

Pharmacotherapeutic classification of drugs

Gulshan Kumar
School of Fisheries

Introduction

- There are a lot of drugs out there and a lot of ways to classify them.
- In this lesson, you'll learn four of the ways that drugs can be classified using organ systems, therapeutics, chemistry, and law.

- A drug class is a term used to describe medications that are grouped together because of their similarity. There are three dominant methods of classifying these groups:¹
- By their mechanism of action, meaning the specific biochemical reaction that occurs when you take a drug
- By their physiologic effect, meaning the specific way in which the body responds to a drug
- By their chemical structure

USP Drug Classification

- In the United States, a non-profit, non-governmental organization called the United States Pharmacopeia (USP) was established in 1820 to ensure that prescription and over-the-counter drugs approved for use in the United States meet quality standards in order to be placed on the National Formulary issued by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

- Analgesics, including opioids and non-opioids
- Anesthetics
- Antibacterials, including antibiotics
- Anticonvulsants
- Antidementia agents
- Antidepressants
- Antidotes and antitoxins
- Antiemetics
- Antifungals

- Anti-inflammatory agents, including corticosteroids and nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs)
- Antimigraine agents
- Antimyasthenic agents
- Antimycobacterials
- Antineoplastics
- Antiparasitics
- Antiparkinson agents
- Antipsychotics

- Antivirals, including HIV antiretrovirals and direct-acting hepatitis C drugs
- Anxiolytic (anti-anxiety) agents
- Bipolar agents
- Blood glucose regulators, including insulin and other diabetes medications
- Blood products, including anticoagulants
- Cardiovascular agents, including beta-blockers and ACE inhibitors
- Central nervous system agents, including amphetamines
- Dental and oral agents
- Dermatological (skin) agents
- Enzyme replacement agent

- Gastrointestinal agents, including H2 blockers and proton pump inhibitors
- Genitourinary (genital and urinary tract) agents
- Hormonal agents (adrenal)
- Hormonal agents (pituitary)
- Hormonal agents (prostaglandins)
- Hormonal agents (sex hormones), including estrogen, testosterone, and anabolic steroids