



INTRODUCTION

Drug combinations for the treatment of hypertension

CONSENSUS REPORTS such as JNC IV (Fourth report of the Joint National Committee on Detection, Evaluation, and Treatment of High Blood Pressure), together with numerous clinical trials, suggest that additive effects on blood pressure can be observed when combining two or more antihypertensive agents in the same regimen. It should not, however, be assumed that any two agents from different antihypertensive classes will have comparable additive hypotensive effects.

The following review addresses combination antihypertensive pharmacotherapy. The authors have reviewed and categorized a large body of literature reports on two or more agents used in the treatment of arterial hypertension. They have also summarized many of the pharmacokinetic or pharmacodynamic in-

teractions that have been reported with different combinations of antihypertensive drugs.

In addition to a useful tabular categorization of different combinations of agents, they have summarized the average changes in blood pressure observed. The reader will appreciate that not all available combinations of agents necessarily provide comparable additive effects. Yet, when appropriate combinations of two or more agents are utilized, additive effects can be achieved with negligible adverse effects. The tabular presentations provided by the authors allow easy comparison of different drug combinations.

DONALD G. VIDT, MD
Section Editor
Senior physician, Department of Hypertension and Nephrology
The Cleveland Clinic Foundation