

Annex 6

Drugs to avoid in patients with chronic heart failure

The following tables list some of the more commonly prescribed medicines and herbal remedies and their effect on the myocardium.

Cardiac medications affecting ventricular function

Drug or class	Effect(s)
Class I and III antiarrhythmics (excluding amiodarone)	reduced contractility, proarrhythmia
Rate-limiting calcium channel blockers (eg verapamil and diltiazem)	reduced contractility and/or neurohormonal activation
Minoxidil	activation of the renin-angiotensin-aldosterone system
Moxonidine	increases mortality

Non-cardiac medications affecting ventricular function

Drug or class	Effect(s)
Corticosteroids	sodium and water retention
Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs	sodium and water retention, antagonism of diuretic therapy, increased systemic vascular resistance
Thiazolidinediones (glitazones)	fluid retention
Tricyclic antidepressants	reduced contractility, proarrhythmia
Itraconazole	reduced contractility
Carbenoxolone	fluid retention
Macrolide antibiotics and some antifungal agents	proarrhythmia mediated by QT prolongation
Terfenadine, and some other antihistamines	proarrhythmia mediated by QT prolongation, especially when used with macrolide antibiotics or some antifungal agents

Selected herbal medicines with cardiac effects

Drug or class	Effect(s)
Liquorice	fluid retention
Ma huang Yohimbe bark	sympathomimetic
Dong quai Aescin	anticoagulant: increased risk of bleeding
Gingko Garlic Dan shen	antiplatelet: increased risk of bleeding
Gossypol	hypokalaemia
Dandelion	sodium retention

A number of other herbs contain constituents with cardiac glycoside effects and enhance the effects of digoxin or interfere with assays.