

Propranolol (Inderal) and Betaxolol

Propranolol is a blood pressure medicine which is commonly used for psychiatric symptoms. It helps physical symptoms of anxiety and can be taken 2 hours before an anxiety-provoking performance (such as a speech) to reduce tremor, racing heart and other physical symptoms. It is used to relieve restless feelings which are caused by other medications (called akathisia). It is also used to treat anger and aggression.

Betaxolol has similar effects in the brain as propranolol (both are centrally-acting beta-blockers) but has not been studied as extensively as propranolol.

Side Effects and Warnings

Dizziness, constipation, dry mouth, nausea, stomach upset. Propranolol can lower blood pressure, which may lead to unexpected fainting. Propranolol should not be taken by people with heart disease without the approval of their cardiologist or primary care physician. Rarely, propranolol has been found to cause depression or mental slowing.

Dosing

Propranolol should be taken 2-3 times per day. It is also available as a once-daily long-acting form.

-Updated 7/27/2012 by Chris Aiken, MD