

# Calcium Channel Blockers

Mechanism of action: Blocks calcium from entering the muscle cells of the heart and arteries. Decreases the contraction of the heart and dilates the arteries

## Drug names:

- Amlodipine (Norvasc)
- Diltiazem (Cardizem)
- Nifedipine (Procardia)
- Verapamil

## Side effects:

- Hypotension
- Constipation
- Headache
- Dizziness, light-headedness

## Adverse effects:

- Dysrhythmias
- Steven-Johnson Syndrome

## **Nursing Considerations:**

- Check blood pressure and heart rate before administration. Assess heart rate and rhythm. If blood pressure is less than 90/60 mmHg or heart rate is less than 60 bpm, do not administer the medication.
- Ask the patient if they have a history of heart failure, blood vessel disease, liver disease, or kidney disease before administering as these medications can make those conditions worse
- Continue to monitor heart rate and heart rhythm, report irregular rhythms to the physician