



Short term cardioselective beta-blocker use safe in COPD

Clinical question Can I safely prescribe cardioselective beta-blockers for individuals with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)?

Bottom line In patients with COPD, cardioselective beta-blockers given as a single dose or for longer duration produce no change in FEV₁ or respiratory symptoms compared to placebo, and do not affect the FEV₁ treatment response to beta-2 agonists.

Caveat The mean duration of the studies included in the meta-analysis was only 3.7 weeks (range 2 days to 12 weeks). Most of the studies were small.

Context Beta-blocker therapy has a proven mortality benefit in patients with hypertension, heart failure and coronary heart disease. Traditionally these drugs have been considered contraindicated in patients with COPD.

Cochrane Systematic Review Salpeter S et al. Cardioselective beta-blockers for chronic obstructive pulmonary disease. Cochrane Reviews, 2005, Issue 4, Article No. CD003566.

Note: this review contains 20 studies with 278 participants.

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