

Central- Acting Adrenergic Agents

Mechanism of action: stimulate CNS receptors to decrease constriction of blood vessels.
Results in dilation of arteries and a decrease in blood pressure

Drug names:

- Clonidine
- Methyldopa

Side effects:

- *high incidence of side effects*
- Drowsiness
- Lethargy
- Dry mouth
- Nasal congestion

Adverse effects:

- Myocarditis with methyldopa

Nursing Considerations:

- Check blood pressure and heart rate before administration. If blood pressure is less than 90/60 mmHg or heart rate is less than 60 bpm, do not administer the medication
- Record a baseline weight
- Continue to monitor blood pressure and heart rate
- Monitor intake and output
- Monitor for swelling and fluid retention
- Monitor for signs/symptoms of depression
- Teach patients to avoid suddenly stop taking a central-acting adrenergic agent
- Frequent mouth care can help the incidence of a dry mouth
- AVOID clonidine during pregnancy and breastfeeding