General Drug Categories

Analgesics

These are drugs that kill pain. There are two main types: non-narcotic analgesics for mild pain, and narcotic analgesics are administered for severe pain.

Antacids

These Drugs relieve indigestion and heartburn. These drugs neutralize stomach acid.

Antianxiety Drugs

Drugs that are sometimes called anxiolytics, sedatives, or minor tranquilizers are used to suppress anxiety and relax muscles.

Antiarrhythmics

Antiarrhythmics Drugs are used to control irregularities of heartbeat or heart rhythms.

Antibacterials

Drugs used to treat infections by bacteria.

Antibiotics

Antibiotics are made from naturally occurring and also from synthetic substances that fight bacterial infection. Some antibiotics fight against limited types of bacteria. Others are effective against a wide range of bacteria known as broad-spectrum antibiotics.

Anticoagulants and Thrombolytics

Anticoagulants are drugs that prevent blood from clotting. Thrombolytics promote dissolving and disperse blood clots and are the drug of choice for patients with recent arterial or venous thrombosis.

Anticonvulsants

Drugs that are used for the treatment of epilepsy to prevent epileptic seizures.

Antidepressants

Antidepressants are used for relieving depression. There are three main groups of antidepressants.

- tricyclics,
- monoamine oxidase inhibitors,
- selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs).

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Antidiarrheals

These drugs are used for the treatment of diarrhea. There are two main types of antidiarrheal preparations. They also include simple adsorbent substances and drugs that slow down the contractions of the bowel muscles so that the contents are expelled out more slowly.

Antiemetics

This group of drugs is used to treat nausea and vomiting.

Antifungals

Antifungal drugs are used to eradicate fungal infections. The most common fungal infections affect the hair, skin, nails, or mucous membranes.

Antihistamines

Antihistamines are usually used to antagonize the effects of histamine. Histamine is one of the chemicals involved in allergic reactions.

Antihypertensives

Antihypertensive are medications that lower blood pressure. The types of antihypertensives include diuretics, beta-blockers, calcium channel blockers, ACE (angiotensin-converting enzyme) inhibitors, centrally acting antihypertensives, and sympatholytics.

Anti-Inflammatories

These drugs are used to reduce inflammation - the redness, heat, swelling, and increased blood flow found in infections. These are also used to treat chronic noninfective diseases such as rheumatoid arthritis and gout.

Antineoplastics

This group of drugs is used to treat cancer.

Antipsychotics

These drugs are used to treat symptoms of severe mental or psychiatric disorders. These drugs are also named as major tranquilizers.

Antipyretics

Drugs that reduce fever.

Antivirals

Drugs that have active ingredients that fight against viral infections or provide temporary protection against infections such as influenza.

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Barbiturates

Barbiturates are effective when used medically as anxiolytics, hypnotics, and anticonvulsants.

Beta-Blockers

Beta-adrenergic blocking agents, or beta-blockers for short, reduce the oxygen needs of the heart by reducing the heartbeat rate.

Bronchodilators

Drugs that dilate the bronchial tubes when the tubes have become narrowed by muscle spasms. Bronchodilators ease breathing in diseases such as asthma.

Cold Cures

Although no drug can cure all symptoms of cold. But aches, pains, and fever can be relieved by aspirin or acetaminophen with decongestant, antihistamine, and sometimes caffeine.

Corticosteroids

These hormonal preparations are used to treat inflammations in arthritis or asthma or act as an immunosuppressant.

Cough Suppressants

Simple cough medicines, which contain substances such as honey, glycerine, or menthol, soothe throat irritation but do not suppress coughing. They are most soothing when taken as lozenges and dissolved in the mouth. These are swallowed as liquified to make them act quickly. There are two groups of cough suppressants. The first one is those that alter the consistency or production of phlegm which are known as mucolytics and expectorants. A group of drugs block the coughing reflex such as codeine (narcotic cough suppressants), antihistamines, dextromethorphan, and isoproterenol (non-narcotic cough suppressants).

Cytotoxics

Cytotoxic medications destroy or harm cells. These agents are used as antineoplastics to treat cancer and also serve as immunosuppressive drugs.

Decongestants

Medications that relieve nasal congestion due to the narrowing of blood vessels, which in turn decreases the swelling of the mucous membranes in the nose.

Diuretics

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Diuretics are medications that increase urine production by the kidneys and facilitate the elimination of excess fluid from the body are known as diuretics. These drugs help alleviate tissue swelling caused by fluid retention associated with conditions affecting the heart, kidneys, and liver. Additionally, they are effective in managing mild hypertension.

Expectorant

A medication that enhances saliva production and encourages coughing to clear mucus from the respiratory system.

Hormones

Hormones generated by the body's endocrine glands, such as the thyroid, adrenal glands, ovaries, testes, pancreas, and parathyroid, play crucial roles in various bodily functions. In certain conditions, like diabetes mellitus, where there is an insufficient production of specific hormones, healthcare providers may prescribe synthetic alternatives or natural hormone extracts to correct the deficiency. This approach is referred to as hormone replacement therapy.

Hypoglycemics (Oral)

Medications that reduce blood glucose levels are known as oral hypoglycemic agents. These are prescribed for individuals with diabetes mellitus when dietary measures alone are insufficient, necessitating the use of insulin injections for effective management.

Immunosuppressives

Medications that inhibit or diminish the body's typical response to disease or foreign tissues are known as immunosuppressives. These drugs are utilized in the treatment of autoimmune disorders, where the immune system mistakenly attacks the body's own tissues, and they also play a crucial role in preventing organ transplant rejection.

Laxatives

Medications that enhance the frequency and ease of bowel movements can do so by stimulating the bowel wall (stimulant laxatives), increasing the bulk of the stool (bulk laxatives), or providing lubrication (stool softeners). Laxatives can be administered orally or introduced directly into the lower bowel through suppositories or enemas. Regular use of laxatives may lead to the bowels becoming dependent on them for proper function.

Muscle Relaxants

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Medications that alleviate muscle spasms associated with conditions like back pain are frequently utilized. The most commonly used are antianxiety medications, also known as minor tranquilizers, which possess muscle-relaxant properties.

Sedatives

Same as Antianxiety drugs.

Sex Hormones (Female)

There are two main categories of these hormones: estrogens and progesterone, which play a crucial role in the development of female secondary sexual traits. Males also produce these hormones in smaller amounts. In medical applications, female sex hormones are utilized to address menstrual and menopausal issues, and they are commonly prescribed as oral contraceptives. Estrogens can be employed in the treatment of breast or prostate cancer, while progestins, which are synthetic forms of progesterone, are used to manage endometriosis.

Sex Hormones (Male)

Androgenic hormones, with testosterone being the most potent, play a crucial role in the development of male secondary sexual traits. Females also produce small amounts of these hormones. In medical contexts, male sex hormones are administered to address hormonal deficiencies resulting from hypopituitarism or testicular disorders. They can also be utilized in the treatment of breast cancer in women; however, synthetic derivatives known as anabolic steroids, which tend to have milder side effects or specific anti-estrogens are often favored. The muscle-building properties of anabolic steroids have contributed to their (typically unauthorized) use in competitive sports among both men and women.

Sleeping Drugs

The primary categories of medications utilized for promoting sleep are benzodiazepines and barbiturates. At lower doses, these drugs exhibit sedative properties, while higher doses serve as effective sleep aids. Benzodiazepines are more commonly prescribed than barbiturates due to their enhanced safety profile, milder side effects, and reduced likelihood of developing physical dependence.

Tranquilizer

These medications induce a calming or sedative effect. However, the substances typically labeled as minor tranquilizers are more accurately described as antianxiety medications, while those referred to as major tranquilizers should be classified as antipsychotics.

Vitamins

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Vitamins are essential chemicals that are required in very small amounts or traces for optimal health. The human body can't synthesize these vitamins by itself yet a typical diet usually provides sufficient levels. Individuals with poor dietary habits or suffering from digestive or liver issues may require vitamin supplements.

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