



# *Management of* HYPERTENSIVE DISEASES

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**With Foreword by PAUL DUDLEY WHITE**

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# Contents

## chapter 1

<b>Arterial Hypertension</b>	<b>21</b>
Definition	21
Blood Pressure and Age	22
Systolic Hypertension With Arteriosclerosis	22
Hypertension Associated With Other Conditions	23
Correctible Types of Elevated Blood Pressure	23
Neurogenic Hypertension	24
Primary (Essential) Hypertension	25
Accelerated or Malignant Hypertension	28
Hypertensive Encephalopathy	30

## chapter 2

<b>Diagnosis of Arterial Hypertension</b>	<b>31</b>
Taking the History	31
Past History	31
Physical Examination of the Patient	32
Conditions in Which Hypertension May Occur	33
Possible Relationships Between Kidney Disease and Hypertension	34
Unilateral Renal Disease	34
Laboratory Tests	34
Examination of Ocular Fundi	36
Fundal Vessel Changes	36
Arteriosclerosis of Retinal Arteries	37
Changes in Early Hypertension	37
The Fundi in Malignant Hypertension	38
Retinal Changes Not Always Indicative of Successful Therapy	39
Papilledema in Hypertension	39
Relation to Cerebrospinal Fluid Pressure	39
Relation of Intracranial Pressure to Systemic Arterial Pressure	41

Hypertensive Cerebrovascular Disease Versus Intracranial Tumor	41
Methods of Recording Blood Pressures	43
Definition of Systolic and Diastolic Pressure: Direct and Indirect Determination	43
Measurements of Arterial Pressure in Persons With Obese Arms	44
Blood Pressure Measurements in Older Persons	45
Casual Blood Pressure	45
Basal Blood Pressure	46
Mean Blood Pressure	46
Blood Pressure Determination in Infants	47
"Flush" Method for Measurements in the Infant	47
Electric Microphone or Infratron Method	47
Special Tests of Blood Pressure for Early or "Supposed" Hypertensives and for Hyperreactors	47
Cold Pressor Test	48
Breath Holding Test	48
Test for Elasticity of Arteries	48
Sodium Amytal or Heavy Sedation Depressor Test	49

### chapter 3

## *Heart Disease With Hypertension* 50

Natural History and Incidence	50
Symptoms and Signs	51
Development of Cardiac Hypertrophy	52
Mechanism of Heart Failure	52
Treatment of Heart Failure	54
Use of Digitalis	55
Use of Anticoagulants	59
Use of Diuretics	60
Acetazolamide, Mercurial and Similar Diuretics	60
Thiazide Diuretics	62
Use of Other Measures	63
Treatment of the Arrhythmias	63
Treatment of Pulmonary Edema	64
Treatment of Angina Pectoris	65

### chapter 4

## *The Electrocardiogram in Hypertension* 66

Factors Influencing the Electrocardiogram	67
Exercise	67
Effects of Plasma Electrolytes	67
Effects of Digitalis	67
Significance of U Waves	67
Electrical Alternans	68

Changes in the Electrocardiogram in Hypertension - - - - -	68
Left Ventricular Preponderance Versus Changes With Coronary Artery Disease	70
Left Ventricular Hypertrophy - - - - -	70
Vector Changes - - - - -	75
Delayed Ventricular Conduction: Left Bundle Type - - - - -	76
Left Ventricular Hypertrophy and Bundle Branch Block - - - - -	76
Right Ventricular Hypertrophy and Bundle Branch Block - - - - -	78
Myocardial Infarction and Bundle Branch Block - - - - -	81
Improvement in the Electrocardiogram With Antihypertensive Management - -	82
Electrocardiographic Changes in Experimental Hypertension and in Hypertension Plus Atherosclerosis in Rabbits - - - - -	82
Vectorcardiograms - - - - -	83
Ballistocardiograms - - - - -	84

## chapter 5

### *The Natural History of Essential Hypertension* - - - - - 86

Incidence - - - - -	86
Blood Pressure and Age - - - - -	86
Blood Pressure and Weight - - - - -	90
Blood Pressure in Athletes - - - - -	90
Blood Pressures in Different Racial Groups - - - - -	90
Inheritance of Essential Hypertension - - - - -	92
Prognosis - - - - -	92
Prognostic Signs - - - - -	92
Prehypertensive States - - - - -	93
Prognosis of Patients Without Drug Therapy - - - - -	93
Patients With Essential Hypertension - - - - -	93
Patients With Severe and Malignant Hypertension - - - - -	96
Prognosis of Patients With Drug Therapy - - - - -	98
Cause of Death - - - - -	101

## chapter 6

### *Management of the Patient With Hypertension* - - - - - 103

Considerations Before Drug Therapy - - - - -	104
Reasons for Drug Therapy - - - - -	107
Hypertension With Nephritis - - - - -	108
Evidence of Improvement Other Than Lowering of Blood Pressure - - - - -	109
Psychologic Rapport With the Patient - - - - -	110
Emotional Factors - - - - -	111
Placebo Effect: Judging Effect of Any Specific Drug - - - - -	112
Use of Tranquilizers - - - - -	112
Therapy by Diet Control - - - - -	113
Obesity and Weight Reduction - - - - -	113

Low Sodium, Low Protein Rice Diet	114
Low Sodium Diet	114
Low Salt Diet Outline	115
Low Salt Diet and Resins	118
The Cation Exchange Resins	118
Atherosclerosis and Diet	118
Classification of Hypertension	119
Classification for Clinical Management	120
Grade I—Mild Hypertensive Disease	123
Grade II—Moderate Hypertensive Disease	125
Grade III—Severe Hypertensive Disease	129
Grade IV—Very Severe or Accelerated (Malignant) Hypertensive Disease	141
New Drugs	144
Guanethidine	144
Dosage	145
Ambulatory Patients	145
Side Effects and Cautions	145
Bretylium Tosylate or Bretylium-p-Toluene Sulfonate (Darenthin)	147
Evaluation of Antihypertensive Agents	147
Summary	151

## chapter 7

### *Special Problems in Management of the Patient With Hypertension* 153

The Thiazide Drugs in Therapy	154
Side Effects of Thiazide Drugs	155
Management of the Patient With Complications	158
The Problem of Drug Toxicity and Side Effects	165
Office Patients and Ganglionic Blocking Drugs	166
Hypertension in Old Age	176
Sympathectomy	179
Contraindications for Surgical Sympathectomy	182
Adrenalectomy	183
Suggested Instructions to Patients	183

## chapter 8

### *Hypertension Associated With Pregnancy (Seymour Monat, M.D., and Joseph C. Edwards, M.D.)* 187

Toxemia of Pregnancy	187
Diagnosis	188
Etiology	188
Prevention	190

Treatment of Pre-Eclampsia	191
Bed Rest	192
Diet	192
Sedation	193
Diuretics	193
Side Effects of the Thiazide Diuretics	195
Antihypertensive Drugs	195
Magnesium Ion	196
Rauwolfia Derivatives	196
Hydralazine (Apresoline)	196
Veratrum	197
Ganglionic Blocking Agents	200
Other Hypotensive Agents	201
Dosage of Antihypertensive Drugs	201
Alternative Management	202
Treatment of Eclampsia	203
Termination of Pregnancy	207
Peripheral Vascular Collapse	207
Does Toxemia "Cause" Subsequent Hypertension?	208
Pre-Existing Hypertension and Superimposed Pregnancy	209
Without Renal Involvement	209
With Renal Involvement	212

## chapter 9

### *Special Types of Hypertension (Secondary Factors)* 213

Coarctation of Aorta	213
Adrenal Abnormalities	216
Cushing's Syndrome	216
Relation of Cushing's Syndrome to Hypertension	227
Pseudo Cushing's Syndrome	229
Aldosteronism	229
Pheochromocytoma	232
Clinical Types of Pheochromocytoma	237
Diagnosis of Pheochromocytoma: Precautions and Tests	237
Cold Pressor Test	238
Drugs Useful in Diagnostic Tests	239
Regitine Test	240
Benzodioxane Test	242
Histamine Test	246
Measurements of Epinephrine and Norepinephrine in Urine and Blood	248
Bio-Assay of Norepinephrine-Epinephrine	251
Summary of Tests for Suspected Pheochromocytoma	252
Management During Surgery for Pheochromocytoma	252
Renal Abnormalities	253
Glomerulonephritis and Arteriolar Nephrosclerosis	254
Chronic Pyelonephritis	255
Amyloid Disease of Kidneys	260
Unilateral Renal Disease	261

Diagnosis of Unilateral Renal Disease - - - - -	261
Technique of Retrograde Aortography (James M. Stokes, M.D.) - - -	261
Complications With Aortography - - - - -	264
Surgical Treatment of Unilateral Renal Disease - - - - -	265
Surgical Correction of Arterial Lesions - - - - -	269
Damage From Irradiation - - - - -	280
Pulmonary Hypertension - - - - -	281
Treatment of Primary Pulmonary Hypertension - - - - -	289

## chapter 10

### *Antihypertensive Drugs—Pharmacology and Therapy* - - - 290

Peripherally Acting Adrenergic Drugs - - - - -	291
Alkaloids of Ergot - - - - -	291
Central and Reflex Acting Drugs—Veratrum Group - - - - -	291
Diuretics as Aids in Antihypertensive Therapy - - - - -	293
Rauwolfia Alkaloids, Alseroxylon, Reserpine, Rescinnamine - - -	295
Action - - - - -	295
Clinical Appraisal - - - - -	297
Side Effects - - - - -	299
Antidiuretic Effects - - - - -	300
Depressive Effects - - - - -	300
Effects on Gastric Acidity - - - - -	301
Effects on the Blood - - - - -	302
Effects on Renal Function - - - - -	302
Effects on the Heart - - - - -	302
Hydralazine (Apresoline) - - - - -	303
Humoral Pressor Action and Hydralazine - - - - -	303
Studies of Hydralazine in Human Beings - - - - -	304
Side Effects - - - - -	305
Toxic Reactions - - - - -	306
Amine Oxidase Inhibitors - - - - -	307
Ganglionic Blocking Agents - - - - -	307
Action - - - - -	308
Effect on Renal Function - - - - -	309
Effect on Serum Lipids - - - - -	310
Use of Ganglionic Blocking Agents as Antihypertensive Drugs - - -	310
Ganglionic Blocking Agents and Nitroprusside - - - - -	312
Ganglionic Blocking Agents Following Sympathectomy - - - - -	312
Angina Pectoris and Ganglionic Blocking Agents - - - - -	312
Other Uses of Ganglionic Blocking Agents - - - - -	313
Hexamethonium (Methium, Bistrium, Hexameton, etc.) - - - - -	313
Action - - - - -	313
Absorption - - - - -	314
Development of Tolerance - - - - -	314
Side Effects - - - - -	314
Toxic Effects - - - - -	315
Pentolinium (Ansolysen) - - - - -	316
Hypotensive Action - - - - -	316
Clinical Use - - - - -	316

Chlorisondamine (Ecolid) - - - - -	318
Mecamylamine (Inversine) - - - - -	319
Action - - - - -	319
Renal Excretion - - - - -	320
Distribution - - - - -	321
Side Effects - - - - -	321
Clinical Use - - - - -	322
Some New Ganglionic Blocking Agents - - - - -	322
New Drugs (Sympathetic Blocking Agents) - - - - -	323

## chapter 11

<i>Etiology of Hypertension, With Special Reference to Essential Hypertension</i> - - - - -	325
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Dietary Factors - - - - -	326
Diet in Experimental Hypertension - - - - -	328
Heredity as a Factor - - - - -	329
Psychogenic Factors - - - - -	331
Experimental Work - - - - -	331
Clinical Aspects - - - - -	331
Neurogenic Factors - - - - -	332
Experimental Work - - - - -	332
Clinical Aspects - - - - -	334
Vascular Factors - - - - -	336
Adrenal Factors - - - - -	337
Experimental Work - - - - -	337
Clinical Aspects - - - - -	340
Epinephrine and Norepinephrine - - - - -	340
Electrolyte Factors - - - - -	343
Humoral Substances - - - - -	348
Renin, Angiotensin, Pherentasin - - - - -	348
Cerebrotonin - - - - -	351
Serotonin - - - - -	351
Renal and Adrenal Factors - - - - -	352
Experimental Work - - - - -	352
Possible Roles of Kidney in Hypertension - - - - -	357
Protective Action of Normal Kidney in Hypertension of Unilateral Renal Origin - - - - -	357
Nephrotoxic Agents in Hypertension - - - - -	358
Pituitary Factors - - - - -	359
Experimental Work - - - - -	359
Clinical Aspects - - - - -	360

<i>References</i>	361
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## Foreword

Two quotations from Shakespeare's *King Henry VI* may be aptly applied to medical problems and to none more than to hypertension. In the first scene of the second act a messenger said

*"And many strokes, though with a little axe,  
Hew down and fell the hardest timbered oak"*

which may be said to illustrate the wear and tear from high blood pressure over the years and the need to control it or, better still, of course, to prevent it. In the eighth scene of the fourth act a still more significant truth is uttered:

*"A little fire is quickly trodden out;  
Which, being suffered, rivers cannot quench."*

Someday we must learn to recognize the candidates for serious hypertension before it strikes and to protect them from it, even in its earliest stages, before it has had any harmful effect. We are still at the threshold of such preventive medicine and have not yet done much of anything either to mark the candidates or to apply prophylactic measures.

Meanwhile, however, much is known about the effects of hypertension and much has been done, though largely empirically, to check it or in part to control it not only by the radical measures of surgery (thoracolumbar sympathectomy), diet (very low salt intake, as in the rice diet), and the more powerful hypotensive drugs but also by the application of relatively simple hygienic measures of diet regulation, control of obesity, proper proportions of rest and exercise, and avoidance of excessive nervous strain and excessive use of tobacco, and by the use of the milder sedative drugs.

This book by Dr. Edwards presents clearly and succinctly the present status of the problem of hypertension and its treatment. Important details of the use of the potent drugs alone and in combinations are included. As yet we are in the very midst of a rapid evolution of our knowledge not only of the treatment of hypertension but of that disease process itself. Without doubt new editions will be needed in the not far distant future to keep up with these advances.

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## *Introduction*

The first American paper on hypertension was published by Janeway soon after the turn of the century, and it stimulated an enormous number of clinico-pathologic studies. Goldblatt more than anyone else opened the era of experimental work on hypertension about twenty-five years later and, when this century entered its third quarter, drugs which could be depended upon to lower arterial pressure became available to the profession. To be sure, they are not perfect drugs, but at least they make a beginning. This book is a bold attempt to summarize the major developments in this exciting and fluid field. It should therefore be a useful guide to therapy.

Until the meaning of high blood pressure becomes apparent and more actuarial data are evaluated, the manipulation of manometric readings will continue as the accepted procedure. It is, however, a maneuver which we must employ, since there is certainly no evidence that a high arterial pressure is useful to the patient with progressive arterial disease. For the moment physicians must depend largely upon a variety of chemicals whose actions are complex, sometimes unpleasant, and always poorly understood. Empiric as these chemotherapeutic approaches may be, there is reason to believe that they often relieve symptoms and sometimes prolong life.

Since there is no general agreement concerning the selection of drugs or the technique of their administration, Dr. Edwards has faced a formidable job. He has wisely refrained from presenting criteria and schedules which are too rigid, and yet the practitioner faced with a specific problem will find experienced counsel here.

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