set forth in this text are in accord with current recommendations and practice at the time of
publication. However, in view of ongoing research, changes in government regulations, and the
constant flow of information relating to drug therapy and drug reactions, the reader is urged to
check the package insert for each drug for any change in indications and dosage and for added
warnings and precautions. This is particularly important when the recommended agent is a new
and/or infrequently employed drug.

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Contents

Preface XI

Pharmacological Background of the Therapeutic
Activities and Side Effects of Calcium Antagonists

P. A. van Zwieten, Amsterdam, The Netherlands 1

Introduction 1
Nomenclature and Definitions 1
Chemistry 3
Radioligand-Binding Studies 5
Calcium Channels 6
Pharmacology 7
Organ Specificity 9
Pharmacological Background of Therapeutic Applications 10
Cardiovascular Disease 10
Calcium Antagonists in the Treatment of Neurological Disease 12
Pharmacological Background of Adverse Reactions 15
Dihydropyridines 15
Verapamil and Gallopamil 15
Diltiazem 16
Flunarizine 16
Conclusions 17
References 17

Hemodynamic Actions of Calcium Entry Blockers


Introduction 21
The Cardiovascular System and Its Control Mechanisms 22

Contents VI

Vascular Effects of Calcium Entry Blockers 23
Effects on Isolated Blood Vessels 23
Calcium Entry Blockers and Vascular-adrenoceptors 25
Does the Endothelium Play a Role in the Vascular Effects of Calcium Entry Blockers? 28
In Vivo Vascular Effects of Calcium Entry Blockers 28
Cardiac Effects of Calcium Entry Blockers 39
Effects on Myocardial Contractility 39
Effects on Nodal Tissue 40
Effects on Coronary Vascular Tone 40
Effects on Cardiac Metabolism and Damage due to Ischemia 41
Effects of Calcium Entry Blockers on Cardiovascular Control Mechanisms 42
Nervous Control of the Circulation 42
Endocrine Control of the Circulation 44
Renal Control of the Circulation 45
Long-Term Control by Structural Design of the Cardiovascular System 48
Synthesis: The Overall Hemodynamic Effects of Calcium Entry Blockers 49
References 51

Calcium Antagonism in the Control of Cardiac Arrhythmias

B.N. Singh, Los Angeles, Calif. 67

Electropharmacologic Considerations 67
Clinical Electrophysiologic Effects of Calcium Antagonists 68
Effects of Calcium Antagonists in Supraventricular Arrhythmias 69
Acute Termination of Paroxysmal Supraventricular Tachycardia 70
Modes of Conversion of Paroxysmal Supraventricular Tachycardia with Calcium Antagonists 71
Acute Conversion of Paroxysmal Supraventricular Tachycardia: Calcium
Antagonists versus Other Antiarrhythmic Agents 72
Calcium Antagonists versus Adenosine and Adenosine Triphosphate in the Acute Conversion of Paroxysmal Supraventricular Tachycardia 73
Response in Other Forms of Reentrant of Ectopic Supraventricular Tachycardia 73
Calcium Antagonist and Multifocal Tachycardia 73
Chronic Prophylaxis of Paroxysmal Supraventricular Tachycardia with Calcium Antagonists 74
Verapamil and Paroxysmal Atrial Tachycardia with Block 75
Calcium Antagonists in Preexcitation Syndroms 75
Treatment of Other Atrial Tachycardias by Calcium Antagonists 76
Atrial Fibrillation 76
Maintenance of Sinus Rhythm 78
Atrial Flutter 78
Ventricular Arrhythmias 78
Premature Ventricular Contractions 79

Contents VII
Chromc Recurrent Ventricular Tachycardia 79
Exercise-Triggered Ventricular Tachycardia 81
Idiopathic Ventricular Tachycardia with Right Bundle Branch Block and Left Axis Deviation Morphology 81
Torsades de Pointe and Calcium Antagonism 82
Calcium Antagonists and Sudden Death 82
Summary and Conclusions 83
References 84

Treatment of Myocardial Ischemia with Calcium Entry Blockers
W.H. van Gilst, K. I. Lie, Groningen, The Netherlands 88

Introduction 88
Pathogenetic Classification of Ischemic Heart Disease 88
Results of Controlled Trials with Calcium Entry Blockers in Relatively ‘Stable’ Ischemic Syndromes, i.e. Stable and Mixed Angina 90
Results of Controlled Trials with Calcium Entry Blockers in Acute Unstable Ischemic Syndromes, i.e. Unstable Angina and Myocardial Infarction 93
Unstable Angina 93
Acute Myocardial Infarction 94
Conclusions 98
References 98
Treatment of Migraine with Calcium Entry Blockers

P. Tfelt-Hansen, L. Edvinsson, J. Olesen, Copenhagen, Denmark 143

Introduction 143
Flunarizine 144
Placebo-Controlled Trials 144
Comparative Trials 144
Other Studies 147
Nimodipine 147
Placebo-Controlled Trials 147
Comparative Trials 147
Other Studies 148
Verapamil 148
Diltiazem 149
Discussion 149
Review of Trials 149
Mode of Action 150
Clinical Implications 151
References 152

Contents IX

Treatment of Neurological Disorders Except Migraine with Calcium Antagonists

A. Hartmann, Bonn; P. A. van Zwieten, Amsterdam 155
Events at the Cellular Level Associated with Cerebral Ischemia 155
Subarachnoidal Hemorrhage 159
Pathophysiology and Biochemistry 159
Prevention of Vasospasms 162
Treatment of Existing Vasospasms 165
Cerebral Infarction 166
Calcium-Antagonists and Global Cerebral Ischemia 169
Vertebrobasilar Insuffiency and Vertigo 173
Epilepsy 174
Conclusions 175
References 177

Subject Index 195

Preface
Calcium antagonists (CAs) have drawn the attention as drugs that are both therapeutically relevant and of great fundamental importance. Their discovery has greatly deepened our insight into the fundamental processes of cellular calcium metabolism, and the concept ‘specific calcium channels’ in the cell membrane would probably not have been submitted without the availability of the CAs as selective blockers of these channels. Most review papers and monographs on CAs have emphasized either their fundamental mechanisms or, clinically, the treatment of one particular disease with these therapeutic agents.

Reviews or books covering the broader spectrum of the therapeutic applicability of the CAs are rare. It thus seemed of interest to ask experts in their various fields to present the state of the art of the CA drugs as therapeutic means in the most important clinical conditions where they are applied at present. After two introductory chapters of a more basic character, the role of CAs in various cardiovascular and neurological disorders is described in some detail, with emphasis on the clinical aspects but without neglecting the basic mechanisms involved, as far as relevant. We have limited the discussion in this book to those diseases where the therapeutic role of CAs is substantiated by clinical trials, however modest they may sometimes be. Those diseases where only case reports and clinical impressions are available with respect to the possible therapeutic activity of CAs are not included here, but the reader may consult the recently published volume (No. 552) of the Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences on Calcium Antagonism edited by P.M. Vanhoutte, L. Paoletti, and S. Govoni.

I was fortunate in finding such highly competent authors for the various chapters and subjects and I wish them to be assured of my gratitude for their contributions.

P. A. van Zwieten