

Common Medication Categories

Drugs are classified into categories or classes with other medications that affect the body in similar ways. Many drugs, due to their multiple uses, can be found in more than one category.

Here is the way the *Nursing Drug Handbook* categorizes medications:

- **Anti-infective drugs:** antibiotics, antifungals.
- **Cardiovascular system drugs:** antihypertensives, antiarrhythmics
 - Central nervous system drugs
 - Anticonvulsants, analgesics
 - Sedative-hypnotics
 - Antidepressants, antianxiety
 - Antipsychotics
- **Autonomic nervous system drugs:** skeletal muscle relaxants, adrenergics.
- **Respiratory tract drugs:** antihistamines, expectorants.
- **Gastrointestinal tract drugs:** antacids, antidiarrheals, laxatives.
- **Hormonal drugs:** estrogens, progestins.
- **Antidiabetic drugs:** glucagons, thyroid hormones.
- **Drugs for fluid and electrolyte balance:** diuretics, acidifier, alkalizers.
- **Hematologic drugs, anticoagulants.**
- **Antineoplastic drugs, alkylating drugs, antimetabolites.**
- **Immunomodulation drugs:** vaccines and toxoids; **immunosuppressants.**
- **Ophthalmic, otic, and nasal drugs;** ophthalmic anti-inflammatory.
- **Topical drugs:** corticosteroids, scabicides, anti-infectives.
- **Nutritional drugs:** vitamins and minerals; caloric.
- **Miscellaneous drug categories:** antigout drugs; enzymes; gold salts.