

# Alpha Blockers

**Mechanism of action:** Blocks receptors in arteries and smooth muscle. Relaxes blood vessels and decreases blood pressure

**Drug names:**

- Doxazosin
- Prazosin
- Terazosin

**Side effects:**

- Dizziness
- Drowsiness
- Headache
- Hypotension
- Runny nose

**Adverse effects:**

- Fainting
- Shortness of breath

### **Nursing Considerations:**

- Check blood pressure and heart rate before administration. If blood pressure is less than 90/60 or heart rate is less than 60 bpm, do not administer the medication
- Ask males if they are taking a medication for erectile dysfunction such as Viagra, Cialis, or Levitra. Men taking one of these medications should not take alpha blockers
- Continue to monitor blood pressure and heart rate after administration
- Monitor for weight gain and swelling in the ankles- report to physician if signs of fluid retention occur
- Teach patients about orthostatic hypotension and to avoid standing quickly