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Drugs

CLONIDINE The acute circulatory effects of 2-(2,-dichloroanilino)-2-imidazoline (Clonidine) were studied in eight hypertensive patients at rest and exercise. Imidazoline compounds, such as phentolamine and tolazoline, have been used as hypotensive and peripheral vasodilating drugs, respectively, but gastrointestinal symptoms and development of resistance to its hypotensive action have limited the use of phentolamine. Clonidine decreased the blood pressure by variable reductions in cardiac output and systemic vascular resistance. In its hypotensive action, clonidine is neither an alpha nor a beta blocker, nor has a ganglionic blocking action been demonstrated. The mechanism of action is probably a centrally-mediated reduction in sympathetic tone. The circulatory responses to exercise in the supine and erect positions were unimpaired. Since all current hypotensive agents cause decreases in blood pressure with exercise, Clonidine would seem to be an important addition to the therapy of hypertension. (Muir, A. L., Burton, J. L., and Lawrie, D. M.: *Circulatory Effects at Rest and Exercise of Clonidine, an Imidazoline Derivative with Hypotensive Properties*, *Lancet* 2: 181 (July) 1969.)

TETANUS Patients with severe tetanus are routinely treated by a regime of tracheostomy, curarization, adequate sedation and intermittent positive-pressure ventilation (IPPV). The form of therapy used derives from the suggestion that the clinical and physiologic syndrome already described may be due to sympathetic overactivity. The aim has been to suppress such overactivity, where it exists, by three pharmacologic methods: 1) the use of drugs having nonspecific antiadrenergic activity, i.e., phenothiazine derivatives; 2) nonspecific suppression of neuronal activity using general anesthetic agents; 3) specific suppression of adrenergic transmission at nerve endings and receptors. (Prys-Roberts, C.: *Treatment of Cardiovascular Disturbances in Severe Tetanus*, *Proc. Roy. Soc. Med.* 62: 662 (July) 1969.)