	Bleeding; likely recent cardiac stent
LUNGS			
-terol	**Beta-2 agonist**	*albuterol, salmeterol*	Tachycardia, tremor; long-acting ones are not rescue
-tropium	**Anticholinergic inhaler**	*ipratropium, tiotropium*	COPD flag; dry mouth, urinary retention
-lukast	**Leukotriene blocker**	*montelukast*	Asthma or allergy flag; never a rescue med
STOMACH			
-prazole	**Proton pump inhibitor**	*omeprazole, pantoprazole*	GERD or GI bleed history; heartburn can be an MI
-tidine	**H2 blocker**	*famotidine*	GERD; also an anaphylaxis add-on
-setron	**Antiemetic (5-HT3)**	*ondansetron*	QT prolongation

RED FLAGS ON THE MED LIST

- **Thinner + fall or head strike**: a bleed until proven otherwise.
- **Beta or calcium blocker + "normal" HR**: trust BP, skin, mental status.
- **-afil in the last 24 to 48 h**: ask before any nitrate, every time.
- **-pril + swollen lips or tongue**: ACE angioedema. Airway first.

Study aid. Generic names shown. Follow local protocols.

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Two or more serotonin drugs, or two or more QT drugs, on one list: watch closely.

ENDING	CLASS	EXAMPLES	WHY EMS CARES
DIABETES			
-gliflozin	**SGLT2 inhibitor**	*empagliflozin*	**DKA with normal glucose**; also used for CHF/CKD
-glutide / -tide	**GLP-1 agonist**	*semaglutide, tirzepatide*	Vomiting, slow stomach (aspiration risk), pancreatitis
gli- / gly-	**Sulfonylurea**	*glipizide, glyburide*	**Long, rebounding lows**; poor refusal candidate
BRAIN + BEHAVIOR			
-azepam / -azolam	**Benzodiazepine**	*lorazepam, alprazolam*	Resp depression with opioids/alcohol; withdrawal seizures
-oxetine / -aline / -opram	**SSRI (mostly)**	*fluoxetine, sertraline*	Serotonin syndrome, low Na+; see traps below
-triptyline / -ipramine	**Tricyclic (TCA)**	*amitriptyline, imipramine*	**OD: wide QRS**, seizures, hypotension
-apine / -idone / -peridol	**Antipsychotic**	*quetiapine, haloperidol*	QT, dystonia, NMS (fever, rigidity), sedation
-triptan	**Migraine (triptan)**	*sumatriptan*	Vasoconstriction; chest tightness; serotonin
PAIN			
-codone / -morphone	**Opioid**	*oxycodone, hydromorphone*	Resp depression, pinpoint pupils; naloxone
-profen	**NSAID**	*ibuprofen, ketoprofen*	GI bleed, kidney injury; bleeding with thinners
INFECTION + IMMUNE			
-cillin / cef-	**Penicillin / cephalosporin**	*amoxicillin, cephalexin*	Most common drug allergy; ask what the reaction was
-floxacin	**Fluoroquinolone**	*ciprofloxacin*	QT, tendon rupture, glucose swings
-conazole	**Azole antifungal**	*fluconazole*	Raises levels of other drugs (warfarin); QT
-sone / -olone	**Corticosteroid**	*prednisone, dexamethasone*	High glucose, infection risk; adrenal crisis if stopped
-mab	**Monoclonal antibody**	*adalimumab*	Immune suppression or cancer care: sepsis risk

SUFFIX TRAPS

- **-azole**: -prazole = PPI, -conazole = antifungal, metronidazole = antibiotic.
- **-pine**: -dipine = BP med, -apine = antipsychotic, carbamazepine = seizures.
- **-oxetine**: fluoxetine = SSRI, duloxetine = SNRI, atomoxetine = ADHD.
- **-olol**: labetalol and carvedilol also block alpha (more BP drop).
- **Sound-alikes**: hydroxyzine/hydralazine, Celexa/Celebrex, clonidine/Klonopin.

NO SUFFIX, STILL A BIG DEAL

- **Warfarin**: bleeding; ask about INR
- **Insulin, metformin**: diabetes; lows, acidosis
- **Digoxin**: N/V, vision change, any dysrhythmia
- **Diltiazem, verapamil**: brady, low BP
- **Amiodarone**: dysrhythmia history; QT
- **Lithium**: narrow range; tremor, AMS, vomiting
- **Clonidine**: OD looks like opioids; rebound HTN
- **Methadone, buprenorphine**: OUD treatment
- **Spironolactone**: high K+
- **Keppra, phenytoin, valproate**: seizure history