The Dangers of Hydralazine and Clonidine in the ED

IV Hydralazine


- **Bad adverse effects**
  - Stimulation of sympathetic nervous system, leading to exacerbation of oxygen consumption in a myocardium as well as an increase in heart rate.

  - Only 2% of all patients had documented evidence of hypertensive crisis.
  - Over 80% of all doses were associated with a reduction in systolic BP < 25%.
  - Of the 16 patients who experienced an adverse effect, most were related to hypotension, with six experiencing a decrease in systolic BP > 65 mmHg.

Clonidine

- The problem with clonidine is less about its safety in the ED and more related to its potential for abuse, misuse, and adverse effects in the outpatient setting.
  - High street value
  - Abrupt discontinuation leads to rebound hypertension (Lowenstein J. Ann Intern Med 1980;92:74-7.)
  - Patch doesn’t reach peak effect for 2-3 days.

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