

# Common Blood Pressure Medications



You may take several blood pressure pills because different medications act in different ways in your body to control blood pressure and protect your heart.

Medication	How it lowers blood pressure
<b>ACE Inhibitors</b> (Angiotensin Converting Enzyme Inhibitors) <i>Examples:</i> Lisinopril (Prinivil, Zestril), Captopril (Capoten), Benazepril (Lotensin), Enalapril (Vasotec)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Decreases</b> angiotensin in your body</li><li>• Angiotensin causes blood vessels to contract (get narrower) and makes your body hold on to salt</li></ul>
<b>ARBs</b> (Angiotensin Receptor Blockers) <i>Examples:</i> Candesartan (Atacand), Irbesartan (Avapro), Losartan (Cozaar), Telmisartan (Micardis), Valsartan (Diovan), Olmesartan (Benicar)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Blocks</b> the effect of angiotensin</li><li>• Angiotensin causes blood vessels to contract (get narrower) and makes your body hold on to salt</li></ul>
<b>Beta blockers</b> <i>Examples:</i> Metoprolol (Lopressor, Toprol-XL), Atenolol (Tenormin)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Slows heart rate and relaxes blood vessels</li><li>• Works by affecting nerve signals</li></ul>
<b>Calcium channel blockers</b> <i>Examples:</i> Amlodipine (Norvasc, Lotrel), Verapamil (Calan, Isoptin), Nifedipine (Adalat CC, Procardia XL), Diltiazem (Cardizem CD or SR, Dilacor, Tiazac)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Reduces the amount of calcium that goes into muscles of the heart and blood vessels</li><li>• Calcium makes muscles contract with more force, so with less force, pressure is lower</li></ul>
<b>Diuretics</b> <i>Examples:</i> Bumetanide (Bumex), Furosemide (Lasix), Metolozone (Mykrox, Zaroxolyn), Hydrochlorothiazide (Esidrix, Hydrodiuril, Microzide), Spironolactone (Aldactone), Torsemide (Demadex)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Removes extra water and salt by working in the kidneys to increase urination</li></ul>
<b>Vasodilators</b> <i>Examples:</i> Hydralazine (Apresoline), Minoxidil (Loniten)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Works directly on the muscles of the blood vessels to relax and widen them</li></ul>
<b>Alpha blockers</b> <i>Examples:</i> Doxazosin (Cardura), Prazosin (Minipress), Terazosin (Hytrin)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Relaxes blood vessels by blocking signals from the brain and nervous system that make vessels contract</li></ul>
<b>Combination alpha and beta blockers</b> <i>Examples:</i> Carvedilol (Coreg), Labetalol (Normadyne, Trandate)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Has effects of both alpha and beta blockers to slow heart rate and widen blood vessels</li></ul>
<b>Central nervous system agonists</b> <i>Examples:</i> Clonidine (Catapres)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Works on signals from your brain and nervous system that cause blood vessels to contract</li></ul>