

Seminole Community College
Paramedic II
Medication Handout #13
Sodium Nitroprusside / Diltiazem

Sodium Nitroprusside (Nipride)- Nitrate

Description- Sodium Nitroprusside is a rapid-acting hypotensive agent producing peripheral vasodilation and mild increase in heart rate, a decrease in cardiac output, and a slight decrease in peripheral vasodilation.

Indications- Hypertensive Crisis

Contraindications- Compensatory hypertension or impaired cerebral circulation (head injury / stroke).

Side Effects- Dizziness, excessive sweating, headaches, anxiety, abdominal cramps, tachycardia, hypothyroidism, flushing, rash, and muscle twitching.

Precautions- Hepatic or renal impairment, hyponatremia, or hypothyroidism.

Dosage / Route- 0.3 to 3.0 mcg / kg / minute

Diltiazem (Cardizem) – Calcium Channel Blocker

Description- Diltiazem is a slow calcium channel blocker similar to Verapamil. It dilates coronary and peripheral arteries and arterioles, thus increasing circulation to the heart and reducing peripheral vascular resistance. Onset time is approximately 30 minutes.

Indications- Supraventricular tachydysrhythmias (Atrial Fibrillation / Atrial Flutter, and PSVT refractory secondary to adenosine) and to increase coronary artery perfusion in Angina.

Contraindications- Hypersensitivity, sick sinus syndrome, 2nd or 3rd degree heart block, systolic BP less than 90, diastolic BP less than 60, wide complex tachycardia and WPW (Wolfe-Parkinson-White). Cardiogenic shock, hypokalemia, congestive heart failure.

Side Effects- Headache, nausea, hypotension, dizziness, flushing, rash, edema of the ankles and feet, dry mouth, and tachycardia.

Precautions- CHF (especially with Beta Blockers), conduction abnormalities, renal or hepatic impairment, the elderly, and nursing mothers.

Dosage / Route- 0.25 mg / kg IV over 2 minutes, may repeat as needed with 0.35 mg / kg followed with a drip of 5 to 10 mg / hr not to exceed 15 mg / hr over 24 hours.