



Winter 2020 Newsletter

Gregory J. Hanker, M.D., AME

Welcome to this fourth installment of our new feature on SCAUWG.ORG presented by Aviation Medical Examiner - Gregory J. Hanker, M.D. – Dr. Hanker is an orthopedic surgeon practicing at the Southern California Orthopedic Institute in Van Nuys.

Dr. Hanker's primary goal as an Aviation Medical Examiner (AME) is to assist the local aviation community in obtaining their medical certification, especially complex cases where FAA special authorization may be necessary.

In my previous Newsletters I discussed the FAA's medical certification process. Understanding the complex regulatory approach that the FAA requires for pilot medical certification enables the airman applicant to be prepared for their flight physical with their Aviation Medical Examiner (AME), without the worry of a delay – DEFER or DENIAL – of their medical certification. I explained the process of searching through the FAA's website – faa.gov -to find various, "Decision Considerations" mandated by the FAA as, "certification aides" in the AME's medical decision process. As examples, we looked at several risk management tools contained in the AMA Guide such as, "Disposition Tables," "Disease Protocols" and "CACI-Worksheets," that provide the airman applicant guidance for their specific disease or medical condition.

In the Fall Newsletter I used as an illustration of this decision consideration process the common medical condition of HYPERTENSION (HTN), or elevated blood pressure present in approximately 12% of pilots. In reviewing the three certification aides for HTN – Disposition Table, Disease Protocol and CACI-Worksheet - it was apparent that, "medications" taken by the pilot are of paramount importance not only in controlling the disease, but also of relevance to the FAA in their medical certification process. It is therefore critical to the airman applicant to know which exact "medications" are acceptable to the FAA -allowing the AME to ISSUE medical certification; and which are unacceptable – mandating that the AME DENY medical certification.

So, what is a pilot to do in order to find this critical information about their medications?

As we previously observed, when analyzing decision considerations for Medications/Pharmaceuticals this becomes a "double edged sword" for the

airman applicant. On one hand, the medicine is essential to control the underlying disease process, but on the other hand, the medication itself may disqualify the pilot for flying: i.e. DO NOT FLY.

Here are some useful tips to research your particular medication – both physician prescribed (Rx), and over-the-counter (OTC). First, go to the FAA's webpage – faa.gov - and then in the upper right corner locate the "search" box. Type in "pharmaceuticals," and press "search." This will take you to the page entitled: "Search Results pharmaceuticals." Select the first option: "Guide for Aviation Medical Examiners." This takes you to the webpage: "Pharmaceuticals (Therapeutic Medications)"



Guide for Aviation Medical Examiners

FAA Home > Offices > Aviation Safety > Offices > Aerospace Medicine > Aviation Medical Examiner (AME) Information > Guide for Aviation Medical Examiners > Pharmaceuticals

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Pharmaceuticals (Therapeutic Medications)

As an Examiner you are required to be aware of the regulations and Agency policy and have a responsibility to inform airmen of the potential adverse effects of medications and to counsel airmen regarding their use. There are numerous conditions that require the chronic use of medications that do not compromise aviation safety and, therefore, are permissible. Airmen who develop short-term, self-limited illnesses are best advised to avoid performing aviation duties while medications are used.

Aeromedical decision-making includes an analysis of the underlying disease or condition and treatment. The underlying disease has an equal and often greater influence upon the determination of aeromedical certification. It is unlikely that a source document or list could be developed and understood by airmen when considering the underlying medical condition(s), drug interactions, medication dosages, and the sheer volume of medications that need to be considered.

A list may encourage or facilitate an airmen's self-determination of the risks posed by various medical conditions especially when combination therapy is used. A list is subject to misuse if used as the sole factor to determine certification eligibility or compliance with 14 CFR part 61.53, Prohibition of Operations During Medical Deficiencies. Maintaining a published list of "acceptable" medications is labor intensive and in the final analysis only partially answers the certification question and does not contribute to aviation safety.

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There are medications for which examiners should not issue the applicant without clearance from the FAA and medications which can seriously degrade pilot performance, for which the examiner should advise airmen to not fly and provide additional safety information to the applicant. For details, see [Do Not Issue - Do Not Fly](#).

The list of medications referenced below provides aeromedical guidance about specific medications or classes of pharmaceutical preparations and is applied by using sound aeromedical clinical judgment. This list is not meant to be totally inclusive or comprehensive. No independent interpretation of the FAA's position with respect to a medication included or excluded from the following should be assumed.

Pharmaceuticals

Items A to C	Items D to S
Acne Medications	Diabetes Mellitus - Insulin Treated
Allergy - Antihistamines	Diabetes Mellitus - Type II, Medication Controlled (Not Insulin)
Allergy - Immunotherapy	Erectile Dysfunction and Benign Prostatic Hyperplasia Medications
Antacids	Glaucoma Medications
Anticoagulants	Malaria Medications
Antidepressants	Sedatives
Antihypertensive	Sleep Aids
Contraceptives and Hormone Replacement Therapy	

Here you will find a disclaimer from the FAA that it is very difficult to formulate an acceptable *List of Medications* upon which an airman can determine certification eligibility. However, the FAA does display a chart in attempt to provide some aeromedical guidance about specific medications or classes of pharmaceutical preparations based on sound aeromedical clinical judgment.

An alternative search that will provide extra information, but more circuitous, can also be utilized. From the faa.gov home page – select: “Licenses and Certificates” from top blue menu line. Select: “Medical Certification” from the drop-down menu. This will take you to the webpage, “Medical Certification.” Further down the page under the title, “Aviation Medical Examiners” select: “Guide for Aviation Medical Examiners.” This takes you to the webpage, “Guide for Aviation Medical Examiners.” From this page, under the section “Methods to Navigate through the Guide” subsection, “Aeromedical Decision Consideration,” you will find all the choices/selections necessary to search for “medical certification” issues including, “Pharmaceuticals.” Select: “Pharmaceuticals” and you will arrive at the same

webpage we discussed above.

The screenshot shows the official FAA website with a dark blue header containing the FAA logo and navigation links for Home, Jobs, News, About FAA, A-Z Index, and FAA for You ...

The main content area is titled "Guide for Aviation Medical Examiners". It includes a breadcrumb trail: FAA Home > Offices > Aviation Safety > Offices > Aerospace Medicine > Aviation Medical Examiner (AME) Information > Guide for Aviation Medical Examiners.

On the left, there is a sidebar with a table of contents:

Guide for Aviation Medical Examiners	FAA Home > Offices > Aviation Safety > Offices > Aerospace Medicine > Aviation Medical Examiner (AME) Information > Guide for Aviation Medical Examiners
AMCS Login	
Search Guide	
NavAids - Alternative Navigation for the AME Guide	Current revision date - March 27, 2019
Application Process	The Guide provides pertinent information and guidance needed to perform the duties and responsibilities of an Aviation Medical Examiner.
Decision Considerations	
Pharmaceuticals	NOTE: Updates to the AME Guide are posted on the last Wednesday of each month, usually before 9:00 a.m. CT. For specific dates, please see the 2019 update schedule. Refer to the Archives (PDF) document for a description of changes posted each month.
Special Issuances	
Substances	
Dependence/Abuse	
Synopsis of Medical Standards	

The main content area also contains a section titled "Methods to navigate through the Guide" with a bulleted list of resources, including "Pharmaceuticals" which is highlighted with a red arrow.

Just below, under the next section entitled Resources, you may find it helpful to download the complete AME Guide (PDF) to your computer for future reference

In the AME guide under the table of contents page.336 you will find PHARMACEUTICALS. An explanation of the FAA's position on the use of "therapeutic medications" is expounded.

*Aeromedical decision making includes an analysis of the underlying disease or condition and its treatment.

*There are numerous conditions that require use of medications that do not compromise aviation safety.

*A medication list may be subject to misuse if used as the sole determining factor for eligibility of medical certification

*Maintaining a published list of "acceptable" medications is labor intensive and, in the final analysis, only partially answers the certification question; and does not contribute to aviation safety.

The AME Guide then goes on to provide a list of medications, which is not meant to be all-inclusive or comprehensive, but rather to address common concerns regarding the policy of – DO NOT ISSUE-DO NOT FLY.

United States Department of Transportation

Federal Aviation Administration

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Guide for Aviation Medical Examiners



Pharmaceuticals (Therapeutic Medications) Do Not Issue - Do Not Fly

The information in this section is provided to advise Aviation Medical Examiners (AMEs) about two medication issues:

- Medications for which they should not issue (DNI) applicants without clearance from the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), AND
- Medications for which they should advise airmen to not fly (DNF) and provide additional safety information to the applicant.

The lists of medications in this section are not meant to be all-inclusive or comprehensive, but rather address the most common concerns.

For any medication, the AME should ascertain for what condition the medication is being used, how long, frequency, and any side effects of the medication. The safety impact of the underlying condition should also be considered. If there are any questions, please call the Regional Flight Surgeon's (RFS) office or the Aerospace Medicine Certification Division (AMCD).

Do Not Issue. AMEs should not issue airmen medical certificates to applicants who are using these **classes of medications** or medications.

- **Angina medications**
 - nitrates (nitroglycerin, isosorbide dinitrate, imdur),
 - ranolazine (Ranexa).
- **Anticholinergics (oral)**
 - e.g.: atropine, benztropine (Cogentin)
- **Cancer treatments** including chemotherapeutics, biologics, radiation therapy, etc., whether used for induction, "maintenance," or suppressive therapy.
- **Controlled Substances** (Schedules I - V). An open prescription for chronic or intermittent use of any drug or substance.
 - This includes medical marijuana, even if legally allowed or prescribed under state law.
 - Note: for documented temporary use of a drug solely for a medical procedure or for a medical condition, and the medication has been discontinued, see below.*
- **Diabetic medications**
 - **NOT** listed on the [Acceptable Combinations of Diabetes Medications \(PDF\)](#).
 - e.g.: SGLT-2 inhibitors such as Invokana, Farxiga, Jardiance, Xigduo, Invokamet, and Qtern are **NOT** allowed.
- **Dopamine agonists** used for Parkinson's disease or other medical conditions:
 - bromocriptine (Cycloset, Parlodel),
 - pramipexole (Mirapex), ropinirole (Requip), and
 - rotigotine (NeuPro)
- **FDA (Food and Drug Administration) approved less than 12 months ago.**

The FAA requires at least one-year of post-marketing experience with a new drug before considering it for aeromedical certification purposes. New antibiotics, lipid-lowering drugs, and antihypertensive medications may be considered earlier than one year. Please contact the RFS or AMCD for guidance on specific applicants.

- **Hypertensive (centrally acting)** including but not limited to
 - clonidine
 - nitrates
 - guanabenz, methyldopa, and reserpine
- **Malaria** medication - mefloquine (Lariam)
- **Over-active bladder (OAB)/Antimuscarinic** medications as these carry strong warnings about potential for sedation and impaired cognition.
 - e.g.: tolterodine (Detrol),
 - oxybutynin (Ditropan),
 - solifenacina (Vesicare).
- **Psychiatric or Psychotropic medications**, (even when used for something other than a mental health condition) including but not limited to:
 - antidepressants (certain SSRIs may be allowed - see [SSRI policy](#))
 - antianxiety drugs - e.g.: alprazolam (Xanax)
 - antipsychotics
 - attention deficit disorder (ADD) or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) medications
 - mood stabilizers
 - sedative-hypnotics
 - stimulants
 - tranquilizers
- **Seizure** medications, even if used for non-seizure conditions such as migraines
- **Smoking cessation aid** - e.g.: varenicline (Chantix)
- **Steroids, high dose** (greater than 20 mg prednisone or [prednisone-equivalent](#) per day)
- **Weight loss medications** - ex: combinations including phentermine or naltrexone.

Do Not Fly. Airmen should not fly while using any of the medications in the Do Not Issue section above or while using any of the medications or classes/groups of medications listed below without an acceptable wait time after the last dose. All of these medications may cause sedation (drowsiness) and impair cognitive function, seriously degrading pilot performance. This impairment can occur even when the individual feels alert and is apparently functioning normally - in other words, the airman can be "unaware of impair."

For aviation safety, airmen should **not fly following the last dose of any of the medications below** until a period of time has elapsed equal to:

- 5-times the maximum pharmacologic half-life of the medication; or
- 5-times the maximum hour dose interval if pharmacologic half-life information is not available. For example, there is a 30-hour wait time for a medication that is taken every 4 to 6 hours (5 times 6)

Label warnings. Airmen should not fly while using any medication, prescription or OTC, that carries a label precaution or warning that it **may cause drowsiness or advises the user "be careful when driving a motor vehicle or operating machinery."** This applies even if label states "until you know how the medication affects you" and even if the airman has used the medication before with no apparent adverse effect. Such medications can cause impairment even when the airman feels alert and unimpaired (see "unaware of impair" above).

- **Allergy medications.**
 - **Sedating Antihistamines.** These are found in many allergy and other types of medications and may **NOT** be used for flight. This applies to both nasal and oral formulations.
 - **Nonsedating antihistamines.** Medications such as loratadine, desloratadine, and fexofenadine may be used while flying, if symptoms are controlled without adverse side effects after an adequate initial trial period.
- **Muscle relaxants:** This includes but is not limited to carisoprodol (Soma) and cyclobenzaprine (Flexeril).
- **Over-the-counter active dietary supplements** such as Kava-Kava and Valerian.

- **Pain medication:**
 - **Narcotic pain relievers.** This includes but is not limited to morphine, codeine, oxycodone (Percodan; Oxycontin), and hydrocodone (Vicodin, etc.).
 - **Non-narcotic pain relievers** such as tramadol (Ultram).
- **"Pre-medication" or "pre-procedure" drugs.** This includes all drugs used as an aid to outpatient surgical or dental procedures.
- **Sleep aids.** All the currently available sleep aids, both prescription and over-the-counter (OTC), can cause impairment of mental processes and reaction times, even when the individual feels fully awake.
 - See [wait times](#) for currently available prescription sleep aids
 - Diphenhydramine (Benadryl) - Many OTC sleep aids contain diphenhydramine as the active ingredient. The wait time after diphenhydramine is 60 hours (based on maximum pharmacologic half-life)

Page last modified: February 21, 2019 11:06:21 AM EST

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Supplemental Type Certificates		Performance Snapshots	FAA Mobile	No FEAR Act
Type Certificate Data Sheets (TCDS)			Frequently Asked Questions	

In this list under DO NOT ISSUE we once again see that hypertensive medicines (centrally acting) are not allowed. Under DO NOT FLY we are reminded that any medications which are sedating and can cause drowsiness and impaired cognitive function will seriously affect pilot performance: e.g. the sedating antihistamines which are commonly taken by pilots for a variety of conditions. The FAA then goes on to provide aeromedical guidance concerning a list of medications or classes of pharmaceutical drugs.

The list of medications referenced below provides aeromedical guidance about specific medications or classes of pharmaceutical preparations and is applied by using sound aeromedical clinical judgment. This list is not meant to be totally inclusive or comprehensive. No independent interpretation of the FAA's position with respect to a medication included or excluded from the following should be assumed.

ACNE MEDICATIONS

ALLERGY – Antihistamines

ALLERGY – Immunotherapy

ANTACIDS

ANTICOAGULANTS

ANTIDEPRESSANTS

ANTIHYPERTENSIVE

**CONTRACEPTIVES AND HORMONE REPLACEMENT
THERAPY**

**DIABETES MELLITUS – Type II Medication Controlled (Not
Insulin)**

**DIABETES MELLITUS – Insulin Treated
GLAUCOMA MEDICATIONS**

**ERECTILE DYSFUNCTION AND BENIGN PROSTATIC
HYPERPLASIA MEDICATIONS**

MALARIA MEDICATION

SEDATIVES

SLEEP AIDS

The AOPA (Aircraft Owners & Pilots Association) provides a very helpful pilot resource – MEDICATIONS DATABASE: which is a list of FAA allowed and disallowed therapeutic medicines. The AOPA cautions us that it is ultimately the pilot's responsibility to adhere to FAR 61.53 & FAR 91.17 prohibiting the use of any drug that affects the pilot's faculties in anyway contrary to safety of flight.

Furthermore, the AOPA reminds us of the risks of medication usage and that drugs which cause no apparent side effects on the ground can create very serious problems in the air even with only moderate increases in altitude. The situation can be exacerbated if the airman has any medical comorbidities such as pulmonary disease; and by common day-to-day issues such as fatigue and stress.

The AOPA's MEDICATION DATABASE is compiled by their Pilot Information Center and is periodically verified with the FAA's AMCD (Aerospace Medical Certification Division). To access the MEDICATION DATABASE, go to the AOPA website: aopa.org.

The AOPA website homepage features a top navigation bar with links to AOPA Foundation, You Can Fly, Air Safety Institute, Finance, Insurance, Legal & Medical, AOPA Hangar, and Pilot Gear Store. Below the header is the AOPA logo with the tagline "your freedom to fly". A search bar on the right includes options to "RENEW", "AOPA CREDIT CARD", "Donate", and "Hi, Gregory Hunker". The main content area has a large image of a flight instrument panel. Below the image is a blue banner with the text "MYGOFLIGHT BRINGS HEAD-UP DISPLAY TO GA". To the right, a sidebar titled "FEATURED STORIES" lists five articles: "5 ways to fly on your vacation", "20 songs for your aviation playlist", "GPS jamming expected in Southeast", "New Garmin instrument 'reimagines' the panel", and "Feds moving to ground foreign drones".

On the top right of the home page you can “search” for the MEDICATIONS DATABASE ; or alternatively on the top menu bar select PILOT RESOURCES; on the drop-down list select Medical Resources and this will take you to a comprehensive page listing a variety of pertinent medical issues germane to airman medical certification as well as the MEDICATIONS DATABASE. On this page select the BOX entitled MEDICATIONS DATABASE

The screenshot shows the AOPA Pilot Resources - Medical Resources page. At the top, there's a yellow banner stating "AOPA will be closed on Monday, January 2020, in observance of Martin Luther King Jr. Day." Below the banner is a navigation bar with links to AOPA Foundation, You Can Fly, Air Safety Institute, Finance, Insurance, Legal & Medical, AOPA Hangar, and Pilot Gear Store. The main content area features two images: one of a smartphone displaying "FAA allowed/not allowed medications for flight" and another of a pilot looking thoughtful with the text "Health conditions that may affect your certification". A red arrow points to a button labeled "MEDICATIONS DATABASE". Below this, there's a section titled "PILOT RESOURCES" with a dropdown menu for "Aircraft & Ownership" and "Medical Resources". Under "Medical Resources", there are links for "BasicMed Pilot Resources", "BasicMed Physician Resources", and "Airman Medical". The "MEDICAL RESOURCES" section includes a "MEDICAL QUESTIONS" box with a "Find answers here." link, a "MEDICATIONS DATABASE (Members Only)" box with a "Do you have questions or need information about an airman medical topic? Look through the information on these pages, and feel free to contact us if you have any further questions." link, and a "HEART AND CIRCULATORY CONDITIONS" box with a "scroll to more content" link. On the right, there's a "FIT TO FLY" logo and a "AIRMAN MEDICAL CERTIFICATION" section with a "Learn More" link.

and you are brought to a description of the FAA's policy on therapeutic medications. At the bottom of the page select the BOX entitled SEARCH MEDICATION DATABASE.

The screenshot shows the AOPA website with the URL 'aopa.org' in the address bar. The top navigation bar includes links for 'AOPA Foundation', 'You Can Fly', 'Air Safety Institute', 'Finance', 'Insurance', 'Legal & Medical', 'AOPA Hangar', 'Pilot Gear Store', 'RENEW', 'AOPA CREDIT CARD', 'Donate', and a user account dropdown for 'Hi, Gregory Harker'. Below the navigation is a main menu with categories: 'MEMBERSHIP', 'TRAVEL', 'PILOT RESOURCES', 'NEWS & VIDEOS', 'TRAINING & SAFETY', 'ADVOCACY', and 'COMMUNITY'. A sidebar on the left under 'PILOT RESOURCES' has a dropdown menu for 'Medical Resources' which includes 'BasicMed Pilot Resources', 'BasicMed Physician Resources', 'Airmen Medical Certification', 'Health Conditions', 'Submitting to the FAA', 'Medications Database', 'Special Issuance Certification', and 'TFRs'. The main content area features a section titled 'MEDICATIONS DATABASE' with a sub-section about BasicMed pilot medical certificates. To the right of the text is a photograph of several prescription medicine bottles and containers on a tarmac. Further right is a promotional box for 'priceline partner network.com' offering discounts to AOPA members. Below that is another promotional box for 'ForeFlight' with the '#FREQUENT FILER' program.

AOPA's medication database

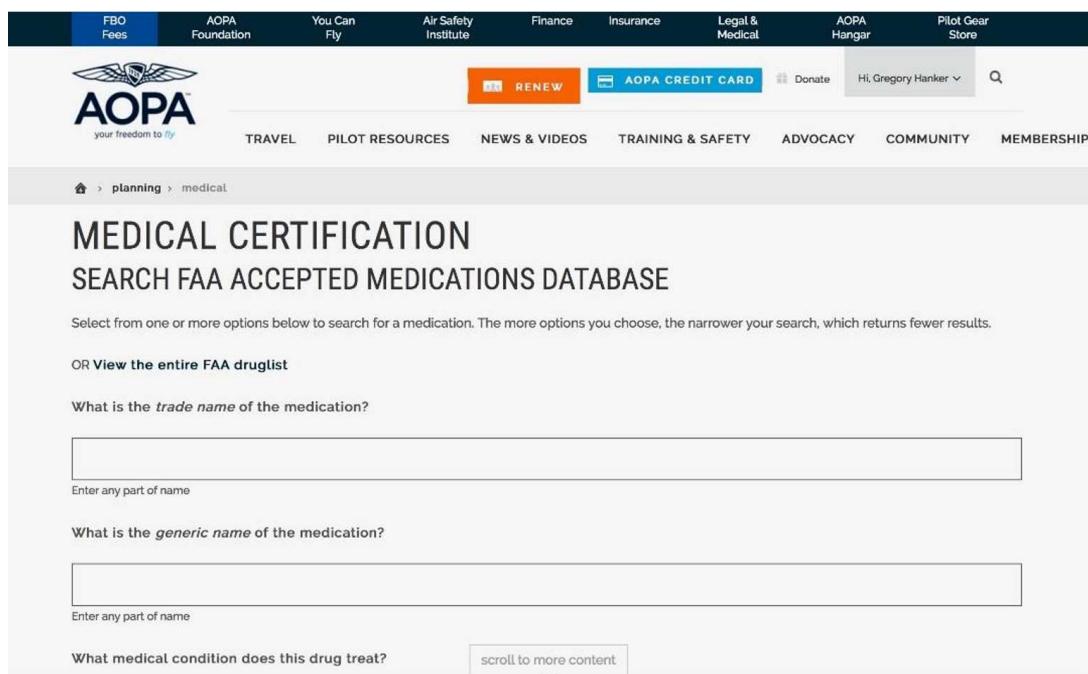
Find out the FAA's position on medications in this database compiled by the AOPA Pilot Information Center. The status of some medications changes from time to time so check back periodically. The database information is verified with the FAA Aerospace Medical Certification Division in Oklahoma City.

If you do not see a particular medication in the database, please call the AOPA Pilot Information Center, 800/USA-AOPA (872-2672), and speak with one of the medical certification specialists. For a more in-depth review of your medical records, consider enrolling in **AOPA's Pilot Protection Services program**.

SEARCH MEDICATION DATABASE

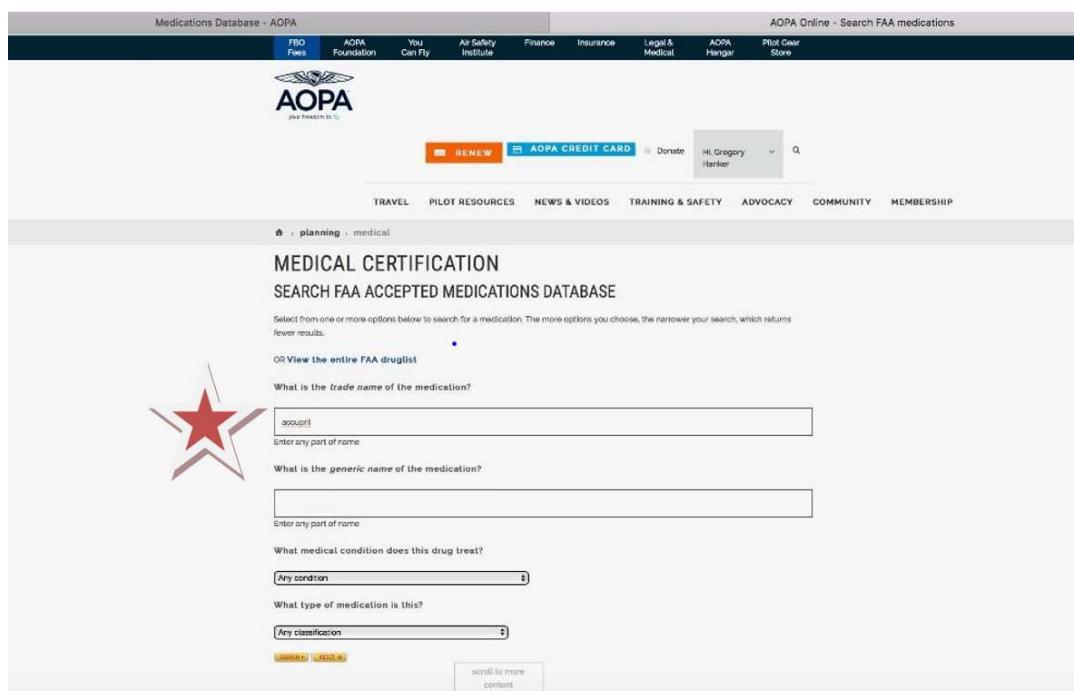
This brings you to the webpage MEDICAL CERTIFICATION, SEARCH FAA ACCEPTED MEDICATIONS DATABASE. In order to proceed you must then select at the bottom of the page the "disclaimer" and you are brought to the webpage which allows you to either enter a specific medication by trade name/brand name, generic

name and/or medical condition; or you can select View the entire FAA drug list.



The screenshot shows the AOPA website's navigation bar at the top, featuring links for FBO Fees, AOPA Foundation, You Can Fly, Air Safety Institute, Finance, Insurance, Legal & Medical, AOPA Hanger, and Pilot Gear Store. Below the navigation is the AOPA logo with the tagline "your freedom to fly". To the right are buttons for "RENEW", "AOPA CREDIT CARD", "Donate", and a user greeting "Hi, Gregory Hanker". A search bar is also present. The main content area has a breadcrumb trail: Home > planning > medical. The title "MEDICAL CERTIFICATION" and "SEARCH FAA ACCEPTED MEDICATIONS DATABASE" are displayed. A sub-instruction says "Select from one or more options below to search for a medication. The more options you choose, the narrower your search, which returns fewer results." Below this, there are three input fields: "What is the *trade name* of the medication?", "What is the *generic name* of the medication?", and "What medical condition does this drug treat?". A "scroll to more content" button is visible at the bottom of the form.

As an example: consider the medication Accupril commonly used to treat HTN. Enter the trade/brand name and search:



This screenshot shows the same AOPA website layout as above, but the search results for "Accupril" are displayed. The "trade name" field contains "accupril", and the "generic name" field is empty. The "What medical condition does this drug treat?" field contains "Any condition". The "scroll to more content" button is visible at the bottom.

Search result for *Accupril*:

Medications Database - AOPA

AOPA Online - FAA medications

FBO Fees AOPA Foundation You Can Fly Air Safety Institute Finance Insurance Legal & Medical AOPA Hangar Pilot Gear Store

 your freedom to fly

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Home > planning > medical

MEDICAL CERTIFICATION

FAA ACCEPTED MEDICATIONS DATABASE - SEARCH RESULTS

[Search Again](#)

TRADE NAME	FAA ALLOWED	DRUG CLASSIFICATION	TREATMENT FOR	FAA ALLOWED BASED ON	WEB LINK
Accupril quinapril		antihypertensive agent	high blood pressure hypertension blood pressure	hypertension evaluation	 complete writeup

Disclaimer

This database is compiled by the AOPA Medical Certification Department and is based upon confirmation with the FAA Aerospace Medical Certification Division in Oklahoma City. Although these medications are generally allowed by the FAA for flight duties, there are variables with each individual's situation that could render a particular medication inappropriate for flying because of case history or adverse side effects. Some medications are being used "off label". This means that a drug is prescribed for symptoms that do not fall within the FDA's approval guidelines for that drug. This is just one example of why the FAA might not approve a drug that is on the list.

The database displays the drugs acceptability to the FAA: allowed versus disallowed; its classification and treatment indication; FAA "allowed" may be based on a specific "disease consideration" such as "hypertension evaluation"; and provides a web link to additional useful information.

An alternative is to select **View the entire FAA drug list**. Selecting this option, you are taken to the DATABASE for the hundreds of medications that the FAA has recently reviewed. They are presented in alphabetical order by trade/brand name.

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Hi, Gregory Hanker

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MEDICAL CERTIFICATION

FAA ACCEPTED MEDICATIONS DATABASE - SEARCH RESULTS

[Search Again](#)

TRADE NAME	FAA ALLOWED	DRUG CLASSIFICATION	TREATMENT FOR	FAA ALLOWED BASED ON	WEB LINK
Abilify aripiprazole	NOT ALLOWED	atypical antipsychotic	psychosis		
Accolate zaflutikast	✓	antileasthmatic		detailed status report from treating physician	
Accupril quinapril	✓	antihypertensive agent	high blood pressure hypertension blood pressure	hypertension evaluation	
Accuretic quinapril/HCTZ	✓	fixed combination ACE-inhibitor/diuretic	high blood pressure hypertension blood pressure	hypertension evaluation	
Accutane isotretinoin	✓	Vitamin A derivative	acne treatment	FAA eye evaluation night flying prohibited while using 14 day observation period for adverse side effects requires status report confirming no psychiatric symptoms	

Looking under the column FAA ALLOWED you immediately see the qualifying or non-qualifying status of your medication. For example, the medication *Accupril* is ALLOWED: it is used as an antihypertensive agent for high blood pressure and will require a "hypertension evaluation". As a second example, the medication, *Accutane*, frequently used to treat acne MAY BE ALLOWED, but only after the stringent criteria that are listed under the column FAA ALLOWED BASED ON are completely satisfied.

Additional questions and medical information can be obtained by contacting AOPA's Medical Certification Specialists at (800)872-2672 or medicalassistant@aopa.org.

Medication usage under Basic Med is an issue that will be receiving close scrutiny by the FAA in the future, as it is highly unlikely that a pilot's family physician will be familiar with the "DO NOT FLY" medications. Below is the AOPA's interpretation of this issue:

Medication usage under BasicMed

If you are taking a medication that is currently on the disallowed list, it doesn't automatically mean it is disallowed under BasicMed. When you visit your physician for the BasicMed examination, the checklist that you and your physician complete will list any prescription or non-prescription medication that you currently use, as well as information such as the medication name and dosage. Your physician will then address, as medically appropriate, any medications the individual is taking and discuss the medication's potential to interfere with the safe operation of an aircraft or motor vehicle. Certain medications are not safe to be used at all while flying and others require a reasonable waiting period after use. Pilots, in discussion with their physician, should consult available aeromedical resources to understand potential flight hazards associated with any medications being taken, such as whether the underlying condition the medication is being taken for makes flight unsafe, or to understand side-effects that may be unnoticeable before flight but could impair the ability of a pilot to make sound decisions. In addition to the BasicMed rules, pilots taking medication must also comply with existing Federal Aviation Regulations, such as the self-grounding requirements of FAR 61.53 and FAR 91.17's prohibition on operations while using any drug that has effects contrary to safety. AOPA's online medical education course will include medication considerations when evaluating your fitness to fly. AOPA is also continuing to work with the FAA concerning the use of certain medications under BasicMed rules.

As a final suggestion - if you are taking any medication for your medical condition that has been prescribed by your physician, and it is working well, but unfortunately your particular medication is on the FAA's, "DO NOT ISSUE/DO NOT FLY" list that we previously discussed, you have the option of appealing your case to the Federal Air Surgeon's Therapeutics and Pharmacology Committee. On occasion, the FAA may grant you a Special Issuance to continue with the unapproved medication.

If additional information is needed regarding a medication acceptable to the FAA, it can be obtained by contacting your Regional Flight Surgeon's (RFS) office: Stephen Griswold M.D. (424) 405-7640. Email link to your RFS is online through the website. In the upcoming Spring Newsletter, I will discuss another class of medications: over-the-counter or OTC. I will also review how supplements and complementary medicinals can affect a pilot's performance.

To schedule your Flight Physical or to enquire about medical issues contact me at the Southern California Orthopedic Institute; 6815 Noble Avenue; Van Nuys, California 91405. Ask for my Medical Assistant Leyla Rivas at (818) 909-5055.

“Good health and safe flying!” – Gregory J. Hanker, M.D. AMEPilot



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Dr. Hanker is a former USAF transport pilot who flew the C-9A Nightingale on aero-medical evacuation missions in Europe; an Ohio USAF Reservist flying the C-123 Provider while attending medical school; and currently a general aviation pilot flying out of Van Nuys Airport.

Dr. Hanker's primary goal as an Aviation Medical Examiner (AME) is to assist the local aviation community in obtaining their medical certification, especially complex cases where FAA special authorization may be necessary.