LASA (Look-Alike, Sound-Alike) A-listers

- **Am**lodipine
  - 5mg
  - AmLODipine
  - Angina
  - Other conditions caused by coronary artery disease
  - Hypertension (high blood pressure)

- **Amitriptyline**
  - 10mg
  - AmiTRIPtyline
  - Depression
  - Nerve pain
  - Panic and anxiety disorders
  - Prevention of migraine headaches

- **Atenolol**
  - 25 / 50mg
  - ATENolol
  - Angina
  - Hypertension
  - Disturbances of heart rhythm

- **Allopurinol**
  - 100mg
  - AlloPURinol
  - Prevention of gout
  - Uric acid kidney stones

Dispensing errors involving these drugs may cause serious harm to patients. Always triple check the **product name** and **strength**. Consider minimising selection error risks through: physical separation, visual warnings, shelf edgers, PMR prompts.
**Dispensing propranolol**
- **Contra-indicated** for patients with some conditions (e.g. asthma)
- Taken **regularly** and continuously for cardiovascular conditions
- Taken **occasionally** for anxiety & migraine relief

**Dispensing prednisolone**
- Doses **vary** depending on the condition (between 5mg and 60mg daily)
- Ensure dispensing labels have **clear directions**
- Provide **counselling** & additional material
- Give ‘**Steroid Card’** for regular treatments

**Check** for potential drug interactions

**Check** the strength & formulation

⚠️ If **propranolol** tablets are supplied in error, consequences include **bronchospasm** and **fall in blood pressure** which can cause **fainting, coma** or even **death**.

⚠️ Rapid **withdrawal** of **high dose prednisolone** can be **dangerous**.

⚠️ Dispensing **prednisolone** in error can cause many unpleasant side effects.

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Carbamazepine is used to treat epilepsy, trigeminal neuralgia & bipolar disorder. 

**Side effects:** nausea, vomiting, dizziness & allergic skin reactions. 
In adults, carbamazepine is usually started at **100mg/300mg** daily and the **dose is increased** until seizures stop or side effects occur. 
In adults, the average daily dose is 800-1200mg, but some people may need daily doses of 2000mg.

Carbimazole is used to treat an overactive thyroid gland (hyperthyroidism).

**Side effects:** headaches, sickness & joint pain. 
The initial dose is **15-40mg** for adults and is usually **750mcg/kg** for children under 11 and **30mg** for 12-17 year olds. 
Once control is achieved, the **dose is reduced**.

**Think about the person behind the prescription**

Carbamazepine is broken down faster in **children**, so young children may require a larger dose than adults 
Carbamazepine can make hormonal methods of birth control less effective, increasing **risk of pregnancy** 
Carbamazepine can cause dizziness or blurry vision in **older people**, increasing the risk of falls

Carbamazepine and Carbimazole can cause **harm** to a developing foetus 
Carbimazole can affect other medicines such as some anticoagulants, steroids, antibiotics & beta-blockers

*Take extra care when selecting look-alike, sound-alike (LASA) medicines, especially when stored in close proximity*

Think **carbamazEPINE & carbimazOLE**

Check the dose: **carbamazepine** is prescribed at a **much higher dose** compared to **carbimazole**. 
To control seizures, the dose of **carbamazepine** is **gradually increased**, whereas **carbimazole** is taken at a **gradually reduced** dose once the hyperthyroidism is under control.
azThioPRINE

- Available in 25mg & 50mg forms
- **High toxicity** - regular monitoring will be required during treatment
- Takes a long time to achieve desired effect; **28 or 56 day** supplies common
- Usually given **once or twice a day**

azIthromycin

- Available in 250mg & 500mg forms (capsules & tablets)
- Antibiotic prescriptions are usually issued for a **3-10 day** course
  - ! Think twice if you are dispensing **high** quantities!
- Usually taken **once a day**

For children, liquids are available for both medicines. Always **double check** the medication in hand when talking to parents about the child’s **condition, dose** and **duration of treatment**.

Read the whole name of the medicine carefully
Consider whether the **dose prescribed** is reasonable
Check – does the patient have a **clear indication** for the medicine prescribed?

**Serious harm** could occur if a patient receives the immunosuppressant azathioprine instead of the antibiotic azithromycin.
Atenolol belongs to a group of drugs called beta-blockers. Beta-blockers affect the heart and circulation (blood flow through arteries and veins). Atenolol is used to treat angina (chest pain) and hypertension (high blood pressure). Lowering high blood pressure helps to prevent strokes, heart attacks and kidney problems.

Most doses start at 25mg to 50mg once daily. Maximum licensed daily dose is 100mg. Side effects include: dizziness, lowered blood pressure (hypotension), cold hands and feet, leg pain and fatigue.

Take extra care when selecting look-alike, sound-alike (LASA) medicines with similar names, especially when stored in close proximity, e.g. allopurinol. Consider minimising selection error risks through: physical separation, visual warnings, shelf stickers & PMR prompts.

If atenolol is supplied in error to a patient with normal blood pressure, it could cause loss of consciousness, with increased risk of a fall. Think about the person behind every prescription – in frail or elderly patients this error could cause severe harm or death.

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Quetiapine vs Quinine

Quetiapine is used for bipolar disorder and schizophrenia, often first diagnosed in young adulthood.

The initial dose is low, so be aware of someone on a dose of 200mg or 300mg who has not had this previously.

Quinine is used for night time cramps, usually a problem associated with older people. It is taken at a dose of one 200mg or 300mg tablet at night.

If a person takes a 200mg or 300mg dose of quetiapine in error, the effects are likely to be serious:
- Stroke-like symptoms (e.g. affecting speech and movement)
- Drowsiness (leading to falls in the elderly)
- Seizures

Use the patient’s age to think about the person behind every prescription
Consider minimising selection error risk through physical separation e.g. by moving quetiapine to ‘Z’ in your dispensary

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