

High Blood Pressure Medicines

High Blood Pressure

High blood pressure (hypertension) is called “the silent killer” because it often has no symptoms. If untreated, it can lead to other serious health conditions that affect your heart. Taking your medicine as prescribed is an important part of treating your high blood pressure.

Your health care provider may start your treatment by prescribing one medicine, then changing its dose and adding other medicines later. It is common to need more than one medicine to control high blood pressure.

The benefits of high blood pressure medicines will be lost or reduced if you do not take them as prescribed. You may need to take these medicines for the rest of your life to control your high blood pressure. Before you start taking any medicine, talk with your health care provider about possible side effects.

Types of High Blood Pressure Medicine

Types of high blood pressure medicines below include generic names and brand names. Generic forms of the medicines work just as well as the brand names and they often cost less. Talk with your health care provider and pharmacist about your options.

Type of medicine	Names of medicines that are commonly prescribed
Angiotensin converting enzyme (ACE) inhibitors relax blood vessels and lower your blood pressure.	enalapril (Vasotec [®]), captopril (Capoten [®]), lisinopril (Zestril [®] , Prinivil [®]), quinipril (Accupril [®])
Beta blockers reduce the nerve impulses to the heart and blood vessels. This makes the heart beat slower and with less force. The heart works less hard and blood pressure is lowered.	carvedilol (Coreg [®]), metoprolol (Lopressor [®]), Toprol XL [®] , atenolol (Tenormin [®]), propranolol (Inderal [®])
Diuretics (water pills) help your body get rid of extra fluid. Getting rid of extra water will reduce the swelling in your feet, ankles, legs and abdomen.	furosemide (Lasix [®]), bumetanide (Bumex [®]), hydrochlorothiazide (HCTZ [®] or HydroDiuril [®]), triamterene/HCTZ (Dyazide [®] , Maxzide [®])
Angiotensin receptor blockers (ARB) relax your blood vessels (similar to ACE inhibitors).	Cozaar [®] , Diovan [®] , Atacand [®] , Avapro [®] , Micardis [®]

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Calcium channel blockers keep calcium from entering the muscle cells of your heart and blood vessels. This causes the blood vessels to relax.	Norvasc [®] , diltiazem (Cardizem [®] , Dilacor XR [®]), felodipine (Plendil [®]), isradipine (DynaCirc [®]), nifedipine (Aldalat [®] , Procardia [®]), nimodipine (Nimotop [®]), Sular [®] , verapamil (Calan [®] , Isoptin [®] , Verelan [®])
Alpha-blockers reduce nerve impulses to blood vessels. This lets the blood flow more easily and reduces blood pressure.	doxazosin (Cardura [®]), Dibenzyline [®] , prazosin (Minipress [®])
Alpha-beta-blockers reduce nerve impulses to blood vessels and slow the heartbeat. Less blood is pumped through the vessels and blood pressure goes down.	Coreg [®] , labetalol (Normodyne [®] , Trandate [®])

High Blood Pressure Medicine Tips

Medicine safety

- **Do not stop taking your high blood pressure medicines unless you have talked with your health care provider.**
- If you miss a dose, take it as soon as possible. However, if you do not remember to take it until it is time for your next dose, then skip the missed dose and return to your regular dose schedule. **Do not double up on missed doses unless your health care provider tells you to do so.**
- If you see more than one doctor, tell each one which medicines you are taking. **Bring a current medicine list (including dose) to every appointment.** Sometimes when medicines are taken together, the effect of the medicines may be increased or decreased.
- Do not take more than the prescribed dose of any medicine.
- Talk with your health care provider or pharmacist if you are thinking about taking a new medicine (over-the-counter, herbal, natural or supplement).

Reminders

- Take your medicines about the same time each day.
- Write notes when to take your medicine. Post the notes where you will see them often, such as the refrigerator, calendar or computer. Ask family members or friends to remind you.
- Use a special pill box to organize your medicines.

Prescription refills

- Have all of your medicines filled at one pharmacy.
- Keep at least a 1-week supply of your medicines.
- Make an appointment to see your health care provider before your medicine refills run out.

Storage

- Do not store medicines in the bathroom or near the kitchen sink. Keep your medicines away from heat, light and humidity.
- Keep your medicines in their original containers.
- Keep all medicines away from children and pets.