

Heart Disease Drugs

ANGIOTENSIN-CONVERTING ENZYME (ACE) INHIBITORS				
Generic Name	Brand Name(s)	Use	Side Effects	Comments
benazepril	Lotensin	Inhibit angiotensin-converting enzyme (ACE) from activating the angiotensin. Angiotensin signals the body to constrict blood vessels, thereby raising blood pressure. ACE inhibitors dilate arteries, decrease the resistance to blood flow in vessels, and lower blood pressure.	Persistent dry cough; altered taste sensation; rash and other allergic reactions; may impair kidney function or raise potassium levels; and may, in rare cases, decrease the number of white blood cells.	ACE inhibitors may take several weeks to achieve the full effect. Kidney function should be monitored when using these drugs. They may be used alone or in combination with other medications.
captopril	Capoten			
enalapril	Vasotec			
fosinopril	Monopril			
lisinopril	Prinivil, Zestril			
moexipril	Univasc			
quinapril	Accupril			
ramipril	Altace			
trandolapril	Mavik			

ASPIRIN			
Brand Name(s)	Use	Side Effects	Comments
Bayer, Ecotrin, Genprin, others	Prevents heart attacks by inhibiting platelet activation and possibly by acting as an anti-inflammatory.	Gastrointestinal problems including stomach pain, heartburn, nausea/vomiting, and bleeding in the GI tract; tendency for blood to clot more slowly.	Even a small dose of aspirin is sufficient to impair the function of platelets for the lifetime of these small cells. That is why many people take small, regular doses of aspirin to reduce their heart attack risk. Today, aspirin is one of the first treatments given in the emergency room to a person with a suspected heart attack. The prompt administration of aspirin decreases the in-hospital mortality rate of acute heart attack by about 25%. Regular use of aspirin thereafter may cut the risk of future heart attacks by as much as 50%.

BETA BLOCKERS

Generic Name	Brand Name(s)	Use	Side Effects	Comments
propranolol	Inderal	Lower demands on heart by slowing heart rate, decreasing force of contractions, and reducing blood pressure.	Can worsen or provoke asthma or pain in legs due to narrowed arteries; can provoke Raynaud's phenomenon (spasm of blood vessels to hands); sometimes causes fatigue or depression, impotence, hallucinations, or bad dreams; elderly patients are more prone to these latter side effects. Beta blockers are now used to treat congestive heart failure, but they may <i>increase</i> the risk for congestive heart failure if used improperly	Beta blockers are effective in the treatment of angina and have been shown to reduce complications and death rates from coronary artery disease.
nadolol	Corgard			Same as above. Long-acting drug usually taken once per day.
timolol	Blocadren			Same as above. Usually taken twice per day.
metoprolol	Lopressor	Lower demands on heart by slowing heart rate, decreasing force of contractions, and reducing blood pressure.	Less likely than propranolol to cause wheezing.	Metoprolol and other "cardioselective" betablockers can be used with caution by people with asthma. Although they are, safer for these patients than propranolol, cardio-selective agents can still cause side effects.
atenolol	Tenormin			Similar to metoprolol; often taken once per day.

** Other beta blockers not included in this table include pindolol (Visken), acebutolol (Sectral), labetalol (Normodyne or Trandate), penbutolol (Levitol), carteolol (Cartrol), betaxolol (Kerlone), carvedilol (Coreg), and bisoprolol (Zebeta). Although most of these medications are effective in treating hypertension, not all have been evaluated in large, randomized trials for their ability to help patients who have coronary disease.*

***Pregnant or nursing women should not take any of these drugs except with the specific advice of a physician.**

Cholesterol-Lowering Medications

Generic Name	Brand Name(s)	Use	Side Effects	Comments
HMG-CoA Reductase Inhibitors (Statins)				
atorvastatin	Lipitor	Block the main liver enzyme that promotes LDL production; lower LDL; to a lesser degree raise HDL and lower triglycerides (atorvastatin has a much greater effect on triglycerides).	Abdominal pain, constipation, diarrhea, indigestion, nausea, flatulence, heartburn, dizziness, fatigue, headache, rash, blurred vision, muscle pains, and muscle or liver damage.	Statins should not be taken by patients taking fibrates or by heavy drinkers or patients with active or chronic liver disease. They should be used with caution by those taking cyclosporine, erythromycin, or niacin. Statins can increase the effect of warfarin (Coumadin).
cerivastatin	Baycol			
fluvastatin	Lescol			
lovastatin	Mevacor			
pravastatin	Pravachol			
simvastatin	Zocor			

Fibric Acid Derivatives (Fibrates)				
fenofibrate gemfibrozil	Tricor Lopid	Increase liver's break-down of VLDL and block the activity of proteins involved in producing cholesterol; reduce LDL, lower triglycerides, and raise HDL.	Nausea; vomiting; diarrhea; Indigestion; flatulence; abdominal headache; cardiac arrhythmias; dizziness; fatigue; muscle pain and weakness; rash; hair loss; abnormal liver or muscle enzymes, or both; gallstones.	Fibrates should not be taken by patients with liver or severe kidney problems; nor by those with gall-bladder disease. They should not be taken in combination with statins. Fibrates can increase the effects of warfarin (Coumadin); liver functions and blood counts should be checked before and throughout therapy.
Bile-acid Binders				
Cholestyramine colestipol	Prevalite, Questran, Questran Lite Colestid Granules	Bind and prevent absorption of bile acids in the gut; lower LDL.	Constipation; heartburn; bloated feeling; nausea; flatulence; tendency to bleed easily; decreased absorption of certain drugs and the vitamins A, D, and K.	Bile-acid binders should not be taken by patients with familial dysbetalipoproteinemia, very high triglyceride levels, or history of severe constipation. They should be used with caution by those with moderately elevated triglycerides. Other medications should be taken at least one hour before or four hours afterward. Vitamin supplementation may be necessary.
Niacin				
niacin (nicotinic acid) patients levels	Niacor, Nicolar, Nicobid, Slo-Niacin, many generics	Reduces the liver's production of VLDL; lowers total cholesterol, LDL, and triglycerides, and raises HDL.	Flushing, rash, headache, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, flatulence, indigestion, low blood pressure, elevated blood levels of uric acid, high blood sugar, activation of peptic ulcer, cardiac arrhythmias, dry skin, abnormal liver enzymes.	Niacin is especially effective in combination with bile-acid binders; it should not be used by patients with chronic liver disease or active peptic ulcer. It should be taken only with caution by taking statins or those who have diabetes, gout, or high blood of uric acid. Tests of blood glucose, uric acid, and liver function must be performed regularly.