

An Overview of Common Medications for High Blood Pressure

Why It Matters

High blood pressure can quietly increase your risk of heart attacks, stroke, and kidney disease. You may not feel it, but treating it protects your heart. These medicines help lower your blood pressure and keep you well.

Medication Type	Examples	How It Works	Common Side Effects	Helpful Tips
Diuretics ("water pills")	Hydrochlorothiazide Chlorthalidone Indapamide	Removes extra salt and water to lower pressure	Frequent urination, dizziness, low potassium	Take in the morning to avoid night-time urination
ACE Inhibitors	Lisinopril Enalapril Ramipril	Relaxes blood vessels	Dry cough, dizziness, rare facial/lip swelling	Report any facial/lip swelling right away
Angiotensin Receptor Blockers (ARBs)	Losartan Valsartan Olmesartan	Works like ACE inhibitors but usually without the cough	Dizziness, high potassium, possible kidney changes	Good alternative if ACE inhibitors cause a cough
Calcium Channel Blockers (CCBs)	Amlodipine Nifedipine Felodipine	Relaxes blood vessels, but differently than ACE inhibitors or ARBs	Ankle swelling, headache, constipation	Tell your doctor if swelling is bothersome (a diuretic will not help swelling)
Potassium-Sparing Diuretics	Spironolactone Eplerenone	Removes extra water, but keeps potassium in check	High potassium, breast tenderness (spironolactone), extra bathroom trips	Used for stubborn blood pressure or heart failure
Beta Blockers	Carvediolol Nebivolol Metoprolol Atenolol	Slows heart rate and reduces strain on the heart	Tiredness, cold hands/feet, slow heartbeat, dizziness	Often used if patient has had a heart attack or heart condition

Tips for Taking Blood Pressure Medications Safely

- Take your medications every day at the same time.
- Use a pill organizer to stay on track.
- Don't stop your medications suddenly – always talk to your doctor.
- Keep a list of your medications with you.
- Let your doctor know if you feel dizzy, weak, or unwell.