

Antihypertensives - What You Need to Know

What — Antihypertensive drugs are medications that are used to lower a person's blood pressure. There are many different mechanisms to lowering blood pressure and multiple drugs from different classes are used to do it. Drugs that fall under the antihypertensive category include, but are not limited to, ACE-inhibitors, angiotensin receptor blockers, beta blockers, calcium channel blockers, and diuretics.

Why — Nearly half of the adults living in the United States have high blood pressure which can lead to more serious events like a stroke or heart attack. Often referred to as the "silent killer," high blood pressure can go undetected and untreated if not diagnosed early. Hypertension, or high blood pressure, can be broken up into more specific categories but typically is considered a systolic pressure of 130 or greater and a diastolic pressure of 90 or greater.

Treatment Options

Drug Class	Brand	Generic
ACE-Inhibitor	Prinivil	lisinopril
ACE-Inhibitor	Altace	ramipril
ACE-Inhibitor	Vasotec	enalapril
Angiotensin receptor blocker	Cozaar	losartan
Angiotensin receptor blocker	Diovan	valsartan
Angiotensin receptor blocker	Micardis	telmisartan
Beta blocker	Lopressor, Toprol	metoprolol
Beta blocker	Tenormin	atenolol
Beta blocker	Trandate	labetalol
Calcium channel blocker	Norvasc	amlodipine
Calcium channel blocker	Adalat	nifedipine
Calcium channel blocker	Cartia	diltiazem
Loop Diuretic	Lasix	furosemide
Loop Diuretic	Demadex	torsemide
Thiazide Diuretic	Microzide	hydrochlorothiazide

Considerations

- Blood pressure may be reduced to a healthier level when using more than one drug class of antihypertensives. Different drug classes are often combined and made into combo pills. Ex. Lisinopril-hydrochlorothiazide
- It is important to choose antihypertensives specific to the patient and their conditions. Not every drug class of medications work for everyone.
- All antihypertensive agents work best in combination with lifestyle changes such as increased physical activity and a low-sodium diet.

1. Facts about hypertension. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. <https://www.cdc.gov/bloodpressure/facts.htm#:~:text=Nearly%20half%20of%20adults%20in,are%20taking%20medication%20for%20hypertension>. Published September 27, 2021. Accessed December 3, 2021.

2. 2017 AHA/ACC Hypertensive Guidelines