

[Facility Logo]	<b>Page:</b> 1 of 2
	<b>Effective Date:</b> [Sample 10/18/24]
<b>No:</b> CLN.10.01.MOD	<b>Corporate Approval Date:</b> 10/18/24
<b>Title:</b> Safe Practices for High-Alert and Look-Alike and Sound-Alike Medications (CO-2.034)	<b>Previous Versions:</b> 08/25/21, 07/20/17, 09/19/16, 09/21/12
	<b>Medical Staff Approval Date:</b> [Include if required]
	<b>Governing Board Approval Date:</b> [Include if required]

## I. Scope

This policy applies to Tenet Healthcare Corporation, its subsidiaries and affiliates (each, an “Affiliate”), any other entity or organization in which Tenet or an Affiliate owns a direct or indirect equity interest of greater than 50%, and any entity in which an Affiliate either manages or controls the day-to-day operations of the entity (each, a “Tenet Entity”) (collectively, “Tenet”). This policy does not apply to United Surgical Partners International Ambulatory Surgery Centers or Tenet Physician Resource practice sites.

## II. Purpose

To avoid preventable injuries and establish standardized drug safety practices for High-Alert and Look-Alike, Sound-Alike medications.

## III. Definitions

**High-Alert Medications:** Means High-Alert medications which may include opioids, IV insulin, anticoagulants and neuromuscular blocking agents and recommendations from organizations such as the Institute for Safe Medication Practices (ISMP), which have a heightened risk of causing patient harm.

**Independent Double Check:** Means an independent double check where two individuals separately check (alone and apart from each other, then compare results) before administering or changing a patient’s medication.

**Look-Alike, Sound-Alike Medications (Confused Drug Names):** Means medications that look or sound very similar to each other, which can lead to medication errors if not carefully distinguished.

## IV. Policy

- A. The Facility will maintain a written list of High-Alert and Look-Alike, Sound-Alike Medications, including samples if utilized, which bear a heightened risk of causing significant patient harm and/or sentinel events when they are used in error, and as a result, require special safeguards to reduce the risk of errors.
- B. For safe management, the hospital High-Alert and Look-Alike, Sound-Alike Medication list shall be based on unique utilization patterns, internal data about medication errors and published professional literature.
- C. The Pharmacy and Therapeutics Committee shall be responsible for designation of High-Alert, Look-Alike, and Sound-Alike Medication and shall review the list at least annually.
- D. The Facility shall implement safeguards to prevent error or patient harm from medication ordering, storage, dispensing or administration.

[Facility Logo]	<b>Page:</b> 2 of 2
	<b>Effective Date:</b> [Sample 10/18/24]
<b>No:</b> CLN.10.01.MOD	<b>Corporate Approval Date:</b> 10/18/24
<b>Title:</b> Safe Practices for High-Alert and Look-Alike and Sound-Alike Medications (CO-2.034)	<b>Previous Versions:</b> 08/25/21, 07/20/17, 09/19/16, 09/21/12
	<b>Medical Staff Approval Date:</b> [Include if required]
	<b>Governing Board Approval Date:</b> [Include if required]

E. Healthcare providers should be aware of High-Alert, Look-Alike, and Sound-Alike Medications, and the strategies used to prevent error or patient harm.

## V. Procedure

- A. In accordance with Appendix A, the Facility shall implement safeguards to prevent error or harm from medication ordering, storage, dispensing or administration. Safeguards may include:
1. Barcode medication scanning;
  2. Electronic alerts or standard order sets in the electronic medical record (EMR) and/or automated dispensing cabinet (ADC);
  3. Auxiliary warning label or tall man lettering;
  4. Limiting storage to secure areas accessible to authorized personnel only;
  5. Storage in designated areas or separate physical locations (e.g., color coded or locked lidded storage bins); and/or
  6. Independent Double Check.

## VI. Enforcement

All employees whose responsibilities are affected by this policy are expected to be familiar with the basic procedures and responsibilities created by this policy. Failure to comply with this policy will be subject to appropriate performance management pursuant to all applicable policies and procedures, up to and including termination. Such performance management may also include modification of compensation, including any merit or discretionary compensation awards, as allowed by applicable law.

## VII. References

CLN.10.01.DR.01.MOD Appendix A: High Alert, Look Alike/Sound Alike Medications

[Institute for Safe Medication Practices \(ISMP\). ISMP Targeted Medication Safety Best Practices for Hospitals. ISMP; 2022.](#)

ISMP (2023) List of Confused Drug Names

ISMP (2024) List of High Alert Medications in Acute Care Settings