

What About Side Effects?

All medicines have possible side effects.

However, most people who take medicines to lower blood pressure do not develop any or have only mild side effects.

A full list of cautions and possible side effects is listed on the leaflet inside the medicine packet.

The most common are:

- Diuretics can cause gout in a small number of people.
- Beta-blockers can cause cool hands and feet, tiredness, poor sleep and impotence in some users.
- Ace-inhibitors can cause an irritating cough.
- Angiotensin receptor blockers can cause dizziness.
- Calcium channel blockers can cause dizziness, facial flushing, swollen ankles and constipation.

**PLEASE DISCUSS ANY CONCERNS
ABOUT YOUR MEDICATION
WITH A DOCTOR, NURSE OR
PHARMACIST.**

Further Help and Information

BLOOD PRESSURE UK

www.bloodpressureuk.org

020 8772 4994

BRITISH HEART FOUNDATION

www.bhf.org.uk

0300 330 3311

If you would like this leaflet in larger text please ask.



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CUMBERLAND HOUSE

PRIMARY HEALTH CARE CENTRE

**MEDICATION FOR
HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE**

What is the aim of treatment?

THE USUAL TARGET IS BELOW 140/85

IF YOU ARE DIABETIC THE TARGET IS BELOW 130/80

Which Medicines Are Used To Lower Blood Pressure?

There are six main classes of medicines which are used. There are various types and brands of medicine in each class.

The following is a brief overview, but for more detailed information please read the leaflet that comes inside the medicine packet.

1. ACE INHIBITORS

Eg Ramipril; Perindopril

These medicines work by:

- Reducing the amount of a chemical you make in your bloodstream called Angiotensin II(2). This chemical tends to constrict (narrow) blood vessels therefore less of it causes them to relax and widen therefore reducing the pressure.
- They are particularly useful if you have failure or diabetes.

- You will need a blood test before starting an Ace Inhibitor and a week after starting it or increasing the dose. A yearly blood test is then needed.

2. ANGIOTENSIN RECEPTOR BLOCKERS

Eg losartan; Candesartan

These work by blocking the effect of Angiotensin II on the blood vessel wall.

3. CALCIUM CHANNEL BLOCKERS

Eg Amlodipine; Nifedipine

These medicines affect the way calcium is used in the blood vessels and heart muscle.

4. DIURETICS

Eg Bendroflumethiazide; Furosemide.

Diuretics work by:

- Increasing the amount of fluid and salt that you pass in your urine. This has the effect of reducing the fluid in the circulation.

- They may also have a “relaxing” effect on the blood vessels.

Only a low dose is needed and you should not notice much diuretic effect (you will not pass much extra urine).

5. BETA-BLOCKERS

Eg Atenolol; Bisoprolol

There are many various types and brands. Beta-blockers work by:

- Slowing the heart rate and reducing the force of the heart.
- They are commonly used to treat angina.

You should not take a Beta-blocker if you have Asthma or Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease.