

# News

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\*\*\*\*\*World meeting on new heart  
disease drugs.

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DALLAS--The international symposium about the use of beta-adrenergic blockers in cardiovascular disease on March 13 and 14 will be the largest gathering to date of experts in the use of these drugs, according to the symposium chairman, Dr. Norman Kaplan, professor of internal medicine, The University of Texas Health Science Center at Dallas.

"Beta-adrenergic blockers will surely be the most widely used drugs for the treatment of both hypertension and coronary heart disease in the 1980s," said Dr. Kaplan. "The meeting brings together both clinical and research scientists from all around the world to review the accomplishments of the past 10 years and to discuss where we'll go on from here."

The "beta blockers" were discovered in the 1960s, but their approval for use in the United States was delayed. Three of these drugs are in clinical use here now and others will be introduced in the near future, the Texas physician said. These drugs work by modifying the neural impulses that direct the beating of the heart.

Some of the speakers at the symposium at Loews Anatole Hotel, near the UT Health Science Center, have been working with beta blockers for more than a decade and have administered the drugs to thousands of patients. Others will discuss the latest results of research involving beta blockers.

"We have learned a great deal about how beta blockers work, but there is a lot more we need to know," Dr. Kaplan explained.

"For example, some of the drugs are more selective as far as certain receptors in the heart are concerned. Others seem to be more effective in different types of patients. The drugs are chemically similar, but their side effects vary--why? We need to find out, and meetings like this where people from different centers and laboratories get together and compare notes help us get ahead."

Some physicians use beta blockers together with diuretics, while other physicians believe that beta blockers will become the sole type of drug used in treating certain conditions. This, too, will be discussed at the meeting.

Dr. Kaplan singled out a number of the 20 speakers because their material will be of special interest. Three of these will speak in the Thursday afternoon session presided over by Dr. Colin T. Dollery, professor of clinical pharmacology and consultant physician at Hammersmith Hospital, London, England.

\*Dr. David G. Shand, professor of pharmacology and medicine, Duke University Medical Center, Durham, NC, will talk about how and why the beta blockers work, and their effect on various organ systems and parts of the body (the central nervous system, the kidneys, and the blood, among others).

\*Dr. John M. Cruickshank, medical advisor to ICI Pharmaceuticals, the British Company that first discovered beta blockers and pioneered in their use, will discuss the drugs' effects on the central nervous system.

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first add beta blockers

\*Dr. Jay M. Sullivan, professor of medicine, University of Tennessee, Memphis, will discuss the effect of beta blockers on the kidneys. He is one of the United States clinicians who is conducting research on the treatment of hypertension with these agents.

The speakers in the second session on Friday morning (presided over by Dr. Edward D. Frohlich, vice president for education and research of the Alton Ochsner Medical Foundation, New Orleans) include:

\*Dr. Colin T. Dollery, who will compare the effects of various beta blockers on patients with hypertension.

\*Dr. Marvin Moser, clinical professor of medicine at New York Medical College, who will talk about whether beta blockers may provide protection against coronary artery disease.

\*Dr. Frohlich, who will provide a general overview of the use of beta blockers in treating hypertension.

Dr. Harriet P. Dustan, director of the Cardiovascular Research and Training Center, University of Alabama, Birmingham, will preside over the second Friday morning session. The speakers:

\*Dr. Brian N.C. Prichard, consultant physician at the University College Hospital, London, England, and "clinical father" of the use of beta blockers, will discuss his rich experience with these drugs. He was one of the first researchers to recognize the importance and application of these drugs in the treatment of hypertension.

\*Dr. Francis J. Zacharias, consultant-in-charge of the hypertension unit, Clatterbridge Hospital, Cheshire, England, a physician who has treated thousands of patients for many years with beta blockers, will talk about their long-term use.

\*Dr. Michael A. Weber, director of the hypertension unit, Veterans Administration Medical Center, Long Beach, Calif., will talk about "Selection of the Patient for Beta Blocker Therapy."

The person presiding over the final session Friday afternoon will be Dr. Richard Gorlin, professor and chairman of medicine, Mt. Sinai School of Medicine, New York. Among the speakers:

\*Dr. Lennart Hansson, associate professor of medicine at Ostra Hospital, Goteborg, Sweden, will talk about using beta blockers in patients undergoing treatment for myocardial infarction (heart attacks).

\*Dr. Hillard J. Katz, clinical professor of medicine, University of California-San Francisco, will speak on "Beta Blocker Withdrawal Syndrome--Fact or Fallacy?"

\*Dr. Graham Jackson of London will describe the comparative effectiveness of various beta blocking drugs for angina pectoris and will discuss his reasons for a particular drug.

The chairman and organizer of the symposium, Dr. Norman M. Kaplan, is author of Clinical Hypertension and a recognized authority in the fields of hypertension research and the clinical application of the results of these studies.

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(Editors Note: A press room will be set up at the Loews Anatole Hotel on the afternoon of Wednesday, March 12. Dr. Kaplan has said that members of the press and electronic media are welcome to cover the symposium. Most of the speakers will be available for interviews.) (Mr. Kangilaski is a consultant for Professional Postgraduate Services, Inc.)