Past and future of antihypertensive drugs.

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About 40 years have already passed since hexamethonium was introduced as the first antihypertensive drugs. During these days, many antihypertensive drugs have been introduced with the progress in the research on the causes of hypertension.

Now, 4 groups of antihypertensive drugs are commonly used: 1) Diuretics, 2) \( \beta \)-blockers, \( \alpha \)-blockers, \( \alpha \cdot \beta \)-blockers and sympatholytic drugs, 3) Vasodilating drugs including Ca-antagonists, and 4) Angiotensin Converting Enzyme (ACE) inhibitors. Newer drugs are being devised from the points of 24 hours blood pressure changes, quality of life (QOL), and others.

As the newer developments of antihypertensive drugs in future, the followings are considered: Non-peptide angiotensin II receptor antagonists, renin inhibitors, metabolic inhibitors of atrial natriuretic peptides (ANP), and others.