

# **Therapy of Hypertension**

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# Therapy of Hypertension

## Classification:

### 1. Essential or primary hypertension:

- Most common (~ 90% of patients).
- Unknown etiology.
- **Can NOT be cured, but it can be controlled.**

### 2. Secondary hypertension:

- A small percentage of patients (< 10% of patients).
- Specific cause.
- **Can be relieved or potentially cured.**

The accuracy of BP measurement is affected by patient preparation and positioning, technique, and timing. Before the first reading, the patient should avoid smoking, caffeine, and exercise for at least 30 minutes and should sit quietly in a chair for at least 5 minutes with back supported and feet flat on the floor. An appropriately sized cuff should be placed on the bare upper arm and with the arm supported at heart level. For the first encounter, BP should be recorded in both arms. The arm with the higher reading should be used for subsequent measurements.

It is recommended that one uses an average of 2 to 3 readings, separated by 1 to 2 minutes, obtained on 2 to 3 separate visits. Some of those readings should be performed outside of the clinical setting, either with home BP self-monitoring or 24-hour ambulatory BP monitoring, especially when confirming the diagnosis of sustained hypertension. Note that a clinic BP of 140/90 may correspond to home BP values of 135/85.

# Secondary Hypertension

## Secondary Hypertension:

- A co-morbid disease or a drug is responsible for elevating BP.

## Causes:

1. Chronic kidney disease
2. Cushing's syndrome
3. Coarctation of the aorta
4. **Obstructive sleep apnea**
5. Primary hyperparathyroidism
6. Pheochromocytoma
7. Primary aldosteronism

# Secondary Hypertension

8. Renovascular disease.
9. Thyroid disease (both hypo- and hyper-thyroidism)
10. **Drugs:**
  - a) Amphetamines.
  - b) Antivascular endothelial growth factor agents (Bevacizumab, ranibizumab and aflibercept).** May increase vascular tone due to inhibition of VEGF-mediated vasodilation.
  - c) Corticosteroids.
  - d) Calcineurin inhibitors (cyclosporine, tacrolimus).

# Secondary Hypertension

- e) Decongestants (pseudoephedrine, phenylephrine)
- f) Ergot alkaloids (bromocriptine, methysergide, dihydroergotamine).
- g) Erythropoiesis-stimulating agents (erythropoietin, darbepoetin). May increase response to circulating vasoconstrictors.
- h) Estrogen-containing oral contraceptives.
- i) Nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs.
- j)  $\beta$ -blocker withdrawal.
- k) Tyramine-containing foods.

# Secondary Hypertension

- l) Street drugs and other products:** Cocaine and cocaine withdrawal; Ephedra alkaloids (Ma huang), “herbal ecstasy” ; Nicotine and withdrawal, anabolic steroids, narcotic withdrawal, ergot-containing herbal products; St. John’s wort.
- m) Food substances:** Sodium, Alcohol drinking (by increasing levels of endothelin and angiotensin II), Licorice (aldosterone-like action).
- n) Others...**

# Secondary Hypertension

- **When a secondary cause is identified, removing the offending agent or treating/correcting the underlying co-morbid condition should be the first step in management.**

## Blood pressure classification in the ACC/AHA and ESC/ESH guidelines

ACC/AHA Category	SBP		DBP		ESC/ESH Category	SBP		DBP
<b>Normal</b>	<b>&lt;120</b>	<b>and</b>	<b>&lt; 80</b>		<b>Optimal</b>	<b>&lt;120</b>	<b>and</b>	<b>&lt;80</b>
<b>Elevated</b>	<b>120-129</b>	<b>and</b>	<b>&lt; 80</b>		<b>Normal</b>	<b>120-129</b>	<b>and/or</b>	<b>80-84</b>
<b>Stage 1 hypertension</b>	<b>130-139</b>	<b>or</b>	<b>80-89</b>		<b>High normal</b>	<b>130-139</b>	<b>and/or</b>	<b>85-89</b>
<b>Stage 2 hypertension</b>	<b>≥ 140</b>	<b>or</b>	<b>≥ 90</b>		<b>Grade 1 hypertension</b>	<b>140-159</b>	<b>and/or</b>	<b>90-99</b>
					<b>Grade 2 hypertension</b>	<b>160-179</b>	<b>and/or</b>	<b>100-109</b>
					<b>Grade 3 hypertension</b>	<b>≥ 180</b>	<b>and/or</b>	<b>≥ 110</b>
					<b>Isolated systolic hypertension</b>	<b>&gt; 140</b>	<b>and</b>	<b>&lt; 90</b>

Reference:

New American (JNC8) and European Hypertension Guidelines, Reconciling the Differences. *Cardiol Ther* (2019) 8:157–166.

# Classification of Hypertension

- Hypertensive crises are clinical situations where there are extreme BP elevations, typically > 180/120 mm Hg.
- They are categorized as either:
  1. Hypertensive emergency: extreme BP elevations that are accompanied by **acute or progressing end-organ damage.**
  2. Hypertensive urgency: extreme BP elevations **without acute or progressing end-organ injury.**

# Therapy of Hypertension

## Overall Goal of Treatment:

- The overall goal of treating hypertension is to reduce associated morbidity and mortality from cardiovascular (CV) events (coronary events, cerebrovascular events, heart failure, kidney disease).
- Therefore, the specific selection of antihypertensive drug therapy should be based on evidence demonstrating CV event reduction.

# Therapy of Hypertension

- According to JNC8 BP goal for:
- Age  $\geq$  60 years: < 150/90
- Age < 60 years: < 140/90

# Therapy of Hypertension

- Treating patients to lower BP goals may lead to hypotension, syncope, electrolyte abnormalities, and acute kidney injury or failure.
- BP control rates are poor. The main reason is **Clinical Inertia** which is defined as a clinic visit at which NO therapeutic move has been made to lower BP in a patient with uncontrolled hypertension.
- **During visits, treatment can be initiated, titrated, and/or changed.**

# Therapy of Hypertension

## General Approach to Treatment:

- Most patients should be placed on both **life-style modifications** and **drug therapy** concurrently after the diagnosis of hypertension.
- Life-style modification alone is appropriate for most patients with pre-hypertension.
- Life-style modifications alone may NOT adequately lower BP in hypertensive patients.

# Therapy of Hypertension

- Patients with additional CV risk factors or those with hypertension-associated complications need antihypertensive drug therapy in addition to life-style modifications.
- The choice of initial antihypertensive drug therapy depends on the degree of BP elevation and presence of compelling indication.

# Therapy of Hypertension

1. Most patients with stage 1 hypertension should be initially treated with **a first-line drug** or the combination of two.
  - Monotherapy: **ACEi, ARB, CCB or a thiazide diuretic.**
  - Two-drug combination: **ACEi or ARB + CCB or thiazide diuretic.**

# Therapy of Hypertension

2. For patients with stage 2 hypertension, combination drug therapy is recommended, using preferably **two first-line** antihypertensive drugs.
  - **ACEi or ARB + CCB.**
  - **ACEi or ARB + thiazide.**

# Therapy of Hypertension

## Non-pharmacologic Therapy:

- All patients with pre-hypertension and hypertension should follow life-style modifications.
- **Life-style modifications should never be used as a replacement for antihypertensive drug therapy.**
- They can provide small-to-moderate reductions in SBP.
- Strict adherence with life-style modification can decrease the progression to hypertension in patients with pre-hypertension.

# Life-style Modifications

Modification	Recommendation
Weight loss	Maintain normal body weight (body mass index, 18.5-24.9 kg/m <sup>2</sup> ), <b>reduce wt gradually</b>
Diet	A diet rich in fruits, vegetables, and whole grains. Including fat-free or low-fat dairy products, fish, poultry, beans, nuts, and vegetable oils
Reduced salt intake	Reduce daily dietary sodium intake as much as possible to no more than 2400 mg/day.
Aerobic physical activity	3 to 4 sessions/wk, lasting an average of 40 min/session, and involving moderate to vigorous-intensity physical activity
Moderation of alcohol intake	Limit consumption to $\leq 2$ drink equivalents per day in men and $\leq 1$ drink equivalent per day in women and lighter-weight persons

In addition to smoking cessation and control of diabetes and dyslipidemia

# Therapy of Hypertension

## Pharmacotherapy:

- An ACE-inhibitor, an angiotensin II receptor blocker (ARB), a calcium channel blocker (CCB), or a thiazide diuretic are preferred first-line antihypertensive agents for most patients.
- They should be used to treat the majority of patients with hypertension **because of evidence demonstrating cardiovascular event reduction.**

# Therapy of Hypertension

- $\beta$ -Blocker therapy should be reserved to either treat a specific compelling indication or used in combination with one or more of the first-line antihypertensive agents for patients without a compelling indication.
- A  $\beta$ -blocker can be used as a first-line antihypertensive agent **when an ACEi, ARB, CCB, or thiazide can NOT be used as the first-line agent.**

# Therapy of Hypertension

- **Alternative antihypertensive drug classes may be used in select patients after first-line agents:**  
Loop diuretics, potassium sparing diuretics,  $\beta$ -blockers,  $\alpha_1$ -blockers, central  $\alpha_2$ -agonists, direct renin inhibitors, and direct arterial vasodilator (hydralazine).

# Therapy of Hypertension

## Patients with Compelling Indications:

- **Compelling indications represent specific co-morbid conditions where evidence supports using specific antihypertensive class to treat both the compelling indication and hypertension.**
- **In these cases, drug therapy consists of drug combinations.**

# Therapy of Hypertension

## Heart Failure with Reduced Ejection Fraction:

- Systolic heart failure associated with decreased cardiac output.
- The following are indicated: An ACEi or ARB plus diuretic therapy, followed by the addition of a  $\beta$ -blocker (bisoprolol, carvedilol, or metoprolol) and possibly an aldosterone receptor antagonist.
- An ACEi or ARB should be started with low doses, especially in patients with acute exacerbation.

# Therapy of Hypertension

- Heart failure induces a compensatory high-renin condition, and starting an **ACEi or ARB** can cause a profound first-dose effect and possible **orthostatic hypotension**.
- Diuretics provide symptomatic relief of edema.
- **Loop diuretics** are often needed, especially for patients with more advanced heart failure and/or CKD.

# Therapy of Hypertension

- A  **$\beta$ -Blocker** must be started in very low doses, much lower than that used to treat hypertension, and titrated slowly to higher doses based on tolerability.
- **Bisoprolol, carvedilol, and sustained-release metoprolol** are the only  $\beta$ -blockers proven to be beneficial.
- The addition of an aldosterone antagonist (**spironolactone** or **eplerenone**) **can reduce cardiovascular morbidity and mortality.**

# Therapy of Hypertension

## Post-Myocardial Infarction:

- $\beta$ -Blockers (without intrinsic sympathomimetic activity) and ACEi or ARB are first choice to decrease cardiac adrenergic stimulation.
- They reduce the risk of a subsequent MI or sudden cardiac death.
- ACEi treatment improves cardiac remodeling and cardiac function and reduces cardiovascular events post-MI.
- $\beta$ -blockers should be used first.

# Therapy of Hypertension

## Coronary Artery Disease:

- **Chronic stable angina and acute coronary syndrome (unstable angina and acute MI) are the most common hypertension-associated complications.**
- **$\beta$ -Blocker therapy is a standard of care for treating these conditions in patients with hypertension.**
- **They are first-line therapy in chronic stable angina and have the ability to reduce BP and improve ischemic symptoms by decreasing myocardial oxygen consumption and demand.**

# Therapy of Hypertension

- Long-acting CCBs (the non-dihydropyridines diltiazem and verapamil) are alternatives to  $\beta$ -blockers.
- Dihydropyridine CCBs are considered as **add-on therapy** in chronic stable angina for patients with ischemic symptoms.
- Once ischemic symptoms are controlled, other antihypertensive drugs (ACEi or ARB) can be added to provide additional cardiovascular risk reduction.

# Therapy of Hypertension

- **Thiazides can be added thereafter to provide additional BP lowering and to further reduce cardiovascular risk, but they do NOT provide anti-ischemic effects.**

# Therapy of Hypertension

## Diabetes Mellitus:

- The primary cause of mortality in diabetes is cardiovascular disease, and hypertension management is a very important risk reduction strategy.
- **ACEi or an ARB** have been shown to reduce CV events in patients with diabetes.
- These agents provide **nephro-protection due to vasodilation in the efferent arteriole.**

# Therapy of Hypertension

- CCBs are the **most appropriate add-on agents for BP control for patients with diabetes.**
- A thiazide, used in low doses, is recommended add-on therapy to lower BP and provide additional cardiovascular risk reduction.

# Therapy of Hypertension

- $\beta$ -Blockers (especially **non-selective**) can **mask the signs and symptoms of hypoglycemia** in patients with tightly controlled diabetes because most of the symptoms of hypoglycemia (tremor, tachycardia, and palpitations) are mediated through the sympathetic nervous system.
- Sweating, a sympathetic-cholinergic function, still occurs during a hypoglycemic episode despite  $\beta$ -blocker therapy.
- Patients may have a **delay in hypoglycemia recovery time** because compensatory recovery mechanisms need catecholamine input which is antagonized by  $\beta$ -blockers.
- **Unopposed  $\alpha$ -receptor stimulation** during the acute hypoglycemic recovery phase (due to endogenous epinephrine release intended to reverse hypoglycemia) **may result in acutely elevated BP due to vasoconstriction.**
- **Despite these potential problems, selective  $\beta$ -blockers can be used for patients with diabetes.**

# Therapy of Hypertension

## Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD):

- ACEi or ARB therapy reduces intraglomerular pressure, which slows progression of CKD in diabetics and nondiabetics.
- Patients may experience a rapid and profound drop in BP or acute kidney failure when given an ACEi or ARB, especially in patients with bilateral renal artery stenosis or a solitary functioning kidney with stenosis.
- Start with low dose and monitor serum creatinine soon after starting the drug to minimize this risk.

# Therapy of Hypertension

## Recurrent Stroke Prevention:

- **Ischemic stroke** and transient ischemic attack are complications of hypertension.
- **A thiazide is a reasonable choice.**
- **It can be combined with an ACEi or an ARB.**
- **Antihypertensive drug therapy should only be implemented after the patient has stabilized following an acute cerebrovascular event.**

# Therapy of Hypertension

## Pulmonary Disease:

- **Nonselective  $\beta$ -Blockers and ACEis or ARBs should be avoided in hypertensive patients with reactive airway disease (asthma or COPD) due to a fear of inducing bronchospasm.**

## Peripheral Arterial Disease:

- **$\beta$ -Blockers decrease peripheral blood flow secondary to unopposed stimulation of  $\alpha_1$ -receptors that results in vasoconstriction, and should be avoided.**
- **$\beta$ -blocker with  $\alpha_1$ -blocking properties (carvedilol) can be used.**

# Therapy of Hypertension

## Alternative Drug Treatments:

- Include: direct renin inhibitors,  $\alpha$ -blockers, central  $\alpha_2$ -agonists, adrenergic inhibitors, and direct arterial vasodilators.
- These agents are effective in lowering BP, but they may NOT reduce morbidity and mortality in hypertension, or have poor tolerability and **adverse effects** that significantly limit their use.
- Alternative agents may be used for patients with resistant hypertension, or as add-on therapy with multiple other first-line antihypertensive agents.

# Therapy of Hypertension

## Hypertension in elderly patients:

- Hypertension may present as **isolated systolic hypertension** in the elderly.
- This population is at high risk for hypertension-associated complications.
- Many elderly patients with hypertension are either NOT treated, or treated but NOT controlled.
- **Thiazides and long-acting dihydropyridine CCBs reduce cardiovascular morbidity and mortality in these patients.**

# Therapy of Hypertension

- Elderly patients are more sensitive to volume depletion and sympathetic inhibition than younger patients → orthostatic hypotension.
- This can increase the risk of falls due to the associated dizziness.
- Centrally acting agents and  $\alpha_1$ -blockers should be avoided because they are frequently associated with dizziness and orthostatic hypotension.

# Therapy of Hypertension

- A thiazide, ACEi, or ARB provide significant benefits and **can safely be used in the elderly, at smaller-than-usual initial doses.**
- To minimize risks, **dosage should be titrated over a longer period of time.**
- Standard SBP goals of <140 mm Hg should be considered for elderly patients, **who tolerate therapy.**

# Therapy of Hypertension

## Patients at Risk of Orthostatic Hypotension:

- Older patients, those with isolated systolic hypertension, those with long-standing diabetes, severe volume depletion, baroreflex dysfunction, autonomic insufficiency, and on concomitant venodilators ( $\alpha$ -blockers, mixed  $\alpha$ -/ $\beta$ -blockers, nitrates).
- Antihypertensive agents should be started in low doses, especially a thiazide, ACEi or ARB.

# Therapy of Hypertension

## Hypertension in Children and Adolescents:

- Hypertensive children often have a **family history** of high BP, and many are **overweight** predisposing them to **insulin resistance** and associated cardiovascular disease.
- **Secondary hypertension** is more common in children and adolescents, thus, we need to find the cause.
- **Kidney disease** (pyelonephritis, glomerulonephritis) is the most common cause of secondary hypertension in children.
- **Coarctation of the aorta** can also produce secondary hypertension.

# Therapy of Hypertension

- **Medical or surgical management of the underlying disorder usually normalizes BP.**
- **Weight loss is the cornerstone of therapy.**
- **An ACEi, ARB,  $\beta$ -blocker, CCB, and thiazide are all acceptable choices in children.**
- **Like adults, selection of initial agents should be based on the presence of compelling indications or concurrent conditions that may warrant their use (ACEi or ARB for diabetics or CKD).**

# Monitoring of Therapy

**Ongoing monitoring, in all patients treated with antihypertensive drugs, is required to assess:**

- 1) The desired effects of antihypertensive therapy (BP goal).**
- 2) Drug adverse effects.**
- 3) Disease progression.**

# Monitoring of Therapy

## Monitoring of antihypertensive therapy

Class	Parameters
Aldosterone antagonists	BP; BUN/serum creatinine; serum potassium
ACEis & ARBs	BP; BUN/serum creatinine; serum potassium
Calcium channel blockers	BP; heart rate
Thiazides	BP; BUN/serum creatinine; serum electrolytes (potassium, magnesium, sodium); uric acid, glucose.
$\beta$ -Blockers	BP; heart rate

# Adherence and Persistence

- **Poor adherence is frequent.**
- **Only 50% of patients with newly diagnosed hypertension are continuing treatment at 1 year.**
- **Identification of nonadherence should be followed up with appropriate patient education, counseling, and intervention.**
- **Once-daily regimens are preferred in most patients to improve adherence.**

# Resistant Hypertension

- Failure to achieve goal BP with the use of three or more antihypertensive drugs indicates resistant hypertension.
- It affects ~ 12% of patients.
- Pseudo-resistance should also be ruled out by **assuring adherence with prescribed therapy.**

# Causes of Resistant Hypertension

1. **Improper BP measurement.**
2. **Volume overload:**
  - **Excess sodium intake.**
  - **Volume retention from kidney disease.**
  - **Inadequate diuretic therapy.**
3. **Drug-induced (2°)  
(mentioned before)**
4. **Other causes:**
  - **Nonadherence.**
  - **Inadequate antihypertensive doses.**
5. **Associated conditions:**
  - **Obesity, excess alcohol intake, obstructive sleep apnea.**

# Hypertensive Urgencies and Emergencies

- Hypertensive urgencies and emergencies (**hypertensive crises**) are characterized by very elevated BP (> 180/120 mm Hg).
- The difference is that **emergencies are associated with acute or immediately progressing end-organ injury.**
- Urgencies are NOT associated with acute or immediately progressing end-organ injury.

# **Hypertensive Urgencies and Emergencies**

- **Acute end-organ injury include encephalopathy, intracranial hemorrhage, retinopathy, nephropathy, acute left ventricular failure with pulmonary edema, dissecting aortic aneurysm, unstable angina, and eclampsia or severe hypertension during pregnancy.**

# Hypertensive Urgency

- **A common error with hypertensive urgency is aggressive antihypertensive therapy.**
- **Hypertensive urgencies are ideally managed by adjusting maintenance therapy:**
  - 1) adding a new antihypertensive.**
  - 2) increasing the dose of a present medication.**
- **This provides a more gradual reduction in BP.**

# Hypertensive Urgency

- **Very rapid reductions in BP to goal values should NOT be attempted** because autoregulation of blood flow in patients with hypertension occurs at a much higher range of pressure than in normotensive persons.
- **The risks of reducing BP too rapidly include cerebrovascular accidents, MI, and acute renal failure.**

# Hypertensive Urgency

- **Hypertensive urgency requires BP reductions with oral antihypertensive agents to stage 1 (130-139/80-89) over a period of several hours to days.**
- **All patients with hypertensive urgency should be reevaluated within, and NOT later than 7 days (preferably after 1 to 3 days).**

# Hypertensive Urgency

- Administration of a short-acting oral antihypertensive (captopril, clonidine, labetalol) followed by careful observation for several hours to assure a gradual reduction in BP **is an option.**
- A single dose may be all that is necessary.
- Labetalol can be given in a dose of 200 to 400 mg, followed by additional doses every 2 to 3 hours.

# Hypertensive Urgency

- Oral or sublingual immediate-release nifedipine is dangerous, should never be used for hypertensive urgencies due to risk of causing severe adverse events (MI, stroke).

# Hypertensive Emergency

- Hypertensive emergencies **require immediate BP reduction to limit new or progressing end-organ damage.**
- They **require parenteral therapy**, at least initially.
- **Do NOT lower BP to < 140/90 mm Hg.**
- **The initial target is a reduction in MAP of up to 25% within minutes to hours.** [MAP = {SBP + 2 (DBP)} / 3]
- **When the patient is stable, DBP can be reduced to 100 - 110 mm Hg within the next 2 - 6 hours.**

# Hypertensive Emergency

- **Precipitous drops in BP may lead to end-organ ischemia or infarction.**
- **If patients tolerate this reduction well, additional gradual reductions toward goal BP values can be attempted after 24 to 48 hours.**
- **The exception to this guideline is for patients with an acute ischemic stroke where maintaining an elevated BP is needed for a longer period of time.**

# Hypertensive Emergency

- The clinical situation should dictate which IV medication is used to treat hypertensive emergencies.
- Therapy should be provided in a hospital or emergency room setting with intra-arterial BP monitoring.

# Drugs Used in Hypertensive Emergency

## Sodium nitroprusside:

- **It was drug of first choice in the past.**
- **Dose: 0.25-10  $\mu\text{g}/\text{kg}/\text{min}$  IV infusion (requires special delivery system).**
- **Onset: immediate.**
- **Duration: 1-2 min.**
- **Adverse effects:** Nausea, vomiting, muscle twitching, sweating, thiocyanate and cyanide intoxication.
- **Special indications:** Most hypertensive emergencies.
- **Caution** with high intracranial pressure, azotemia, or in chronic kidney disease.

# Drugs Used in Hypertensive Emergency

## Nitroglycerin:

- 1. IV nitroglycerin** is ideal for the management of hypertensive emergency **in the presence of myocardial ischemia.**
- IV nitroglycerin is associated with tolerance when used over 24 to 48 hours and can cause severe headache.
- Dose: 5-100  $\mu\text{g}/\text{min}$  IV infusion.
- Onset: 2-5 min.
- Duration: 5-10 min.
- **Adverse effects:** Headache, vomiting, methemoglobinemia, tolerance with prolonged use.
- **Special indications:** Coronary ischemia.

# Drugs Used in Hypertensive Emergency

## Clevidipine:

- It provides arterial vasodilation and **can treat cardiac ischemia** similar to nitroglycerin, and may provide more predictable reductions in BP.
- Dose: 1-2 mg/h (32 mg/h maximum).
- Onset: 2-4 min.
- Duration 5-15 min.
- **Adverse effects:** Headache, nausea, reflex tachycardia, hypertriglyceridemia.
- **Special indications:** Most hypertensive emergencies; **caution with coronary ischemia.**
- **Contraindications:** soy or egg allergy, defective lipid metabolism, and severe aortic stenosis.

# Drugs Used in Hypertensive Emergency

## Nicardipine:

- It provides arterial vasodilation and **can treat cardiac ischemia** similar to nitroglycerin, and may provide more predictable reductions in BP.
- Dose: 5-15 mg/h IV.
- Onset: 5-10 min.
- Duration: 15-30 min, may exceed 4 hours.
- **Adverse effects:** reflex tachycardia, headache, flushing, local phlebitis.
- **Special indications:** Most hypertensive emergencies. **Caution** with coronary ischemia.

# Drugs Used in Hypertensive Emergency

## Enalaprilat:

- Dose: 1.25-5 mg IV every 6 hours.
- Onset: 15-30 min.
- Duration: 6-12 hours.
- **Adverse effects:** Precipitous fall in pressure in high-renin states; variable response.
- **Special indications:** Acute left ventricular failure.
- **Avoid** in acute myocardial infarction, eclampsia.

# Drugs Used in Hypertensive Emergency

## Esmolol:

- **Dose:** 250-500  $\mu\text{g}/\text{kg}/\text{min}$  IV bolus, and then 50-100  $\mu\text{g}/\text{kg}/\text{min}$  IV infusion; may repeat bolus after 5 minutes or increase infusion to 300  $\mu\text{g}/\text{min}$
- **Onset:** 1-2 min.
- **Duration:** 10-20 min.
- **Adverse effects:** Hypotension, nausea, asthma, first-degree heart block, heart failure.
- **Special indications:** Aortic dissection; perioperative.
- **Avoid** in patients already on  $\beta$ -blocker, bradycardic, or decompensated heart failure.

# Drugs Used in Hypertensive Emergency

## Fenoldopam:

- It is a dopamine D<sub>1</sub>-receptor agonist. **It can improve renal blood flow and may be especially useful for patients with renal insufficiency.**
- Dose: 0.1-0.3 µg/kg/min IV infusion.
- Onset: <5 min.
- Duration: 30 min.
- **Adverse effects:** Tachycardia, headache, nausea, flushing.
- **Special indications:** Most hypertensive emergencies.
- **Caution** with glaucoma.

# Drugs Used in Hypertensive Emergency

## Hydralazine:

- **Dose: 12-20 mg IV; 10-50 mg intramuscular.**
- **Onset: 10-20; 20-30 min, respectively.**
- **Duration: 1-4; 4-6 hours, respectively.**
- **Adverse effects:** Tachycardia, flushing, headache vomiting, aggravation of angina.
- **Special indications:** Eclampsia.

# Drugs Used in Hypertensive Emergency

## Labetalol:

- **Dose:** 20-80 mg IV bolus every 10 minutes; 0.5-2 mg/min IV infusion.
- **Onset:** 5-10 min
- **Duration:** 3-6 hours.
- **Adverse effects:** Vomiting, scalp tingling, bronchoconstriction, dizziness, nausea, heart block, orthostatic hypotension.
- **Special indications:** Most hypertensive emergencies except acute heart failure or heart block.