

Fast Tip 4.1 Drug Suffixes (Ending of Generic Drug Names)

Sometimes drug suffixes provide clues to the type of drug.

Drugs With These Endings	Usually Belong to This Class
-caine	Local anesthetics
-cillin	Antibiotics
-dine	Antiulcer agents
-done	Opioid analgesics
-ide	Oral hypoglycemics
-lam	Antianxiety agents
-micin	Antibiotics
-mide	Diuretics
-mycin	Antibiotics
-nium	Neuromuscular blocking agents
-olol	Beta blockers (cardiovascular)
-oxacin	Antibiotics
-pam	Antianxiety agents
-pril	ACE inhibitors
-sone	Steroids
-statin	Antilipemics
-vir	Antivirals
-zide	Diuretics

ACE, angiotensin-converting enzyme

drugs are available by prescription only. The Combat Methamphetamine Epidemic Act of 2005 was passed to regulate over-the-counter drugs that contain ephedrine, pseudoephedrine, or phenylpropranolamine, which are ingredients used in the production of crystal meth, an illegal street drug. The OTC drugs do not require a prescription, but the purchaser must present a valid ID at the pharmacy and sign for the drug. This protocol may vary from state to state. Some discussion has suggested adding these drugs to the controlled substances list, which would make them at least schedule V drugs.

Although the FDA determines which drugs are available only by prescription, the DEA decides which drugs are controlled and assigns the drugs to a schedule, or category, based on their abuse potential.

Drug Schedules

Controlled substances are assigned one of five schedules designated by the Roman numerals I to V according to their potential for addiction and abuse. The most highly controlled drugs are Schedule I drugs, and the least controlled are Schedule V drugs (Table 4-3). It is not necessary to memorize all these drugs, but knowing the categories is important to understand the effects of each type of drug on the patient.

Schedule I drugs are considered to be highly addictive, both physically and psychologically, and they have no medical use. Heroin is considered a Schedule I drug. These drugs are considered so dangerous that they are illegal to process, distribute, and use. Schedule I drugs are not prescribed except in carefully controlled research facilities in which patients are closely monitored, such as the study of the street drug ecstasy in the treatment of post-traumatic stress disorder. Marijuana is a schedule I drug, but as more and more states are legalizing marijuana for medical use, this may change. Health-care professionals should never possess these drugs because criminal prosecution may result.

Schedule II drugs have a high potential for physical and psychological addiction. The use of these drugs is heavily restricted because they are popular with addicts. These drugs are dispensed through written prescription only; an office assistant cannot call in the prescription to the pharmacy. Additionally, no refills are permitted. This does not mean that patients cannot have more of the medication, but they must have a written prescription for each new supply. The office staff may fax the prescription