

Top 157 Drugs for the PTCB Exam

The most-dispensed US medications by therapeutic class: brand name, generic name, and what each is used for.

Source: ptcbquizprep.com. Grounded in FDA DailyMed and MedlinePlus. Last reviewed July 15, 2026.

Statins (HMG-CoA reductase inhibitors)

Brand	Generic	Used for
Lipitor	atorvastatin	Lowers LDL cholesterol to cut heart attack and stroke risk (statin).
Crestor	rosuvastatin	Potent statin that reduces LDL cholesterol and triglycerides.
Zocor	simvastatin	Blocks liver cholesterol production to protect the heart (statin).
Pravachol	pravastatin	Lowers cholesterol with a low potential for drug interactions (statin).
Mevacor	lovastatin	Older statin used to reduce cholesterol and cardiovascular risk.

ACE inhibitors

Brand	Generic	Used for
Zestril	lisinopril	Relaxes blood vessels for high blood pressure and heart failure (ACE inhibitor).
Lotensin	benazepril	Lowers blood pressure by easing vessel constriction (ACE inhibitor).
Vasotec	enalapril	Treats hypertension and heart failure (ACE inhibitor).
Altace	ramipril	Controls blood pressure and protects the heart after a heart attack (ACE inhibitor).
Accupril	quinapril	Reduces blood pressure and helps manage heart failure (ACE inhibitor).

ARBs (angiotensin II receptor blockers)

Brand	Generic	Used for
Cozaar	losartan	Blocks angiotensin to lower blood pressure (ARB).
Diovan	valsartan	Treats hypertension and heart failure (ARB).
Benicar	olmesartan	Lowers blood pressure by relaxing blood vessels (ARB).
Avapro	irbesartan	Controls blood pressure and guards the kidneys in diabetes (ARB).
Micardis	telmisartan	Long-acting agent for high blood pressure (ARB).
Atacand	candesartan	Manages hypertension and heart failure (ARB).

Beta blockers

Brand	Generic	Used for
Toprol XL	metoprolol succinate	Once-daily beta blocker for heart failure and high blood pressure.
Lopressor	metoprolol tartrate	Slows heart rate for hypertension and angina (beta blocker).
Coreg	carvedilol	Beta blocker used for heart failure and high blood pressure.
Tenormin	atenolol	Lowers heart rate and blood pressure (beta blocker).
Inderal	propranolol	Treats hypertension, tremor, and performance anxiety (beta blocker).

Brand	Generic	Used for
Bystolic	nebivolol	Selective beta blocker for high blood pressure.
Zebeta	bisoprolol	Cardioselective beta blocker for hypertension.

Calcium channel blockers

Brand	Generic	Used for
Norvasc	amlodipine	Relaxes arteries to treat high blood pressure and angina (calcium channel blocker).
Cardizem	diltiazem	Controls blood pressure and heart rate (calcium channel blocker).
Procardia	nifedipine	Widens blood vessels for hypertension and angina (calcium channel blocker).
Calan	verapamil	Slows heart rate and lowers blood pressure (calcium channel blocker).
Plendil	felodipine	Relaxes blood vessels to reduce high blood pressure (calcium channel blocker).

Diuretics

Brand	Generic	Used for
Microzide	hydrochlorothiazide	Thiazide water pill that lowers blood pressure.
Lasix	furosemide	Loop diuretic that removes excess fluid in heart failure and edema.
Aldactone	spironolactone	Potassium-sparing diuretic for fluid overload and heart failure.
Thalitone	chlorthalidone	Long-acting thiazide-type diuretic for hypertension.
Demadex	torsemide	Loop diuretic for edema and heart failure.
Dyazide	triamterene and hydrochlorothiazide	Combination diuretic that lowers blood pressure while sparing potassium.

Proton pump inhibitors and H2 blockers

Brand	Generic	Used for
Prilosec	omeprazole	Proton pump inhibitor for acid reflux and ulcers.
Protonix	pantoprazole	Reduces stomach acid for GERD and ulcers (proton pump inhibitor).
Nexium	esomeprazole	Treats acid reflux and heals the esophagus (proton pump inhibitor).
Prevacid	lansoprazole	Lowers stomach acid for reflux and ulcers (proton pump inhibitor).
Dexilant	dexlansoprazole	Long-acting proton pump inhibitor for GERD.
Pepcid	famotidine	H2 blocker that eases heartburn and reflux.
Tagamet	cimetidine	H2 blocker used to reduce stomach acid.

SSRIs (selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors)

Brand	Generic	Used for
Zoloft	sertraline	Treats depression and anxiety (SSRI).
Lexapro	escitalopram	Eases depression and generalized anxiety (SSRI).
Prozac	fluoxetine	SSRI for depression, OCD, and panic disorder.

Brand	Generic	Used for
Celexa	citalopram	Treats depression (SSRI).
Paxil	paroxetine	SSRI for depression and anxiety disorders.

SNRIs (serotonin-norepinephrine reuptake inhibitors)

Brand	Generic	Used for
Cymbalta	duloxetine	Treats depression and nerve pain (SNRI).
Effexor XR	venlafaxine	SNRI for depression and anxiety.
Pristiq	desvenlafaxine	Once-daily SNRI for major depression.

Other antidepressants (atypical and tricyclic)

Brand	Generic	Used for
Wellbutrin	bupropion	Atypical antidepressant that also aids smoking cessation.
Desyrel	trazodone	Antidepressant often used at low doses for sleep.
Remeron	mirtazapine	Atypical antidepressant that can improve appetite and sleep.
Elavil	amitriptyline	Tricyclic antidepressant also used for nerve pain.
Pamelor	nortriptyline	Tricyclic antidepressant for depression and chronic pain.

Benzodiazepines

Brand	Generic	Used for
Xanax	alprazolam	Short-acting benzodiazepine for anxiety and panic.
Klonopin	clonazepam	Benzodiazepine for seizures and panic disorder.
Ativan	lorazepam	Benzodiazepine for anxiety and acute agitation.
Valium	diazepam	Benzodiazepine for anxiety, spasms, and seizures.
Restoril	temazepam	Benzodiazepine used for short-term insomnia.

Opioid analgesics

Brand	Generic	Used for
Norco	hydrocodone and acetaminophen	Combination opioid for moderate to severe pain.
Percocet	oxycodone and acetaminophen	Combination opioid analgesic for acute pain.
OxyContin	oxycodone	Extended-release opioid for around-the-clock pain.
Ultram	tramadol	Weaker opioid analgesic for moderate pain.
MS Contin	morphine	Strong opioid for severe and chronic pain.
Dilaudid	hydromorphone	Potent opioid for severe pain.
Duragesic	fentanyl	Transdermal opioid for chronic severe pain.
Tylenol with Codeine	codeine and acetaminophen	Combination opioid for mild to moderate pain.

Non-opioid analgesics and NSAIDs

Brand	Generic	Used for
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Brand	Generic	Used for
Advil	ibuprofen	NSAID for pain, fever, and inflammation.
Aleve	naproxen	Long-acting NSAID for pain and inflammation.
Mobic	meloxicam	Once-daily NSAID for arthritis pain.
Celebrex	celecoxib	COX-2 selective NSAID that is gentler on the stomach.
Voltaren	diclofenac	NSAID for arthritis and musculoskeletal pain.
Tylenol	acetaminophen	Non-opioid analgesic and fever reducer.
Toradol	ketorolac	Strong short-term NSAID for acute pain.

Antidiabetics: biguanide

Brand	Generic	Used for
Glucophage	metformin	First-line biguanide for type 2 diabetes.

Antidiabetics: sulfonylureas

Brand	Generic	Used for
Glucotrol	glipizide	Sulfonylurea that boosts insulin release for type 2 diabetes.
Amaryl	glimepiride	Once-daily sulfonylurea for type 2 diabetes.
DiaBeta	glyburide	Sulfonylurea that lowers blood sugar in type 2 diabetes.

Antidiabetics: GLP-1 and dual incretin agonists

Brand	Generic	Used for
Ozempic	semaglutide	Weekly GLP-1 injection for type 2 diabetes and weight management.
Trulicity	dulaglutide	Weekly GLP-1 agonist for type 2 diabetes.
Victoza	liraglutide	Daily GLP-1 agonist for type 2 diabetes.
Mounjaro	tirzepatide	Weekly dual GIP and GLP-1 agonist for type 2 diabetes.
Byetta	exenatide	GLP-1 agonist that lowers after-meal blood sugar.

Antidiabetics: SGLT2 inhibitors

Brand	Generic	Used for
Jardiance	empagliflozin	SGLT2 inhibitor for diabetes and heart failure.
Farxiga	dapagliflozin	SGLT2 inhibitor for diabetes, heart, and kidney protection.
Invokana	canagliflozin	SGLT2 inhibitor that lowers blood sugar through the urine.

Antidiabetics: DPP-4 inhibitors

Brand	Generic	Used for
Januvia	sitagliptin	DPP-4 inhibitor for type 2 diabetes.
Tradjenta	linagliptin	Once-daily DPP-4 inhibitor for type 2 diabetes.
Onglyza	saxagliptin	DPP-4 inhibitor that improves blood sugar control.

Antidiabetics: thiazolidinedione

Brand	Generic	Used for
Actos	pioglitazone	Thiazolidinedione that improves insulin sensitivity in type 2 diabetes.

Insulins

Brand	Generic	Used for
Lantus	insulin glargine	Long-acting basal insulin for diabetes.
Humalog	insulin lispro	Rapid-acting mealtime insulin.
Novolog	insulin aspart	Rapid-acting insulin taken with meals.
Tresiba	insulin degludec	Ultra-long-acting basal insulin.
Levemir	insulin detemir	Long-acting basal insulin for diabetes.
Humulin N	NPH insulin (isophane)	Intermediate-acting insulin.
Humulin R	regular insulin	Short-acting insulin for blood sugar control.

Thyroid agents

Brand	Generic	Used for
Synthroid	levothyroxine	Replaces thyroid hormone (T4) in hypothyroidism.
Cytomel	liothyronine	Synthetic T3 thyroid hormone replacement.
Armour Thyroid	desiccated thyroid	Natural thyroid hormone replacement.
Tapazole	methimazole	Antithyroid drug for an overactive thyroid.

Anticoagulants and antiplatelets

Brand	Generic	Used for
Eliquis	apixaban	Factor Xa inhibitor that prevents clots and stroke.
Xarelto	rivaroxaban	Oral factor Xa inhibitor for clot prevention.
Pradaxa	dabigatran	Direct thrombin inhibitor anticoagulant.
Savaysa	edoxaban	Factor Xa inhibitor for stroke and clot prevention.
Coumadin	warfarin	Vitamin K antagonist anticoagulant that needs INR monitoring.
Lovenox	enoxaparin	Low molecular weight heparin injection for clot prevention.
Plavix	clopidogrel	Antiplatelet that prevents clots after stents and stroke.
Brilinta	ticagrelor	Antiplatelet used after heart attack and stenting.
Bayer	aspirin	Low-dose antiplatelet for heart attack and stroke prevention.

Penicillin antibiotics

Brand	Generic	Used for
Amoxil	amoxicillin	Penicillin antibiotic for common bacterial infections.
Augmentin	amoxicillin and clavulanate	Penicillin combination for more resistant infections.
Bicillin L-A	penicillin G benzathine	Long-acting injectable penicillin for strep and syphilis.

Cephalosporin antibiotics

Brand	Generic	Used for
Keflex	cephalexin	First-generation cephalosporin for skin and urinary infections.
Omnicef	cefdinir	Oral cephalosporin for respiratory and ear infections.
Ceftin	cefuroxime	Cephalosporin for respiratory and skin infections.
Rocephin	ceftriaxone	Injectable cephalosporin for serious infections.

Macrolide antibiotics

Brand	Generic	Used for
Zithromax	azithromycin	Macrolide antibiotic often given as a short Z-Pak course.
Biaxin	clarithromycin	Macrolide for respiratory infections and H. pylori.
Ery-Tab	erythromycin	Older macrolide antibiotic.

Fluoroquinolone antibiotics

Brand	Generic	Used for
Cipro	ciprofloxacin	Fluoroquinolone for urinary and other infections.
Levaquin	levofloxacin	Fluoroquinolone for respiratory and urinary infections.
Avelox	moxifloxacin	Fluoroquinolone for respiratory infections.

Other antibiotics

Brand	Generic	Used for
Vibramycin	doxycycline	Tetracycline antibiotic for acne, respiratory, and tick-borne infections.
Bactrim	sulfamethoxazole and trimethoprim	Sulfa combination for urinary and skin infections.
Macrobid	nitrofurantoin	Antibiotic focused on urinary tract infections.
Cleocin	clindamycin	Lincosamide antibiotic for skin and dental infections.
Flagyl	metronidazole	Antibiotic for anaerobic and protozoal infections.

Respiratory and inhaler medications

Brand	Generic	Used for
ProAir HFA	albuterol	Short-acting rescue inhaler for asthma and COPD.
Advair Diskus	fluticasone and salmeterol	Combination inhaler for asthma and COPD maintenance.
Symbicort	budesonide and formoterol	Steroid and long-acting bronchodilator inhaler.
Trelegy Ellipta	fluticasone, umeclidinium, and vilanterol	Triple therapy inhaler for COPD and asthma.
Combivent Respimat	ipratropium and albuterol	Combination bronchodilator inhaler for COPD.
Spiriva	tiotropium	Long-acting anticholinergic inhaler for COPD.
Flonase	fluticasone	Nasal steroid spray for allergy symptoms.
Singulair	montelukast	Leukotriene blocker for asthma and allergies.

Brand	Generic	Used for
Tessalon Perles	benzonatate	Non-opioid cough suppressant.

Antihistamines

Brand	Generic	Used for
Zyrtec	cetirizine	Second-generation antihistamine for allergies.
Claritin	loratadine	Non-drowsy antihistamine for allergy relief.
Allegra	fexofenadine	Non-drowsy antihistamine for seasonal allergies.
Xyzal	levocetirizine	Second-generation antihistamine for allergies.
Benadryl	diphenhydramine	First-generation antihistamine for allergies and sleep.
Vistaril	hydroxyzine	Antihistamine used for itching and anxiety.
Antivert	meclizine	Antihistamine for vertigo and motion sickness.

Corticosteroids

Brand	Generic	Used for
Deltasone	prednisone	Oral steroid for inflammation and immune conditions.
Medrol	methylprednisolone	Oral steroid often given as a tapering dose pack.
Prelone	prednisolone	Liquid steroid for inflammation, common in children.
Kenalog	triamcinolone	Steroid for skin, joint, and allergy inflammation.
Cortef	hydrocortisone	Steroid used for inflammation and adrenal replacement.
Decadron	dexamethasone	Potent long-acting steroid for inflammation.

Gabapentinoids

Brand	Generic	Used for
Neurontin	gabapentin	Gabapentinoid for nerve pain and seizures.
Lyrica	pregabalin	Gabapentinoid for nerve pain and fibromyalgia.

Skeletal muscle relaxants

Brand	Generic	Used for
Flexeril	cyclobenzaprine	Muscle relaxant for short-term muscle spasm.
Zanaflex	tizanidine	Muscle relaxant for spasticity and spasm.
Lioresal	baclofen	Muscle relaxant for spasticity.
Robaxin	methocarbamol	Muscle relaxant for musculoskeletal pain.
Soma	carisoprodol	Short-term muscle relaxant for acute pain.

