

Diuretics, commonly called water pills, are a class of prescription medications that are used to treat high blood pressure, heart disease and certain kinds of kidney or liver disease. The drugs stimulate the kidneys to remove more water from the body, which is then passed through the urine. Loop diuretics are a strong type of diuretics. If you have an interest in treating high blood pressure naturally, see hypertension.

### **Types of Diuretics**

There are 3 types of diuretic medicines. Each type works a little differently, but they all lower the amount of salt and water in your body, which helps to lower your blood pressure.

#### **1. Thiazide diuretics**

Thiazide diuretics are used to treat high blood pressure by reducing the amount of sodium and water in the body. Thiazides are the only type of diuretic that dilates (widens) the blood vessels, which also helps to lower blood pressure.

Commonly used brand names in the United States: Aquatensen (methyclothiazide), Diucardin (hydroflumethiazide), Diulo (metolazone), Diuril (chlorothiazide), Enduron (methyclothiazide), Esidrix (hydrochlorothiazide), Hydro-chlor (hydrochlorothiazide), Hydro-D (hydrochlorothiazide), HydroDIURIL (hydrochlorothiazide), Hydromox (quinethazone), Hygroton (chlorthalidone), Metahydrin (trichlormethiazide), Microzide (hydrochlorothiazide), Mykrox (metolazone), Naqua (trichlormethiazide), Naturetin (bendroflumethiazide), Oretic (hydrochlorothiazide), Renese (polythiazide), Saluron (hydroflumethiazide), Thalitone (chlorthalidone), Trichlorex (trichlormethiazide), Zaroxolyn (metolazone)

#### **2. Potassium-sparing diuretics**

Potassium-sparing diuretics are used to reduce the amount of water in the body. Unlike the other diuretic medicines, these medicines do not cause your body to lose potassium.

Commonly used brand names in the United States: Aldactone (spironolactone), Dyrenium (triamterene), Midamor (amiloride)

#### **3. Loop-acting diuretics**

Loop-acting diuretics cause the kidneys to increase the flow of urine. This helps reduce the amount of water in your body and lower your blood pressure.

Commonly used brand names in the United States: Bumex (bumetanide), Demadex (torsemide), Edecrin (ethacrynic acid), Lasix (furosemide), Myrosemide (furosemide)

### **Diuretics and Heart Failure**

As the dosage of loop diuretics increases in patients with advanced heart failure, the risk of death also increases. Loop diuretics, especially when given at higher doses, activate a part of the nervous system known to increase the risk of death in heart failure patients. Loop diuretics, especially at higher doses, can also contribute to worsened kidney function and electrolyte abnormalities. Physicians should use loop diuretics at the lowest dose possible dose to relieve congestion but not to the point of keeping heart failure patients totally free of fluid in the lungs.

Commonly Used Diuretics

Lucile Packard Children's Hospital

Heart Center/CVICU

Ray Sahelian, M.D. – Author

Alice Rich, RN ([arich@lpch.org](mailto:arich@lpch.org)) – Recommender and Maintainer

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