Bridging the Gap

A Basic Training for Medical Interpreters

An Interpreter's Guide to Common Medications

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Introduction

Why we developed this guide

An Interpreter's Guide to Common Medications was developed for one very simple reason: you requested it! As we here at the CCHCP have trained medical interpreters around the country using our *Bridging the Gap* materials, many interpreters have asked for some kind of guide to help them better understand the many medications that are discussed in medical interviews. This guide was designed to answer the most common questions about how medications work, how they are administered and what certain medications do. By better understanding drug names and actions, you will be able to interpret more accurately and to recognize names of medications so as to be able to reproduce them correctly. The information in this guide is meant to be fairly basic and easily understandable; if you are interested in learning more about a certain drug, you can refer to a Physician's Desk Reference (PDR) which can be found in any hospital or clinic.

How to use this guide

There are two ways to look up information in this guide. Let's say that you know you are going to be interpreting for a patient in endocrinology. You may want to look up the pages in this book about hormones and review the common medications used in that specialty so that you will be prepared for the appointment. Or, perhaps during an interpreted interview you heard the patient or provider refer to a medication, and you are curious as to what it does. In that case, you can look the medication up in the Index of this guide, which will refer you to the section where it is described. Each section divides medications into types of drugs, explaining how each type works in the body, and then giving examples of specific medications. Drug names written in regular type are chemical, (generic) names, while names written in italics are commercial (brand) names.

Common Forms of Administering Medications

Buccal tablets	Buccal tablets contain medication which is absorbed through the walls of the mouth after the tablet dissolves in the mouth.
Capsules	Capsules are a solid form of medication in which one or more medicines are enclosed in a small gelatin shell.
Creams	Creams are prepared for use outside the body (external use). The medication in the cream is absorbed through the skin and stays just below it. Little of the medication is absorbed into the bloodstream.
Elixirs	Elixirs are pleasantly flavored solutions that contain sugar and alcohol as well as the medication. Elixirs are taken by mouth.
Enemas	Enemas are used to insert a quantity of liquid medicine into the rectum through a tube passed through the anus.
Gels	Gels are like a jelly in which the medication has been dissolved or suspended. The medication is absorbed through the skin or through mucous membranes where the gel is applied.
Injectable	An injectable is a drug fluid that is injected into the body by means of a syringe. There are several types of injectables: • subcutaneous (SQ): the drug is injected below the skin. • intradermal/intracutaneous: the drug is injected into the skin. • intramuscular (IM) : the drug is injected into a muscle. • intravenous (IV): the drug is injected into a vein.
Nasal inhaler	A nasal inhaler is like a little pump used to deliver medication to the inside of the nose through the nostrils.
Ointments	Ointments are jelly-like preparations for use outside the body (external use), on the skin or in the eyes (ophthalmic use). They are easily spread and make skin more pliable.
Oral inhaler (aerosol)	An oral inhaler is like a little pump that is used to inhale medication into the lungs through the mouth.
Powders	Powders are a mixture of dry, ground-up drugs that are meant to be used inside or outside the body (internal or external use).
Solutions	A solution is a liquid preparation that contains one or more ingredients. It can be taken by mouth (orally) or used on the skin (topically).

Sublingual tablets Sublingual tablets are absorbed through the walls of the mouth after they dissolve under the tongue. Example: nitroglycerin tablets.

Suspensions Suspensions are made up of a solid material dispersed in a liquid.

Suppositories Suppositories are a solid or semisolid mass to be inserted into a body opening, for example, the rectum, the vagina or the urethra. Once inside the body, they melt, soften or dissolve and effect either the part of the body where they are inserted (a local effect) or the whole body (a systemic effect). Suppositories are usually covered with foil or plastic. These coverings need to be taken off before the suppository is inserted into a body opening.

Syrups Syrups are a concentrated liquid solution of a medication mixed with sugar to be taken by mouth.

Tablets Tablets are the most commonly used solid form of medication. They are prepared by either compression or molding.

Transdermal drug delivery system (TDDS)
A TDDS is a patch which is applied to the skin. The medication in the patch is then absorbed slowly through the skin and eventually enters the bloodstream.

Troches / lozenges / dental cones
Troches, lozenges and dental cones dissolve slowly in the mouth. The medication inside effects primarily only the mouth (a local effect).

Vaginal Creams Vaginal creams are inserted into the vagina through a small plastic tube called an applicator.

Categories of Medications

Allergy medications relieve allergy symptoms such as hay fever, rhinitis, runny nose, sneezing, watery eyes, and pruritus (itching).

Analgesics are medications used to relieve pain and inflammation.

Antacids neutralize the acid in the stomach and are commonly used to treat stomach pain due to excess acid.

Anti-anginal agents are used to treat angina pectoris (chest pain due to lack of oxygen to the heart).

Anti-arrhythmic agents are used to treat arrhythmia. Arrhythmia occurs when the heart starts to beat in an abnormal pattern.

Anti-diabetic agents are used to treat diabetes by lowering the blood sugar level.

Anti-epileptics / anti-convulsants are drugs which are used to prevent or reduce the severity of a seizure or epilepsy.

Anti-hyperlipidemic agents are used to lower a person's cholesterol level.

Anti-protozoal agents treat protozoal infections, such as amebic dysentery or malaria. Protozoa are microscopically small creatures which can infect people and make them sick.

Anti-tubercular agents treat tuberculosis or suppress the germ that causes this disease.

Anti-vertigo agents are used to treat vertigo, which is a feeling of whirling or spinning accompanied by involuntary swaying, weakness and lightheadedness.

Antibiotics are drugs used to treat bacterial infections.

Anticoagulants are medications that prevent the clotting of blood.

Antidepressants alleviate symptoms of depression.

Antidiarrheals treat diarrhea in a variety of different ways.

Antiemetics are medications that prevent vomiting.

Antienemic agents treat anemia or loss of blood.

Antifungal agents treat fungal infection.

Antihistamines are used mainly for the relief of hay fever, pruritis (itching), urticaria (nettle rash) and allergic rhinitis such as sneezing, runny nose and itching of the nose, eyes, and throat.

Antihypertensives are used to treat hypertension (high blood pressure).

Antimanic drugs are used to lessen mania. Mania is a problem in which a person alternates between elevated moods and irritable, hostile moods.

Antineoplastic agents are used to treat various types of cancer (neoplasms).

Antiparkinsonian agents are used to treat Parkinson's disease. Patients with Parkinson's disease suffer from tremors, rigidity and slow movement.

Antipruritics are agents that relieve itching (pruritus).

Antipsychotic agents are used to treat certain mental disorders.

Antipyretics reduce fever by lowering the body temperature.

Antiseborrheic products are used to treat dandruff (seborrheic dermatitis) of the scalp.

Antispasmodics (spasmolytics) are drugs used to relieve spasms.

Antitussives are medications that suppress coughing.

Antiviral agents treat viral infections.

Asthma medications treat asthma, wheezing or shortness of breath.

Cough and cold medications are used to treat flu, cough and cold symptoms.

Emollients are used to soothe and soften the skin.

Keratolytics remove excessive keratin in certain skin disorders. Keratin is a fibrous protein that forms around the fingernails and on skin and hair.

Laxatives help a person who is constipated have bowel movements.

Local anesthetics are used to reduce pain or stop feeling in a small area of the body (local effect).

Muscle relaxants relax tense muscles to relieve discomfort and pain.

Nasal decongestants relieve congestion of the nose due to the common cold, sinusitis or hay fever.

NSAIDS (Nonsteroidal Anti-Inflammatory Drugs) are medications used to reduce pain and inflammation

Pediculocides are medications used to treat crab lice.

Scabicides are medications used to treat head lice.

Sedatives	are medications that have a calming effect to relieve anxiety and tension.
Topical steroids	are medications used for itching, eczema or other skin rashes.

What's in a name?

Within each category of medication, there are many different specific drugs, each with its own name. Yet sometimes it seems as if each medication has many different names!

As a matter of fact, many medications you buy do have two names. One is the chemical name, and the other is the commercial name. When a pharmaceutical company first develops a drug, the company will market it under a commercial name; these are called **brand name drugs.** That company holds a patent on the medication, which means that for a certain number of years no other company can produce that exact medication. When the patent expires, other pharmaceutical companies begin to manufacture the same medication, but they call it by its chemical name. These are called **generic drugs.**

For example, ibuprofen is a medication that reduces inflammation. When ibuprofen was first produced, the drug company which developed it marketed it under the trademark *Motrin.* This is a brand name. When the patent on this drug expired, other companies began to produce it, selling it under the generic name, Ibuprofen. Today, you can still go to the store and buy *Motrin,* but you could also buy just plain Ibuprofen.The active ingredients in both medications are the same, but the generic drug tend to be cheaper than the brand name drug because you are not paying for the name.

Here are a few examples:

Brand name drug		**Generic drug**
Tylenol	=	acetaminophen
Motrin	=	ibuprofen
Chlortrimetron	=	chlorpheniramime

To help you tell the difference, in this guide, generic (or chemical) names are written in normal type, while brand name drugs are written in italics.

Antihypertensives

Description: Antihypertensives are used to treat high blood pressure.

Type of Drug	What does it do?	Examples
Diuretics	help the body to make more urine by making the kidneys give up more salts and water. Diuretics are used to treat swelling (edema), high blood pressure (hypertension) or congestive heart failure.	Amiloride *Dyazide* Furosemide Hydrochlorothiazide *Maxide* Spironolactone Triamterene
Vasodilators	relax the arterial walls, making it easier for the blood to flow through the blood vessels and lowering high blood pressure.	Hydralazine Minoxidil
Beta-blockers	block certain cells in the heart called "beta receptors:" this decreases the activity of the heart and lowers blood pressure.	Atenolol Labetalol Metoprolol Nadolol Pindolol Propranolol
Angiotensin-converting enzyme inhibitors (ACE inhibitors)	If angiotensin I converts to angiotensin II, blood pressure increases. ACE inhibitors block this conversion, and so lower blood pressure.	Benazepril Captopril Enalapril Lisinopril
Other anti-hypertensives		Clonidine Guanabez Guanfacine Prazosin Reserpine

Anti-anginal Agents

Description: Anti-anginal agents are used to treat angina pectoris (pain in the chest), which is caused by a lack of oxygen and blood supply to the heart.

Type of Drug	What does it do?	Examples
Nitrites	lower the heart's need for oxygen and improves the flow of blood to the heart tissues.	Isosorbide Nitroglycerin
Calcium channel blockers	prevent and reverse heart spasm by stopping the flow of calcium into the muscles of the heart. This improves the blood flow, which increases the amount of oxygen reaching the heart and reverses angina pectoris.	Diltiazem Nifedipine Verapamil
Beta blockers	control angina by reducing the heart's need for oxygen.	Propranolol
Peripheral vasodilators	relax the blood vessels, making it easier for the blood to flow and increasing the amount of blood that can reach the heart.	Dipyridamole

Agents used to treat Congestive Heart Failure (CHF)

Description: Congestive heart failure (CHF) happens when the heart is not able to deliver enough blood to other parts of the body during normal activity or at rest.

Type of Drug	What does it do?	Examples
Digitalis glycosides	increase the amount of blood the heart can pump out, decrease fluid volume and correct the condition of congestive heart failure.	Digoxin
Diuretics	manage congestive heart failure by reducing excess sodium (salt) and water in the body.	Furosemide
Other agents used for CHF		Amrinone Dobutamine Dopamine Hydralazine Nitroglycerin Nitroprusside Prazosin

Medications affecting the Cardiovascular System

Type of Drug	What does it do?	Examples
Anti-arrhythmic agents	treat arrhythmia. Arrhythmia occurs when the heart is not beating in a normal pattern.	CLASS IA Disopyramide Procainamide Quinidine CLASS IB Lidocaine Mexiletine Phenytoin Tocainide CLASS II Nadolol Propranolol CLASS III Amiodarone Bretylium CLASS IV Diltiazem Verapamil
Anti-hyperlipidemic agents	decrease cholesterol level.	Cholestyramine *(Questran)* Clofibrate *(Atromid-S)* Colestipol *(Colestid)* Fluvastatin *(Lescol)* Gemfibrozil *(Lopid)* Lovastatin *(Mevacor)* Niacin or Nicotinic acid Pravastatin *(Pravachol)* Probucol *(Lorelco)* Simvastain *(Zocor)*
Anticoagulant agents	prevent the clotting of blood.	Heparin (injectable) Warfarin (oral) *(Coumadin)*
Antienemic agents	treat anemia (loss of blood or a reduction in quantity of the oxygen-carrying pigment hemoglobin in the blood). A person with anemia: • gets very tired very easily; • gets short of breath when exercising even a little; • can look pale all the time; • cannot fight off infection well and so gets sick easily.	**To treat iron deficiency anemia:** Ferrous gluconate Ferrous sulfate **To treat vitamin B12 deficiency anemia:** Cyanocobalamin **To treat folic acid deficiency anemia:** Folic acid

Anti-diabetic Agents

Description: Anti-diabetic agents treat diabetes mellitus by lowering blood glucose (blood sugar). There are two types of diabetes: Type I (insulin dependent) and Type II (non-insulin dependent).
Type I : the pancreas does not make any insulin.
Type II: the pancreas makes some insulin but not enough, or the body cannot use insulin to lower blood sugar level.

Type of Drug	What does it do?	Examples
Insulin	is a hormone (a chemical messenger) produced in the pancreas that is important for controling the amount of sugar (glucose) in the blood. Too little insulin can lead to diabetes mellitus, a condition in which large amounts of sugar are present in the blood and urine, which can damage the body. Injecting insulin helps to decrease the blood sugar and control diabetes.	Regular insulin NPH insulin Semilente insulin Lente insulin Ultralente insulin 70/30 insulin
Sulfonylureas (oral hypoglycemics)	stimulate the pancreas to secrete more of its own insulin to lower blood sugar.	Acetohexamide Chlorpropamide Glipizide Glyburide Tolbutamide
Metformin	helps body tissues use available insulin to break down blood sugar.	Metformin *(Glucophage)*
Acarbose	slows the breakdown of carbohydrates in the small intestine. This means that less sugar gets into the blood in the first place.	Acarbose *(Precose)*

Hormones and Related Drugs

Type of Drug	What does it do?	Examples
Estrogen and progestins	mimic the activities of two female hormones (estradiol and progesterone) which control sexual development and help keep the female reproductive system healthy.	**For hormone replacement therapy**: *Cycrin* *Estraderm patches* *Estratab* *Premarin* *Provera* **For oral contraceptives**: *Desogen* *Lo/ovral* *Ortho-novum* *Ovral* *Triphasil*
Androgens	mimic the activity of a male hormone (testosterone) which controls sexual development and helps to keep the male reproductive system healthy.	Testosterone (injectable)
Adreno-corticosteroids	have anti-inflammatory and immunosuppressive effects to treat severe allergic reactions, severe arthritis, kidney diseases, skin disorders and inflammatory eye problems.	Dexamethasone Fludrocortisone Fluocinonide (topical) Hydrocortisone (topical) Prednisone Triamcinolone
Thyroid hormones	mimic the activity of a pateint's own thyroid hormones, which control metabolic processes, as well as physical and mental development. They are used to treat hypothyroidism (too little thyroid hormone) and simple goiter.	Levothyroxine *(Synthroid)* *(Levothroid)* Liothyronine *(Cytomel)*
Thyroid inhibitors	are used in the treatment of hyperthyroidism, a condition caused by too much thyroid hormone in the body.	Methimazole *(Tapazole)* Propylthiouracil (PTU) Radioactive iodine
Calcitonin	is a hormone that controls calcium and bone metabolism. It is used for postmenopausal osteoporosis and hypercalcemia, a condition caused by too much calcium in the body.	Calcitonin (nasal spray and injectable)
Biphosphonates	reduce bone loss in patients with osteoporosis and are also used for hypercalcemia.	Alendronate *(Fosamax)* Etidronate *(Didronel)*

Medications to treat Infectious Diseases

Type of Drug	What does it do?	Examples	
Antibiotics	are used to treat bacterial infections. Some people are allergic to different antibiotics. A patient who is allergic to one antibiotic will probably be allergic to all the antibiotics in the same family	**Penicillins** Amoxicillin Ampicillin Augmentin Dicloxacillin Penicillins **Macrolides** Azithromycin Clarithromycin Erythromycin **Fluorquinolones** Ciprofloxacin Norfloxacin Ofloxacin **Sulfonamides** Bactrim Pediazole Septra	**Cephalosporins** Cefaclor Cefuroxime Cephalexin Cephradine **Tetracyclines** Doxycycline Minocycline Tetracycline **Aminoglycosides** Gentamicin Neomycin Tobramycin **Miscellaneous** Clindamycin Dapsone Methinamine Nitrofurantoin Vancomycin
Antifungals	are used to treat fungal infections.	Griseofulvin Miconazole Ketoconazole Clotrimazole Fluconazole	Nystatin Itraconazole Terconazole
Anti-protozoal agents	are used to treat protozoal infections, which are caused by microscopic creatures that infest different parts of the body. Three families of these drugs are the anti-malarial agents (to treat malaria), amebicides (to kill amebas), and trichomonacides (to kill giardia and trichomonas).	**Anti-malarial agents** Chloroquine Hydroxychloroquine Primaquine Pyrimethamine Quinine **Amebicides and trichomonacides** Diloxanide Emtine Metronidazole Quinacrine	
Anti-tubercular agents	are used to treat tuberculosis or suppress the germ that causes this disease.	Ethambutol Isoniazid (INH) Pyrazinamide Rifampin	
Antiviral agents	are used to treat viral infection.	Acyclovir *(Zovirax)* Amantadine Famciclovir Lamuvidine Ridarabine Vidarabine Zidovudine	

Medications which Affect the Central Nervous System

Type of Drug	What does it do?	Examples
Antipsychotics	are used to treat certain kind of psychiatric disorders.	Chlorpromazine *(Thorazine)* Fluphenazine *(Prolixin)* Haloperidol *(Haldol)* Loxapine *(Loxitane)* Molidone *(Moban)* Perphenazine *(Trilafon)* Thioridazine *(Mellaril)* Thiothixene *(Navane)* Trifluoperazine *(Stelazine)*
Antidepressants	are used to treat depression. Different families of antidepressants work in differernt ways. For example, monoamine oxidase (MAO) inhibitors block the destruction of neurotransmitters by monoamine oxidase, thus creating an increase in neurotransmitters which reduce symptoms of depression.	**Tricyclic**: Amitriptiline *(Elavil)* Desipramine *(Norpramine)* Doxepin *(Sinequan)* Imipramine *(Tofranil)* Nortriptyline *(Pamelor)* Protriptyline *(Vivactil)* **Others** Fluoxetine *(Prozac)* Paroxetine *(Paxil)* Trazodone *(Desyrel)* **MAO inhibitors** Isocarboxazid *(Marplan)* Phenelzine *(Nardil)* Tranylcypromine *(Parnate)*
Agents used in manic disorder	are used to treat mania.	Lithium
Anxiolytics	are used to treat anxiety or sleeping disorders.	Alprazolam *(Xanax)* Buspirone *(Buspar)* Chlordiazepoxide *(Librium)* Diazepam *(Valium)* Flurazepam *(Dalmane)* Lorazepam *(Ativan)* Oxazepam *(Serax)* Temazepam *(Restoril)* Triazolam *(Halcion)*
Sedative / hypnotics	are used for sedation, hypnosis and anesthesia.	Chloral hydrate Pentobarbital *(Nembutal)* Phenobarbital *(Luminal)* Secobarbital *(Seconal)*

Medications which affect the Central Nervous System (cont.)

Type of Drug	What does it do?	Examples
Antiepileptics	are used to prevent or reduce the severity of convulsions in various types of epilepsy.	Carbamazepine *(Tegretol)* Clonazepam *(Klonopin)* Ethosuximide *(Zarontin)* Gabapentin *(Neurontin)* Phenobarbital Phenytoin *(Dilantin)* Primidone *(Mysoline)* Valproic acid *(Depakote)*
Antiparkinsonian agents	are used to treat Parkinson's disease. Patients with this disease suffer from tremor, rigidity, bradykinesia (slow movement) and have difficulty standing and walking.	Amantadine *(Symmetrel)* Benztropine *(Cogentin)* Carbidopa-levodopa *(Sinemet)* Levodopa *(Dopar)* Procyclidine *(Kemadrin)* Trihexyphenidyl *(Artane)*
Opioid analgesics	are used as pain relievers.	Codeine Hydromorphone *(Dilaudid)* Meperidine *(Demerol)* Methadone *(Dolophine)* Oxycodone (found in *Percocet* and *Tylox)* Propoxyphene *(Darvon)*
Opioid antagonists	are used as antidotes to reverse the adverse effects of opioid analgesics (for example, difficult breathing, slower heart rate, and sedation).	Butorphanol *(Stadol)* Naloxone *(Narcan)* Pentazocine *(Talwin)*
Muscle relaxants	are used to relax tense muscles to relieve discomfort and pain.	Carisoprodol *(Soma)* Chlorzoxazone *(Parafon Forte)* Cyclobenzaprine *(Flexeril)* Dantrolene *(Dantrium)* Diazepam *(Valium)* Metaxalone *(Skelaxin)* Methocarbamol *(Robaxin)* Orphenadrine *(Norflex)* Baclofen *(Lioresal)*

Medications which Affect the Central Nervous System (cont.)

Type of Drug	What does it do?	Examples
Medications used for migraine headache	help to alleviate the pain symptoms of migraine headache. Some medications are used to control the nausea and vomiting associated with migraine.	**(In order of most common use)** *Cafergot* Sumatriptan *(Imitrex)* Bellergal - S Dihydroergotamine (DHE) Methysergide Propanolol Verapamil Amitriptyline Meperidine Chlorpromazine Metoclopramide
Antiemetic / antivertigo agents	are used to treat vertigo, motion sickness, nausea and vomiting.	Meclizine *(Antivert)* Metoclopramide *(Reglan)* Prochlorperazine *(Compazine)* Promethazine *(Phenergan)* Scopalamine *(Transderm-Scop)* Trimethobenzamide *(Tigan)*
Medications used for Attention Deficit Disorders	are used to treat Attention Deficit Disorders in children. A child with ADD is very distracted, has a short attention span, and is often hyperactive.	Amphetamine Dextroamphetamine Methamphetamine Methylphenidate *(Ritalin)* Pemoline *(Cyclert)*

Medications used for Asthma and Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD)

Type of Drug	What does it do?	Examples
Beta-adrenergic agents	make the bronchial muscles relax.	Albuterol Isoproterenol Metaproterenol Salmeterol
Theophylline	controls asthma by relaxing the bronchial muscles.	Aminophylline Theophylline
Corticosteroids	suppress the inflammatory reponse caused by asthma.	Beclomethasone *(Beclovent)* Cromolyn Flunisolide *(Aerobid)* Nedocromil *(Tilade)* Prednisone Triamcinolone *(Azmacort)*
Anticholinergics	help the bronchial tubes open up more.	Atropine Ipratropium *(Atrovent)*

Allergy, Cough and Cold Medications

Type of Drug	What does it do?	Examples
Antihistamines	relieve mild symptoms such as allergic rhinitis, sneezing, runny nose, hay fever, watery eyes, and pruritus.	Astemazole *(Hismanal)* Brompheniramine *(Dimetane)* Cetirizine *(Zyrtec)* Chlorpheniramine *(Chlortrimeton)* Dimetapp Diphenhydramine *(Benadryl)* Loratidine *(Claritin)* Terfenadine *(Seldane)*
Nasal decongestants	decrease nasal congestion due to hay fever, allergic rhinitis, sinusitis, and the common cold.	Ephedrine Naphazoline Oxymetazoline Phenylephrine Phenylpropanolamine Pseudoephedrine *(Sudafed)*
Intra-nasal steroids	exert local anti-inflammatory effects to relieve symptoms of rhinitis.	Beclomethasone *(Beconase, Vancenase)* Flunisolide *(Nasalide)* Triamcinolone *(Nasacort)*
Narcotic anti-tussive	decrease cough.	Codeine
Non-narcotic anti-tussives	control cough spasm by depressing the cough center in the brain.	Dextromethorphan *(Delsym)* Diphenhydramine *(Benadryl)* Benzonatate *(Tessalon)*
Expectorants	help the patient cough up mucous from the lungs; used for cough.	Guaifenesin Iodinated glycerol *(Organidin)* Potassium iodide Tepin hydrate

Non-narcotic Analgesics, Antipyretics and NSAIDS (non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs)

Definition: Analgesics are medications used to relieve pain.
Antipyretics are medications used to lower fever.
NSAIDS (Nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs) are medications used to reduce pain and inflammation.

Type of Drug	What does it do?	Examples
Salicylates	stop the local production of prostaglandin. Prostaglandin can cause inflammation, pain and edema (swelling). Therefore, salicylates help relieve minor pain (they are analgesics), lower temperature (they are antipyretics) and reduce inflammation (they are anti-inflammatory agents).	Aspirin Diflunisal Methyl salicylate (topical) *(Oil of Wintergreen)*
Para-aminophenol derivatives	stop the production of prostaglandin. They help relieve minor pain and they lower fever. They do NOT reduce inflammation.	Acetaminophen *(Tylenol)* Phenacetin
Pyrazolone derivatives	inhibit the production of prostaglandin. They relieve minor pain, lower fever and reduce inflammation.	Oxyphenbutazone Phenylbutazone
NSAIDS (Nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs)	stop the production of prostaglandin. They are analgesics, antipyretics and anti-inflammatory agents.	Diclofenac *(Voltaren)* Ibuprofen *(Motrin)* Indomethacin *(Indocin)* Ketorolac *(Toradol)* Nabumetone *(Relafen)* Naproxen *(Naprosyn)* Oxaprosin *(Daypro)* Piroxicam *(Feldene)* Sulindac *(Clinoril)*

Medications used for Rheumatoid Arthritis

Type of Drug	What does it do?	Examples
Salicylates	reduce inflammation and pain.	Aspirin
Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDS)	reduce inflammation and pain.	Diclofenac *(Voltaren)* Ibuprofen *(Motrin)* Indomethacin *(Indocin)* Ketorolac *(Toradol)* Nabumetone *(Relafen)* Naproxen *(Naprosyn)* Oxaprosin *(Daypro)* Piroxicam *(Feldene)* Sulindac *(Clinoril)*
Nonacetylated salicylates	reduce inflammation and pain.	Salsalate Trilisilate
Gold compounds	reduce pain from arthritis.	Auranofin *(Ridaura)* Aurothioglucose (injectable) Gold sodium thiomalate (injectable)
Penicillamine	reduces inflammation.	Penicillamine
Hydroxychloroquine	is also used for arthritis.	Hydroxychloroquine *(Plaquenil)*
Sulfasalazine	is used for rheumatoid arthritis.	Sulfasalazine
Immunosuppressive drugs	slow down normal cell metabolism. They are used for severe rheumatoid arthritis.	Azathioprine *(Immuran)* Cyclophosphamide *(Cytoxan)* Methotrexate
Corticosteroids	reduce inflammation caused by arthritis.	Prednisone

Medications for Hyperuricemia and Gout

Definition: People with hyperuricemia have a high level of uric acid in their blood, but they have no signs or symptoms of gout attack or acute gouty arthritis.

People with acute gouty arthritis get sudden, painful attacks of arthritis. These attacks are caused by monosodium urate crystals which form in the tissues around the joints, making the joints become inflammed. The affected joints become hot, swollen, and extremely tender.

Type of Drug	What does it do?	Examples
Colchicine	impairs the movement of leukocytes to the inflamed areas and helps decrease the formation of the monosodium urate crystals. Since the crystals are not formed, the inflammation goes down.	Colchicine
NSAIDS (Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs)	decrease pain and swelling in a gout attack.	Ibuprofen *(Motrin)* Indomethacine *(Indocin)* Naproxen *(Naprosyn)* Phenylbutazone Piroxicam *(Feldene)* Sulindac *(Clinoril)*
Uricosurics	reduce hyperuricemia by stopping the body from reabsorbing the uric acid and by increasing the body's ability to get rid of the urate.	Probenecid Sulfinpyrazone
Xanthine oxidase inhibitor	stops the action of xanthine oxidase, an enzyme that helps produce uric acid. Thus the drug reduces serum uric acid level and prevents gout attack.	Allopurinol

Medications used in Peptic Ulcer Disease

Definition: Peptic ulcers are lesions in the lining of the digestive tract, often caused by an abnormally high concentration of acid. A peptic ulcer may be found in the esophagus, the stomach or the duodenum (the first part of the small intestine).

Type of Drug	What does it do?	Examples
Antacids	neutralize stomach acid. By lessening the acid in the stomach, antacids help reduce pain from stomach ulcers.	*Malox* *Mylanta* *Tums*
H2 antagonists (Histamine 2 blockers)	block the production of histamine at the H_2 receptors in the digestive system, which helps to decrease the amount of acid in the stomach.	Cimetidine *(Tagamet)* Famotidine *(Pepcid)* Nizatidine *(Axid)* Ranitidine *(Zantac)*
Proton pump inhibitors	block acid production by inhibiting certain enzymes in the stomach cells.	Lansoprazole *(Prevacid)* Omeprazole *(Prilosec)*
Sucralfate	sticks to the surface of the ulcer, forming a protective barrier against stomach acid.	Sucralfate
Gastro-intestinal anticholinergics	are used to relieve duodenal ulcer pain. These are used together with other medications to treat ulcers.	Atropine Belladonna products Propantheline
Antibiotics	are used in combination with other medicines to treat H. Pyloris, a bacteria that causes ulcers.	Amoxicillin Clarithromycin *(Biaxin)* Metronidazole *(Flagyl)* Tetracycline
Prostaglandins	lessen the production of stomach acids and guard the stomach lining from damage caused by NSAIDS (nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs) and aspirin.	Misoprostol *(Cytotec)*

Other Gastrointestinal Medications

Type of Drug	What does it do?	Examples
Laxatives	help the patient have bowel movements more easily.	Bisacodyl *(Ducolax)* Docusate *(Colace)* *Fleet enema* Glycerin suppository Lactulose Milk of magnesia Mineral oil Psyllium *(Metamucil, Correctol)* Senna *(Senokot)*
Antidiarrheals	treat and control diarrhea.	Bismuth subsalicylate *(Pepto-Bismol)* Diphenoxylate HCl with Atropine sulfate *(Lomotil)* Kapectolin with Paregoric Lactobacillius *(Lactinex)* Loperamide *(Imodium)*
Medications used for ulcerative colitis	treat ulcerative colitis, which is a condition in which the colon becomes inflamed and ulcerated.	Mesalamine *(Rowasa)* Olsalazine *(Dipentum)*

Topical Medications for the Eyes

Type of Drug	What does it do?	Examples
Agents for glaucoma: Glaucoma is an eye disease in which the pressure inside the eye is too high. This high pressure can lead to damage to the optic nerve and ultimately to blindness.	lower the pressure inside the eye and correct the condition of glaucoma.	Acetazolamide Apraclonidine Betaxolol Dipivefrin Echothiophate Epinephrine Levobunolol Methazolamide Physostigmine Pilocarpine Timolol
Cycloplegic mydriatics	dilate the pupil *(mydriasis)* and paralyze the muscle of the iris *(cycloplegia)*. These agents are used to rest the muscle in cases of inflammation of the iris.	Atropine Cyclopentolate Homatropine Scopolamine Tropicamide
Ophthalmic vasoconstrictor/ mydriatics	are used as decongestants to relieve minor eye irritations. They are also used to constrict blood vessels and to dilate the pupil in uveitis and during surgery.	Naphazoline *Naphcon-A* *Neo-Synephrine Ophthalmic* Oxymetazoline *(Afrin)* Phenylephrine Tetrahydrozoline *Vasocon-A*
Ophthalmic nonsteroidal antiflammatory agents (Ophthalmic NSAIDS)	decrease inflammation inside the eye.	Flurbiprofen Suprofen
Corticosteroids	are used to treat inflammatory conditions of the eye due to conjunctivitis, keratitis or iritis.	Dexamethasone Fluorometholone Medrysone Prednisolone *(Pred Forte)*
Antiallergic ophthalmics	are used to treat eye problems such as conjunctivitis or keratitis that are due to allergies.	Cromolyn *(Opticrom)*

Topical Medications for the Eyes (cont.)

Type of Drug	What does it do?	Examples
Ophthalmic antibiotics	are used to treat bacterial infections of the eye.	Bacitracin Chloramphenicol Ciprofloxacin Erythromycin Gentamicin Polymyxin B Sulfacetamide Sulfisoxazole Tetracycline Tobramycin
Ophthalmic antifungal agents	are used to treat fungal infections of the eye.	Natamycin *(Natacyn)*
Ophthalmic antiviral agents	are used to treat viral infections of the eye.	Idoxuridine Trifluridine Vidarabine
Artifical tear solutions	are used to relieve dryness of the eyes and the eye irritation that occurs when the eye doesn't make enough tears.	Artificial tears solutions *Isopto Tears* *Lacril* *Murine* *Refresh* *Tears Naturale* Hydroxypropyl methylcellulose
Ocular lubricants	are used to lubricate the eye.	*Duratears Naturale* *Lacri-Lube*
Ophthalmic hyperosmolar preprarations	reduce swelling of the cornea.	*AK-NaCl* *Muro-128 Ophthalmic*

Medications to treat Ear Problems

Type of Drug	What does it do?	Examples
Steroid and antibiotic combinations	are used to treat superficial bacterial infections of the external ear canal.	*Cortisporin Otic* Antibiotic ear solution
Medications for ear pain	are used to treat ear pain.	*VoSol Otic* *VoSol HC Otic* *Auralgan* *Allergen Ear Drops* *Acetic Acid Otic*
Carbamide	is used to remove ear wax.	*Debrox Drops* Carbamide Ear Drops *Auro Ear Drops*

Medications to treat Skin Problems

Type of Drug	What does it do?	Examples
Acne products	are used for topical treatment of acne.	*Benzamycin* Benzoyl peroxide Clindamycin *(Cleocin T)* Erythromycin *(A/T/S)* Isotretinoin *(Acutane)* Metronidazole *(Metrogel)* *Retin-A* *Sulfacet-R Lotion* Tetracycline *(Topicycline)*
Antiseborrheic products	are used to treat dandruff and seborrheic dermatitis of the scalp.	Betadine shampoo *DHS Tar Shampoo* *Sebutone Shampoo* Selenium sulfide lotion Sulfacetamide lotion *(Sebizon)*
Topical antihistamines	are used for temporary relief of itching due to minor skin disorders like hives, sunburn or nonpoisonous insect bites.	*Benadryl cream/spray* *Calamycin* *Sting Relief*
Topical antiviral agents	are used to treat viral infections of the skin.	Acyclovir ointment *(Zovirax)*
Topical antibiotics	are used to treat bacterial infections of the skin.	Bacitracin ointment Erythomycin ointment Gentamicin ointment Mupirocin ointment *(Bactroban)* Neomycin ointment / cream Neosporin ointment / cream Triple antibiotic ointment
Topical antifungal agents	are used to treat fungal infections of the skin.	Amphotericin B cream *(Fungizone)* Cilopirox cream *(Loprox)* Clotrimazole cream *(Lotrimin)* Econazole cream *(Spectazole)* Ketoconazole *(Nizoral)* Miconazole *(Monistat-Derm)* Naftifine cream *(Naftin)* Nystatin cream *(Mycostatin)* Oxiconazole cream *(Oxistat)* Tolnaftate cream *(Tinactin)*

Medications to treat Skin Problems (cont.)

Type of Drug	What does it do?	Examples
Scabicides/pediculocides	are used to treat pediculus capitis (head lice) and pediculus pubis (crab lice)	Crotamiton cream *(Eurax)* Lindane lotion *(Kwell)* Permethrin *(Nix)* *RID*
Topical corticosteroids	provide relief from itching, rashes and minor skin irritations due to eczema, dermatitis, insect bites or poison ivy.	Alclometasone *(Aclovate)* Betamethasone *(Diprosone)* Clobetasol *(Temovate)* Desonide *(DesOwen)* Fluocinolone *(Synalar)* Fluocinonide *(Lidex)* Flurandrenolide *(Cordran)* Fluticasone *(Cutivate)* Halobetasol *(Ultravate)* Hydrocortisone *(Cortizone-5)* Hydrocortisone butyrate *(Locoid)* Triamcinolone *(Kenalog)*
Topical local anesthetics	are used to provide temporary, local pain relief in local skin disorders.	Benzocaine Dyclonine *(Dyclone)* Lidocaine *(Xylocaine)* Pramoxine *(Prax)* Tetracaine *(Pontocaine)*
Emollients	are used to soothe and soften the skin. Emollients also relieve itching and help heal certain skin lesions.	*Keri Lotion* *Lubriderm Lotion* *Nivea Moisturizing Lotion* Urea *(Carmol 2)* Vitamin A and D ointment Vitamine E cream
Keratolytics	remove excessive keratin in skin disorders caused by too much keratin (such as warts).	Cantharidin *(Duofilm)* Podofilox *(Condylox)* Podophyllum *(Podoben)* Salicylic acid *(Wart-Off)*

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Bridging the Gap: A Basic Training for Medical Interpreters –An Interpreter's Guide to Common Medications