

III. Medications

The project team considered the use of Institute for Safe Medication Practices (ISMP) Tall Man Letters methodology to avoid the miscommunication of lookalike drug names. Upon review of the list and the limited number of medications carried by EMS, as well as the expected use of this document, it was elected not to institute this measure into our medication list. We recommend EMS agencies consider incorporating these measures into practice where appropriate.

Additional information regarding Tall Man Letters can be found on the ISMP website:

<http://www.ismp.org/tools/tallmanletters.pdf> and the US Food and Drug Administration website:
<http://www.fda.gov/Drugs/DrugSafety/MedicationErrors/ucm164587.htm>.

Reference: Trade names, class, pharmacologic action and contraindications (relative and absolute) information from the website <http://www.medscape.com>, accessed October 23, 2021. Additional references include the 2020 American Heart Association Guidelines for Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation and Emergency Cardiovascular Care, position statements from the American Academy of Clinical Toxicology and the European Association of Poison Control Centers (<http://clintox.org/documents/positionpapers/Cathartics.pdf>), and the article: Rodrigo GJ, Pollack CV, Rodrigo C, Rowe BH. Heliox for non-intubated acute asthma patients. Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews 2006, Issue 4. Art. No.: CD002884.

NOTE: Not all contraindications listed on the <http://www.medscape.com> website were included for the purposes of this document. Contraindications which were not pertinent to EMS clinicians were not included for the purposes of streamlining this document.

Medication List

Acetazolamide

Name — Diamox Sequels®

Class — Carbonic anhydrase inhibitors

Pharmacologic Action—Inhibits hydrogen ion excretion in renal tubule, increasing sodium, potassium, bicarbonate, and water excretion and producing alkaline diuresis

Indications — Acute mountain sickness

Contraindications — Known hypokalemia/hyponatremia, hypersensitivity to acetazolamide or sulfa, liver disease, renal disease, cirrhosis, long term administration in patients with chronic, noncongestive angle-closure glaucoma

Acetaminophen

Name — There are multiple over-the-counter medications, as well as scheduled drugs, that include acetaminophen (Tylenol®) as an active ingredient

Class — Analgesics, antipyretic, other

Pharmacologic Action—May work peripherally to block pain impulse generation; may also inhibit prostaglandin synthesis in CNS

Indications—Pain control, fever control

Contraindications—Hypersensitivity, severe acute liver disease

Acetic acid (vinegar)

Name—Vinegar

Class — Other