

LOOK ALIKE –SOUND ALIKE MEDICATIONS

Potential Problematic Drug Names	Generic (lower case) and Brand Name (UPPERCASE)	Potential Error	Safety Strategies
Insulin Products ✓ Lantus and Lente ✓ Humalog and Humulin ✓ Novolog and Novolin ✓ Humulin and Novolin ✓ Humalog and Novolog ✓ Novolin 70/30 and ✓ Novolog Mix 70/30	LANTUS (insulin glargine) LENTE (insulin zinc suspension) HUMULIN (human insulin products) HUMALOG (insulin lispro) NOVOLIN (human insulin products) NOVOLOG (human insulin aspart) NOVOLIN 70/30 (70% isophane insulin [NPH] And 30% insulin injection [regular] NOVOLOG MIX 70/30 (70% insulin aspart protomine suspension and 30% insulin aspart)	Similar names, strengths and concentration ratios of some products (e.g. 70/30) have contributed to medication errors. Mix-ups have also occurred between the 100unit/mL and 500 units/mL insulin concentrations	Emphasize the word “mixture” or “mix” along with the name of the insulin product mixtures. Ensure that labels correctly differentiate from established products.
Concentrated Liquid Morphine Products vs. Conventional Liquid Morphine Concentrations	Concentrated: ROXANOL, MSIR Conventional: Morphine Oral Liquid	Concentrated forms of oral morphine solution (20 mg/mL) have often been confused with the standard concentration (listed as 10 mg/5 mL or 20 mg/5mL), leading to serious errors. Accidental selection of the wrong concentration, and prescribing/labeling the product by volume, not milligrams, contributes to these errors, some of which have been fatal. For example, “10 mg” has been confused with “10 mL”. If concentrated product is used, this represents a 20-fold overdose.	Recommend use of dropper bottles to dispense concentrated solutions. Verify that patients and caregivers understand how to measure the proper dose for home administration.
Hydromorphone Injection and Morphine Injection	DILAUDID (Hydropmorphone) ASTRAMORPH, DURAMORPH, INFUMORPH (Morphine)	Some health care providers mistakenly believed that Hydromorphone is the generic equivalent of Morphine. Fatal errors have occurred when Hydromorphone was confused with Morphine. This may represent significant overdose, leading to serious adverse events.	Ensure that health care providers are aware that these two products are not interchangeable

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<i>Clonidine and Clonazepam</i>	CATAPRES (Clonidine) KLONOPIN (Clonazepam)	The generic name for Clonidine can easily be confused as the generic name for Clonazepam.	See General Recommendations for Preventing Drug Mix-ups
<i>Serzone and Seroquel</i>	SERZONE (Nefazodone) SEROQUEL (Quetiapine)	Beyond similar names, these medications are available in similar strengths, 100 and 200 mg. Both have similar instructions and dosage ranges; both are used in similar clinical settings. Sedation or dizziness has occurred when Seroquel was dispensed instead of Serzone. Decompensation of mental status has occurred when Serzone was given instead of Seroquel. There are many potentially dangerous drug reactions with Serzone. There are reports of serious, sometimes fatal, reactions when patients Receiving monoamine oxidase inhibitors are given drug with pharmacologic properties similar to nefazodone.	
<i>Zyprexa and Zyrtec</i>	ZYPREXA (Olanzapine) ZYRTEC (Cetirizine)	Name similarity has resulted in frequent mix ups between Zyrtec, an antihistamine, and Zyprexa, an antipsychotic. Patients who receive Zyprexa in error have reported dizziness, with potential injury related to fall. Patients on Zyprexa for behavioral issues have relapsed when given Zyrtec in error.	
<i>Prozac and Prilosec</i>	PROZAC (Fluoxetine Hydrochloride) PRILOSEC (Omeprazole)	Name similarity creates potential for mix-ups. Prozac is an antidepressant and Prilosec is used for treatment of GERD	
<i>Xanax and Zantac</i>	XANAX (Alprazolam) ZANTAC (Ranitidine Hydrochloride)	Name similarity creates potential for mix-ups. Xanax is an anti-anxiety medication and Zantac is used for treatment of gastric ulcer	

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<i>Celexa and Zyprexa</i>	CELEXA (Citalopram Hydrobromide) ZYPREXA (Olanzapine)	Name similarity creates potential for mix-ups. Celexa is an anti-depressant and Zyprexa is used for treatment of schizophrenia and bi-polar disease.	
<i>Zantac and Zyrtec</i>	ZANTAC(Ranitidine Hydrochloride) ZYRTEC (Cetirizine)	Name similarity creates potential for mix-ups. Zantac is used for treatment of gastric ulcer and Zyrtec is an antihistamine.	

General Recommendations for Preventing Drug Name Mix-ups:

- Maintain awareness of look-alike and sound-alike drug names.
- Whenever possible, determine the purpose of the medication. Most products with look-alike sound-alike names are used for different purposes.
- Implement use of “read back” when accepting telephone orders to ensure transcription of the correct drug name.