

Look-Alike/Sound-Alike Drugs

National Patient Safety Goal: *Identify and, at a minimum, annually review a list of look-alike/sound-alike drugs used in the organization, and take action to prevent errors involving the interchange of these drugs. An organization's list of look-alike/sound-alike drugs must contain a minimum of 10 drug combinations.*

Potential Problematic Drug Names		Generic (lowercase) and Brand Name(s) (UPPERCASE)	Potential Errors and Consequences	Safety Strategies
1.	Cisplatin and Carboplatin	PLATINOL (cisplatin) PARAPLATIN (carboplatin)	Doses appropriate for carboplatin usually exceed the maximum safe dose of cisplatin. Severe toxicity and death has been associated with accidental cisplatin overdoses.	Store separately Dose limits in WORX TALLman letters: ciSplatin, cARBOplatin
2.	Fentanyl and Sufentanil	SUBLIMAZE (fentanyl) SUFENTA (sufentanil)	The products are not interchangeable. Confusion has resulted in episodes of respiratory arrest due to potency differences between these drugs.	No floor stock, only in OR Store separately
3.	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) HUMALOG 75/25 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 protamine suspension and 30% insulin aspart)	Similar names, strengths and concentration ratios of some products (e.g., 70/30) have contributed to medication errors.	Floor stock – regular - Humulin R Doublecheck by nursing TALLman letters: IN, OG
4.	Lipid-based amphotericin products vs. conventional forms of amphotericin	ABELCET (amphotericin B lipid complex) AMPHOCIN, FUNGIZONE INTRAVENOUS (amphotericin B desoxycholate)	Confusion may occur between the liposomal and the conventional formulations because of name similarity. The products are not interchangeable.	On restricted formulary Only 1 lipid based available Only 1 conventional available Store separately No floor stock WORX prints the brand name
5.	Taxol and Taxotere	TAXOL (paclitaxel) TAXOTERE (docetaxel)	Confusion can result in serious adverse outcomes since they have different dosing recommendations and use in various types of cancer.	Dose limits in WORX Store separately TALLman letters

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6.	Vinblastine and Vincristine and Vinorelbine	VELBAN (vinblastine) ONCOVIN (vincristine) NAVELBINE (vinorelbine)	Fatal errors have occurred, often due to name similarity, when patients were erroneously given Vincristine intravenously, but at the higher Vinblastine dose.	Dose limits in WORX Store separately Pharmacist to pharmacist doublecheck only
7.	Celebrex and Celexa and Cerebyx	CELEBREX (celecoxib) CELEXA (citalopram hydrobromide) CEREBYX (gabapentin)	Patients affected by a mix-up between these three drugs may experience a decline in mental status, lack of pain or seizure control, or other serious adverse events.	TALLman letters Store separately
8.	Diflucan – Diprivan	DIFLUCAN (fluconazole) DIPRIVAN (propofol)	Name similarity has the potential for mix-ups of two agents with totally different indications. Under treatment of an infection or over sedation.	TALLman letters Store separately
9.	Primacor – Primaxin	PRIMACOR (milfilnone lactate) PRIMAXIN (imipenem & cilastatin sodium)	Name similarity has the potential for mix-ups of two agents with totally different indications. Under treatment of an infection or cardiovascular complications.	TALLman letters Store separately
10.	Zantac – Xanax	ZANTAC (ranitidine hydrochloride) XANAX (alprazolam)	Name similarity has the potential for mix-ups of two agents with totally different indications.	TALLman letters Store separately
11.	Oxycontin Roxicodone MSIR	OXYCONTIN (oxycodone hydrochloride) ROXICODONE (oxycodone hydrochloride) MSIR (morphine sulfate)	Accidental selection of the wrong concentration and prescribing/labeling the product contributes to errors.	Stickers on bottom of blue narcotic boxes will include TALLman letters. Separate drugs in the unit narcotic cabinet
12.	Methadone Methylphenidate	DOLOPHINE (methadone hydrochloride) RITALIN (methylphenidate hydrochloride)	Similar names and some similar strengths have contributed to medication errors. This may represent significant overdose, leading to serious adverse events.	TALLman letters Separate drugs in the drug narcotic cabinet.
Additional Safety Measures:		Limit verbal orders Stickers – narc boxes Awareness of issues for formulary review Brand/generic names on MAR Dose limits		