

Medications for Heart Valve Problems

If you are having symptoms, certain medications can ease them. Other medications help prevent problems that may occur due to valve disease. Your doctor can discuss what medications might be right for you. Take any medications exactly as you are instructed.



Medications for Symptoms

Here are some types of medications that may be prescribed and what they do.

Diuretics help rid the body of excess fluid. Having less fluid to pump makes a heart's job easier. Getting rid of extra water can also help reduce swelling, bloating, and shortness of breath.

Digitalis helps the heart pump with more strength. This allows the heart to pump more blood with each beat. Digitalis may also keep the heartbeat regular.

ACE inhibitors make blood flow more easily by relaxing blood vessels and lowering blood pressure. This means the heart doesn't have to work as hard to pump the same amount of blood.

Beta-blockers slow the heart rate, which lessens the work the heart has to do. They may also slow the heartbeat and keep it regular.

Antiarrhythmics control a fast or irregular heartbeat (palpitations).

Other Medications

Problems with heart valves can make the heart more likely to form blood clots or become infected. Medications that help prevent these problems may be prescribed for you.

Antibiotics help prevent infection due to bacteria that can stick to abnormal heart valves. Your doctor may have you take them before certain procedures. These include any dental work (such as cleanings). If you have a valve problem, ask your doctor before having any procedure.

Anticoagulants prevent blood clots from forming inside the heart chambers or on a damaged heart valve.