

DRUG SUFFIXES CHEAT SHEET

—SORTED ALPHABETICALLY—

Many generic drug names contain recognizable stems or endings that can provide clues about a drug's class or action. These patterns are useful study aids, but they are not universal and may have exceptions.

Suffix	Drug Classification	Examples	Action
-astine	H1 antihistamines	azelastine	Block histamine H1 receptors to reduce allergy symptoms such as sneezing, itching, and runny nose.
-azepam -azolam	Benzodiazepines	diazepam, lorazepam, alprazolam, midazolam	Enhance the inhibitory effects of GABA; used for anxiety, seizures, or sedation, depending on the drug.
-caine	Local anesthetics	lidocaine, bupivacaine, ropivacaine	Block sodium channels, preventing nerve impulse transmission and producing local anesthesia.
-cillin	Penicillin antibiotics	amoxicillin, ampicillin, dicloxacillin	Inhibit bacterial cell-wall synthesis.
-conazole	Azole antifungals	fluconazole, itraconazole, voriconazole	Disrupt fungal cell membranes by inhibiting ergosterol synthesis.
-coxib	Selective COX-2 inhibitors	celecoxib, etoricoxib	Reduce prostaglandin production, decreasing pain and inflammation.
-cycline	Tetracycline antibiotics	tetracycline, doxycycline, minocycline	Inhibit bacterial protein synthesis.
-dipine	Dihydropyridine calcium channel blockers	amlodipine, nifedipine, nicardipine	Block calcium entry into vascular smooth muscle, causing vasodilation and lowering blood pressure.
-floxacin	Quinolone/fluoroquinolone antibacterials	ciprofloxacin, levofloxacin, moxifloxacin	Inhibit bacterial DNA replication by blocking DNA gyrase and topoisomerase IV.

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-gliflozin	SGLT2 inhibitors	empagliflozin, dapagliflozin, canagliflozin	Reduce glucose reabsorption by the kidneys, increasing glucose excretion in urine.
-gliptin	DPP-4 inhibitors	sitagliptin, linagliptin, saxagliptin	Prolong incretin activity, increasing glucose-dependent insulin release and reducing glucagon.
-lukast	Leukotriene receptor antagonists	montelukast, zafirlukast	Block leukotriene receptors, reducing airway inflammation and bronchoconstriction.
-olol	Beta blockers	atenolol, metoprolol, propranolol	Block beta-adrenergic receptors, generally reducing heart rate and blood pressure.
-parin	Heparin anticoagulants	enoxaparin, dalteparin	Enhance antithrombin activity, reducing formation of blood clots.
-prazole	Proton pump inhibitors	omeprazole, lansoprazole, pantoprazole	Inhibit gastric proton pumps, substantially reducing stomach-acid production.
-pril	ACE inhibitors	lisinopril, captopril, enalapril	Inhibit angiotensin-converting enzyme, reducing angiotensin II and lowering blood pressure.
-sartan	Angiotensin II receptor blockers (ARBs)	losartan, valsartan, candesartan	Block angiotensin II receptors, relaxing blood vessels and lowering blood pressure.
-semide	Loop diuretics	furosemide, torsemide	Increase sodium and water excretion by the kidneys, reducing fluid volume and blood pressure.
-setron	5-HT ₃ receptor antagonists/antiemetics	ondansetron, granisetron, palonosetron	Block serotonin 5-HT ₃ receptors to prevent or treat nausea and vomiting.
-teplase	Thrombolytics/tissue plasminogen activators	alteplase, reteplase, tenecteplase	Convert plasminogen to plasmin, helping break down fibrin-containing blood clots.

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-terol	Beta2-agonist bronchodilators	albuterol, levalbuterol, salmeterol	Stimulate beta2 receptors, relaxing bronchial smooth muscle and opening the airways.
-thiazide	Thiazide diuretics	hydrochlorothiazide, chlorothiazide	Increase sodium and water excretion by the kidneys, helping lower blood pressure.
-tidine	H2-receptor antagonists	cimetidine, famotidine, nizatidine	Block histamine H2 receptors in the stomach, reducing gastric-acid secretion.
-triptyline	Tricyclic antidepressants	amitriptyline, nortriptyline	Inhibit reuptake of norepinephrine and serotonin; used for depression and other conditions.
-triptan	Antimigraine agents/ 5-HT1 agonists	sumatriptan, rizatriptan, zolmitriptan	Activate serotonin receptors involved in migraine pathways to help stop acute migraine attacks.
-vastatin	Statins/HMG-CoA reductase inhibitors	atorvastatin, simvastatin, rosuvastatin	Inhibit cholesterol synthesis in the liver, primarily lowering LDL cholesterol.
-xaban	Direct factor Xa inhibitors	apixaban, rivaroxaban, edoxaban	Inhibit coagulation factor Xa, reducing thrombin generation and blood-clot formation.