

Can we say bye bye to Beta blockers in the Management of Hypertension without angina and heart failure

Vidyut Jain

MD FACC FSCAI FESC

Choithram hospital ,Indore

Can we say bye bye to Betablockers
in the Management of
Hypertension without angina and
heart failure

Beta blockers in uncomplicated Hypertension

Current status

How Aggressive to Treat Hypertension

Some Early Views on the Controversy

- “The greatest danger to a man with **high blood pressure** lies in its discovery, because then some *fool* is certain to try and reduce it.”-

J.H. Hay, 1931.

- “Hypertension may be an important compensatory mechanism which **should not be tampered** with, even were it certain that we could control it.”

Paul Dudley White, 1937

Benefits of Lowering BP

Average Percent Reduction

Stroke incidence

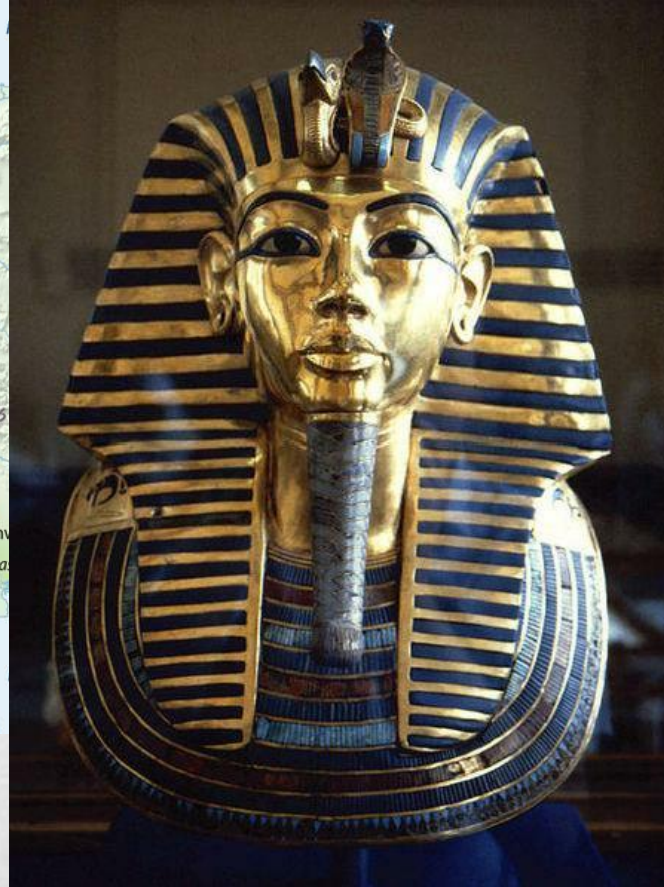
35–40%

Myocardial infarction

20–25%

Heart failure

50%



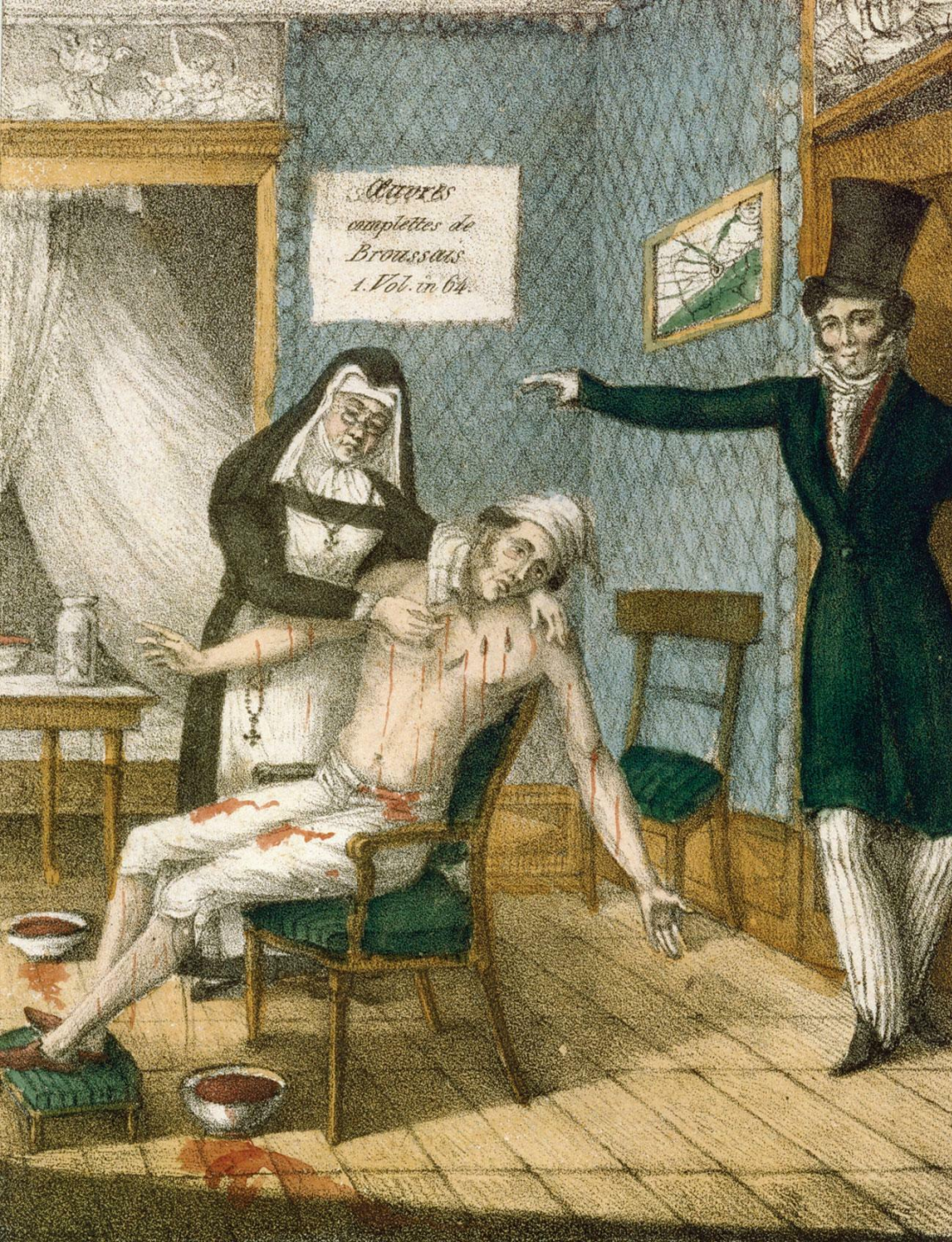
Treatment of Hypertension



History of Hypertension

2600 B.C. mention of “hard pulse disease”

- First treatments: Leeching/phlebotomy, acupuncture
 - Hippocrates recommended phlebotomy 120 AD
 - Cupping of the spine to draw animal spirits down and out was recommended
-



Lithograph showing the leeching of a patient, date unknown.

*National Library of
Medicine,
Bethesda, Maryland*

An ideal antihypertensive drug

- Effective as monotherapy
- Reduced peripheral vascular resistance.
- Preserves cardiac output, and perfusion to vital organs at rest and during exercise.
- Does not cause reflex stimulation in neurohumoral mechanisms.

- Favorable quality of life and side effect profile.
 - Reduces hypertensive end organ damage.
 - Drug compatibility with other drugs.
 - Can be given in co existing disorder
 - Once a day dosage.
 - *Reduces Stroke IHD and Renal event*
-

Choice of Pharmacological Treatment

- Associated risk factors?
- Target organ damage
- Concomitant diseases/conditions?

- Individualized Treatment
- Compelling indications **AND**
- Guidelines ,Opinions

High Blood Pressure : To treat or not

Table 6 Relative risk reduction of fatal events and combined fatal and non-fatal events in patients on active antihypertensive treatment versus placebo or no treatment

	Systolic–diastolic hypertension		Isolated systolic hypertension	
	Risk reduction	<i>P</i>	Risk reduction	<i>P</i>
Mortality				
all cause	-14%	<0.01	-13%	0.02
cardiovascular	-21%	<0.001	-18%	0.01
non-cardiovascular	-1%	NS		NS
Fatal and non-fatal events				
stroke	-42%	<0.001	-30%	<0.001
coronary	-14%	<0.01	-23%	<0.001

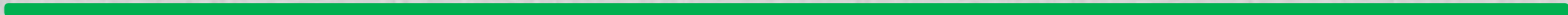
Treatment of Hypertension in **different era**

- Sodium thiocynate ,1900
 - Diuretics
 - Rice diet
 - Surgical sympetectomy
 - Tetramethyle ammonium chloride
 - Hexamethonium
 - Hydralzine
 - Rauwolfia serpentina .
 - Beta blockers 1970
-



The role of Beta blocker in hypertension

TO BE OR NOT TO BE??



BETA BLOCKERS

1948: Ahlquist classified adrenergic receptors in to alpha and beta receptor

1958: Dichloroisoprenaline first BB

1963: Propranolol **J.W Black (Nobel 1988)**

1980: BB became the most popular anti hypertensive drug after diuretics .

2003: **Most controversial**

2010: Guidelines on HTN treatment **moved away** from recommending BB as first line anti hypertensive

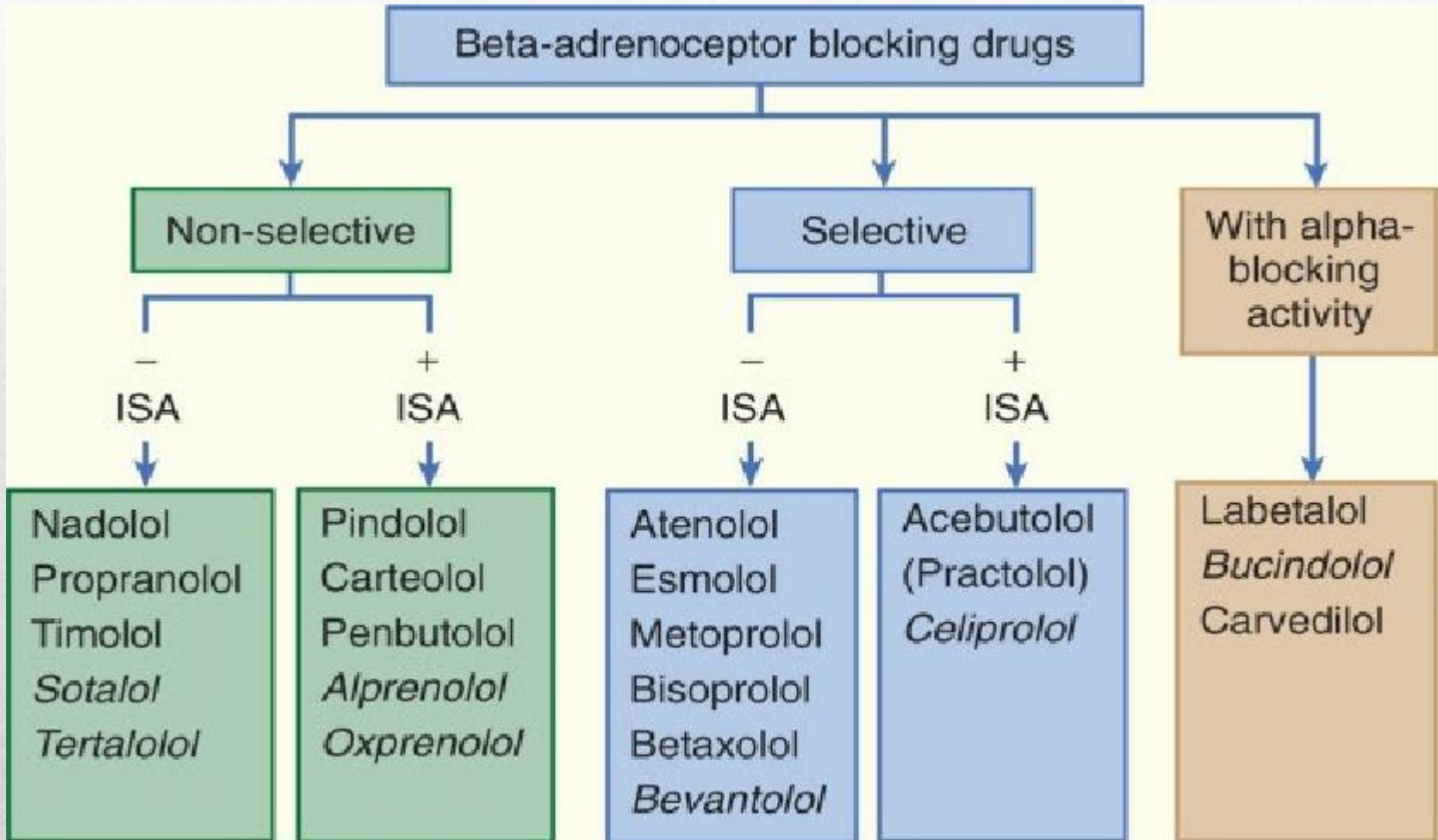


Raymond Ahlquist
Department of Pharmacology
Medical College of Georgia



J.W. Black
Pharmacology Department
University College of London,
England

CLASSIFICATION OF BETA BLOCKER



Consider factors before prescribing Beta blocker

- **Non selective BB can precipitate Bronchial asthma**
- **Avoid in conduction block**
- **Avoid in suspected Pheochromocytoma**
- **Sexual dysfunction in male**
- **Increase in depression
suicidal tendency as compared with CCB/ACEi**
- **Use with caution in DM ,elderly patients**

Consider factors before prescribing Beta blocker

- **Bradycardia and SSS**
- **Impairment of carbohydrate tolerance in pre diabetic**
- **Alteration of lipid problem**
- **Sudden withdrawal, Rebound HTN, Angina**
- **Decreased exercise capacity**
- **Worsening of peripheral artery Disease.(PAD)**

WHAT THE JNC 7 SAYS...

Table 1. Classification and management of blood pressure for adults*

BP CLASSIFICATION	SBP* MMHG	DBP* MMHG	LIFESTYLE MODIFICATION	INITIAL DRUG THERAPY	
				WITHOUT COMPELLING INDICATION	WITH COMPELLING INDICATIONS (SEE TABLE 8)
NORMAL	<120	and <80	Encourage		
PREHYPERTENSION	120–139	or 80–89	Yes	No antihypertensive drug indicated.	Drug(s) for compelling indications.‡
STAGE 1 HYPERTENSION	140–159	or 90–99	Yes	Thiazide-type diuretics for most. May consider ACEI, ARB, BB, CCB, or combination.	Drug(s) for the compelling indications.‡ Other antihypertensive drugs (diuretics, ACEI, ARB, BB, CCB) as needed.
STAGE 2 HYPERTENSION	≥160	or ≥100	Yes	Two-drug combination for most† (usually thiazide-type diuretic and ACEI or ARB or BB or CCB).	

DBP, diastolic blood pressure; SBP, systolic blood pressure.

Drug abbreviations: ACEI, angiotensin converting enzyme inhibitor; ARB, angiotensin receptor blocker; BB, beta-blocker; CCB, calcium channel blocker.

* Treatment determined by highest BP category.

† Initial combined therapy should be used cautiously in those at risk for orthostatic hypotension.

‡ Treat patients with chronic kidney disease or diabetes to BP goal of <130/80 mmHg.



THE LANCET

Articles



Lancet 2004; 364: 1684-1690
Department of Cardiology, Sahlgrenska University Hospital, S-413 45 Göteborg, Sweden (Dr G Carlberg, Dr S Samuelsson, Lars Hjelm and Lindvald)

Summary

Background Atenolol is one of the most widely used β -blockers clinically, and has often been used as a reference drug in randomised controlled trials that assessed the effect of atenolol on cardiovascular morbidity and mortality in patients with primary hypertension. We systematically review the effect of atenolol on cardiovascular morbidity and mortality in hypertensive patients.

Methods Reports were identified through searches of The Cochrane Library, MEDLINE, relevant textbooks, and by personal communication with established researchers in hypertension, randomised controlled trials that assessed the effect of atenolol on cardiovascular morbidity or mortality in patients with primary hypertension were included.

Findings We identified four studies that compared atenolol with placebo or no treatment, and five that compared atenolol with other antihypertensive drugs. Despite major differences in blood pressure lowering, there were no outcome differences between atenolol and placebo in the four studies, comprising 6825 patients, who were followed up for a mean of 4.6 years on all-cause mortality (relative risk 1.01 [95% CI 0.89-1.15]), cardiovascular mortality (0.99 [0.83-1.18]), or myocardial infarction (0.99 [0.83-1.19]). The risk of stroke, however, tended to be lower in the atenolol than in the placebo group (0.85 [0.72-1.01]). When atenolol was compared with other antihypertensives, there were no major differences in blood pressure lowering between the treatment arms. Our meta-analysis showed a significantly higher mortality (1.13 [1.02-1.25]) with atenolol treatment than with other active treatment. In the five studies comprising 17 671 patients who were followed up for a mean of 4.6 years, moreover, cardiovascular mortality also tended to be higher with atenolol treatment than with other antihypertensive treatment. Stroke was also more frequent with atenolol treatment.

Interpretation Our results cast doubts on atenolol as a suitable drug for hypertensive patients. Moreover, they challenge the use of atenolol as a reference drug in outcome trials in hypertension.

Introduction

β -Blockers have long been considered to be well documented first-line drugs in the treatment of hypertension.¹ Moreover, atenolol is one of the most widely used β -blockers clinically, and it has often been used as a reference drug in randomised controlled trials of hypertension.^{2,3} Questions have been raised about β -blockers as first-line treatment options in hypertension.⁴ In the Losartan Intervention for Endpoint Reduction in Hypertension (LIFE) trial, losartan was shown to be more effective than atenolol in hypertensive patients with left ventricular hypertrophy.⁵ Whether the result of the LIFE study was caused by a beneficial effect of losartan or a weak effect of atenolol on cardiovascular disease, or both, has been debated.⁶ The effect of atenolol after myocardial infarction has also been questioned.⁷ Hence, the aim of our investigation was to systematically review the effect of atenolol on cardiovascular morbidity and mortality in hypertensive individuals.

Methods

We reviewed randomised controlled trials that assessed the effect of atenolol on cardiovascular morbidity or mortality in patients with primary hypertension. Studies were identified through searching of The Cochrane Library, MEDLINE, textbooks, and by personal

communication with established researchers in hypertension. The following keywords were used in the database search: atenolol [MESH] OR atenolol "text" AND cerebrovascular disorders [MESH] OR myocardial infarction [MESH]; atenolol AND systematic; β -blocker AND hypertension AND systematic.

The eligibility criteria for inclusion in the meta-analysis were (1) primary hypertension, (2) randomised, controlled trial, (3) predefined criteria of myocardial infarction, stroke, and cardiovascular death, and (4) atenolol alone as the first-line drug in one of the treatment arms. Data from the studies that fulfilled the criteria were entered into the Cochrane Collaboration Review manager package (RevMan 4.2). Heterogeneity between the studies was assessed with χ^2 test and the chosen summary statistic variable was the reduction in relative risk.

Results

17 randomised controlled trials were identified in which atenolol was used in one of the treatment arms of hypertension (panel). Five studies were excluded since atenolol was one of two or more drug alternatives in the same treatment arm.⁸⁻¹² One was excluded since it compared building strategies rather than individual agents.¹³ Three studies were excluded since atenolol was an add-on drug.¹⁴⁻¹⁶

2004
9 RCT
N= 23078
Patients

Beta blocker

- Beta blockers are not recommended as initial treatment of uncomplicated hypertension
 - Beta-blockers has **reduced ability to protect against stroke**, though being equally effective for protection from coronary events and mortality
-

A meta-analysis with pooled data from 13 RCT

“Excess risk of STROKE (16%) associated with the use of BB compared with other Antihypertensives”

Relative risk of major events with atenolol vs placebo (n = 6825)

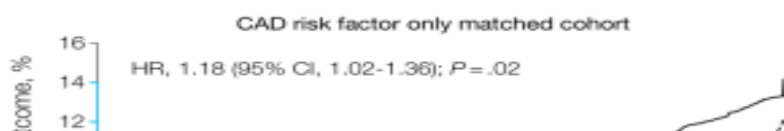
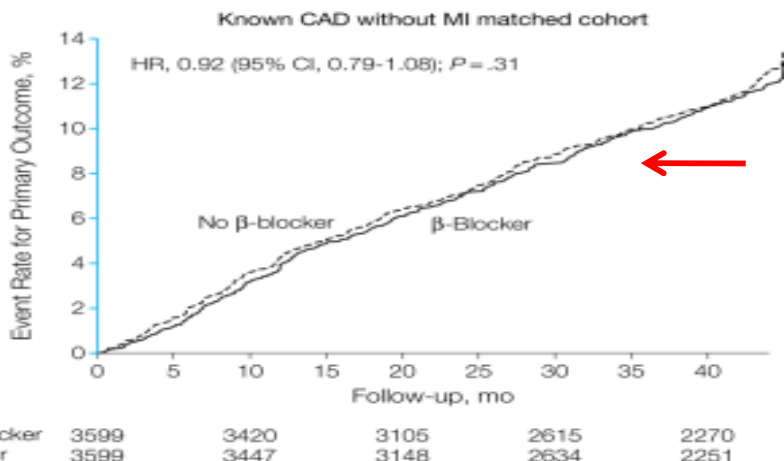
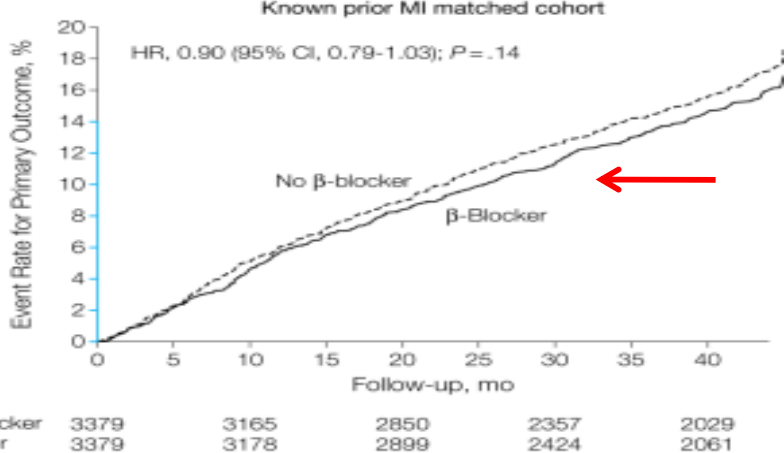
End point	RR	95% CI
All-cause mortality	1.01	0.89-1.15
Cardiovascular mortality	0.99	0.83-1.18
MI	0.99	0.83-1.19
Stroke	0.85	0.72-1.01

The REACH Registry

An International, Prospective Observational Study in Subjects at Risk of Atherothrombotic Events in an Outpatient Setting

reach
REGISTRY

REduction of Atherothrombosis
for Continued Health



	β -Blocker, No.		No β -Blocker, No.		HR (95% CI)	P Value	Favors β -Blocker	Favors No β -Blocker	P Value for Interaction
	Events	Total Sample	Events	Total Sample					
Primary outcome									
Prior MI	489	3379	532	3379	0.90 (0.79-1.03)	.14			.14
Known CAD without MI	391	3599	405	3599	0.92 (0.79-1.08)	.31			
Risk factor without MI	467	3952	403	3952	1.18 (1.02-1.36)	.02			
Secondary outcome^a									
Prior MI	1046	3379	1119	3379	0.91 (0.82-1.00)	.06			.003
Known CAD without MI	1101	3599	1002	3599	1.14 (1.03-1.27)	.01			
Risk factor without MI	870	3952	797	3952	1.12 (1.00-1.24)	.04			
Death									
Prior MI	406	3379	430	3379	0.93 (0.80-1.08)	.34			.53
Known CAD without MI	312	3599	353	3599	0.91 (0.77-1.07)	.25			
Risk factor without MI	348	3952	365	3952	0.97 (0.82-1.14)	.71			
Cardiovascular death									
Prior MI	273	3379	291	3379	0.91 (0.76-1.09)	.31			.51
Known CAD without MI	178	3599	207	3599	0.90 (0.72-1.11)	.32			
Risk factor without MI	207	3952	203	3952	1.05 (0.85-1.30)	.66			
Nonfatal MI									
Prior MI	157	3379	150	3379	1.10 (0.87-1.41)	.42			.29
Known CAD without MI	110	3599	84	3599	1.24 (0.91-1.69)	.16			
Risk factor without MI	89	3952	68	3952	1.36 (0.97-1.90)	.08			
Nonfatal stroke									
Prior MI	123	3379	142	3379	0.87 (0.66-1.13)	.28			.08
Known CAD without MI	141	3599	140	3599	0.89 (0.69-1.16)	.39			
Risk factor without MI	140	3952	140	3952	1.00 (0.80-1.25)	.98			

β -blocker use was not associated with a lower event rate of cardiovascular events at 44-month follow-up, even among patients with prior history of MI



Patients with just only coronary risk factors but no CAD

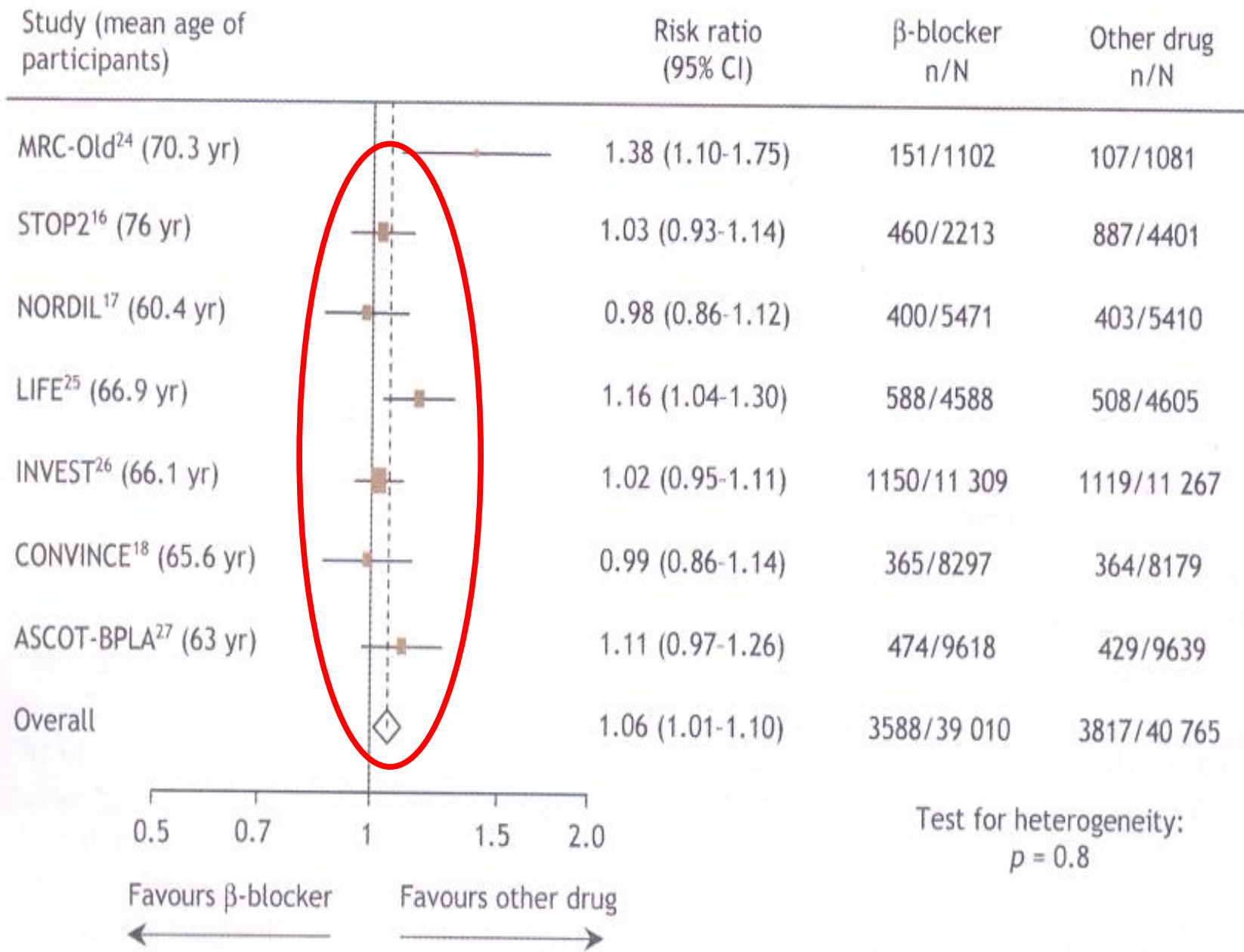


- BB was associated with worse outcome:-
- Increase risk of **primary composite end point**-CV death, non fatal MI, or non fatal stroke
- Increase risk of **secondary outcome**

BB

v/s

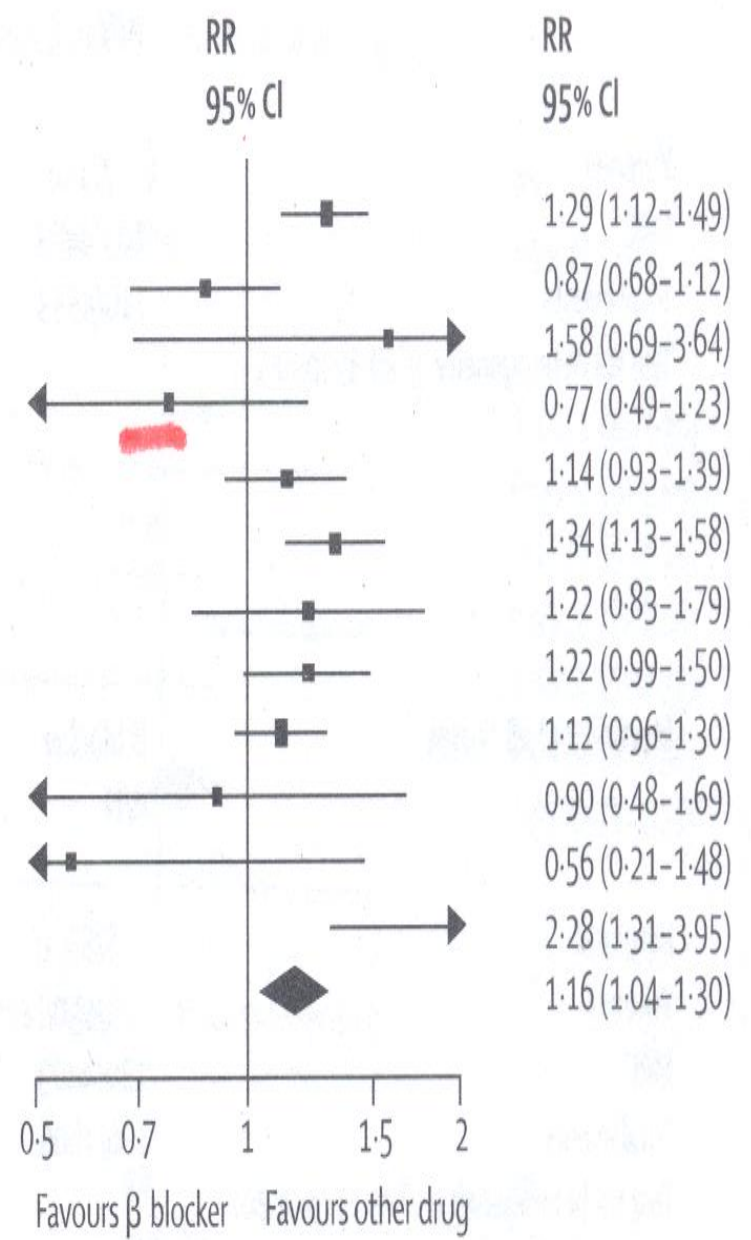
OTHER DRUGS



1A **Stroke** **STROKE**

	β blocker n/N	Other drug n/N
ASCOT-BPLA	422/9618	327/9639
CONVINCE	118/8297	133/8179
ELSA	14/1157	9/1177
HAPPY	32/3297	41/3272
INVEST	201/11309	176/11267
LIFE	309/4588	232/4605
MRC Old	56/1102	45/1081
NORDIL	196/5471	159/5410
STOP-2	237/2213	422/4401
UKPDS	17/358	21/400
Yurenev	6/150	11/154
MRC	42/4403	18/4297
Total events	1650/51963	1594/53882

Test for heterogeneity: $\chi^2=22.39$ (p=0.02)



Myocardial infarction

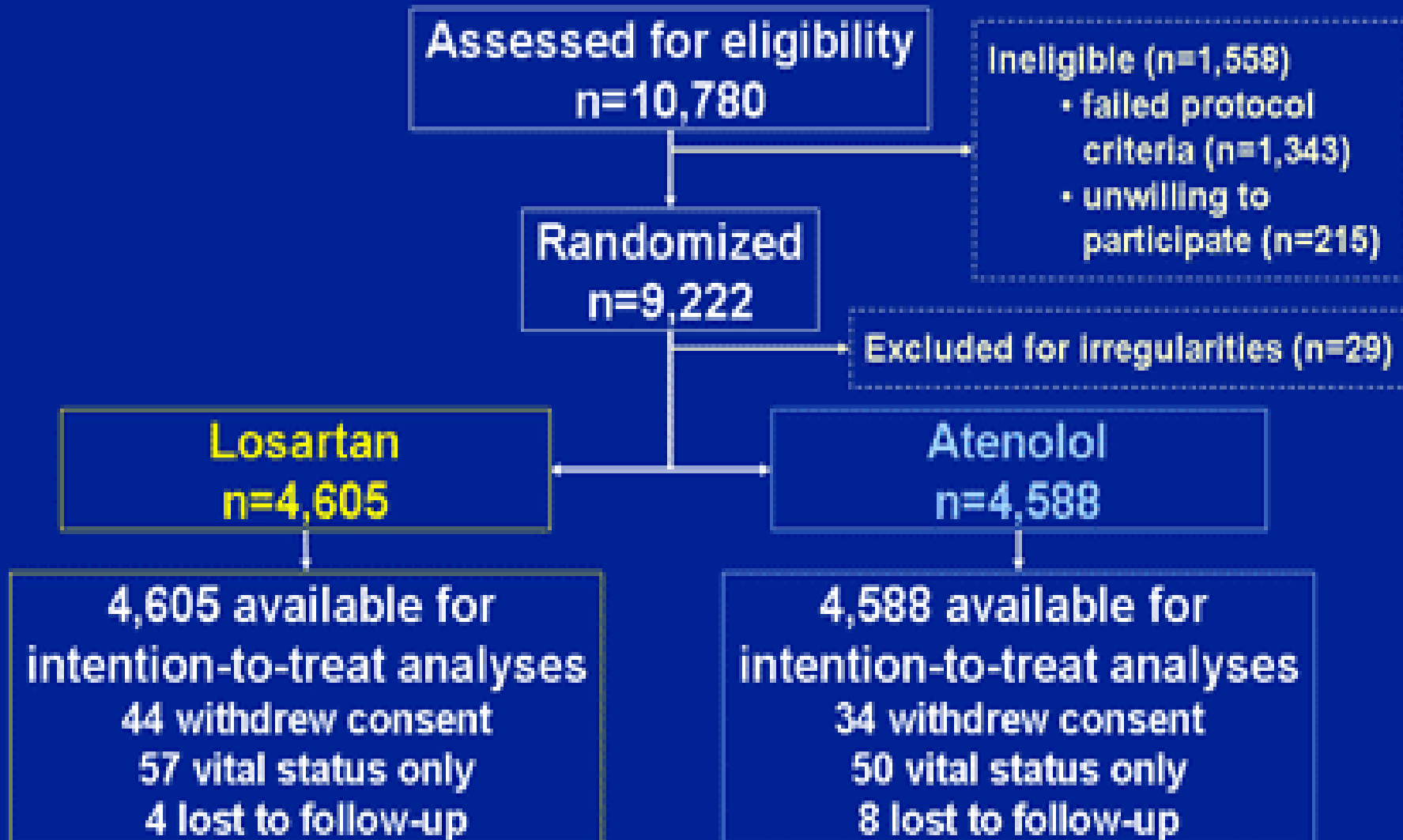
β blocker

Other drug

RR

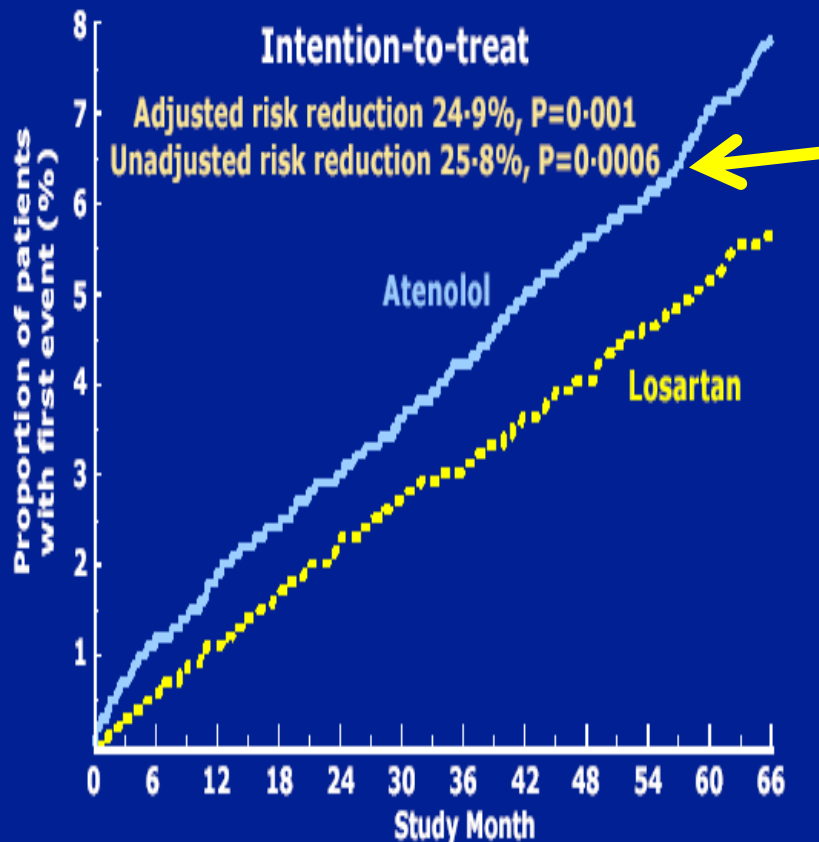
RR

LIFE Study Design



Beta blocker LIFE Study Stroke MI

LIFE Study Fatal and Non-Fatal Stroke

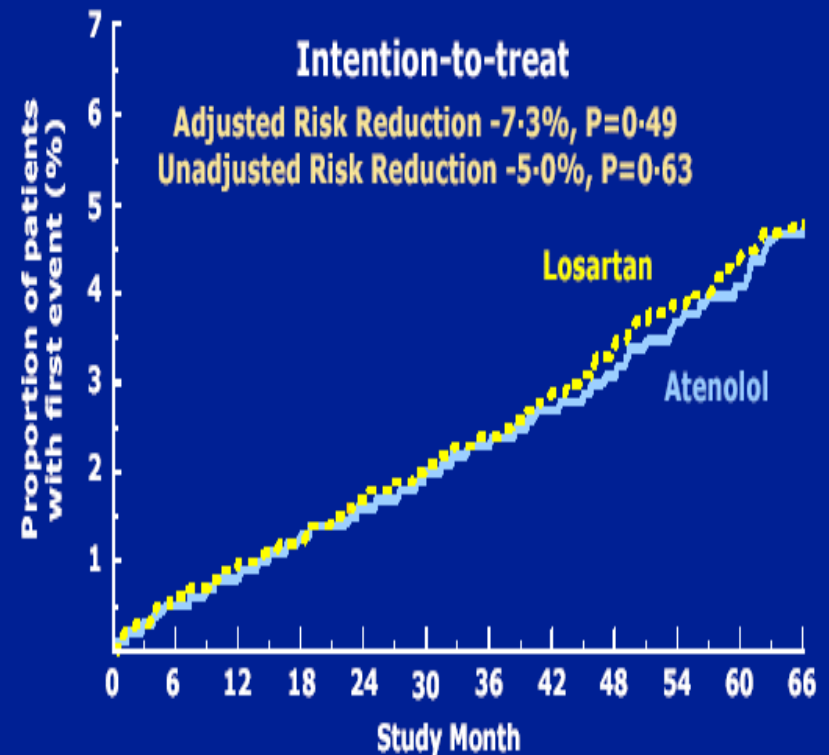


Dahlof B, et al. Lancet. 2002;359:995-1003.

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www.hypertensiononline.org

LIFE Study Fatal and Non-Fatal Myocardial Infarction

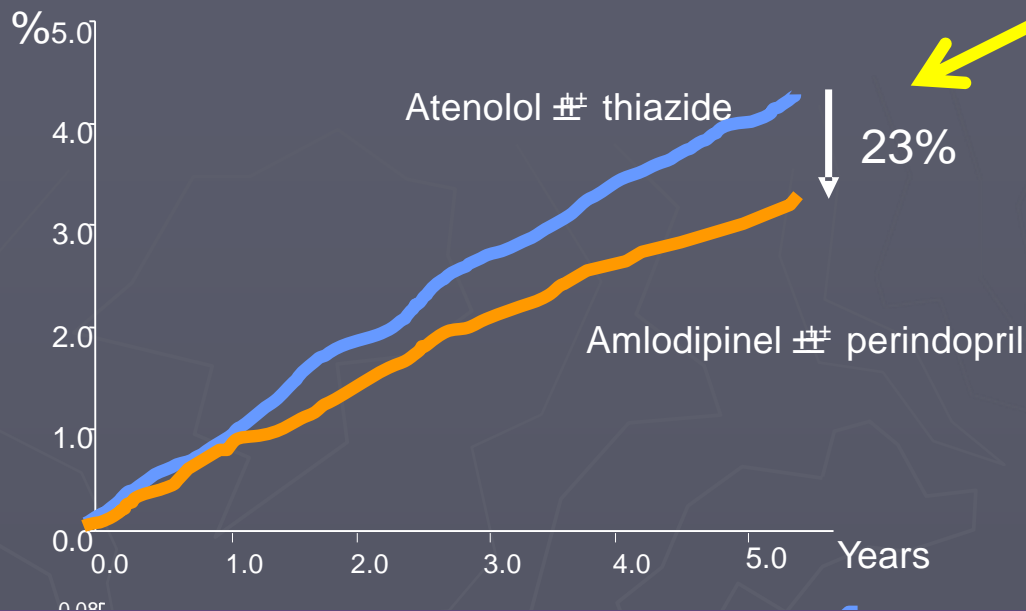


Dahlof B, et al. Lancet. 2002;359:995-1003.

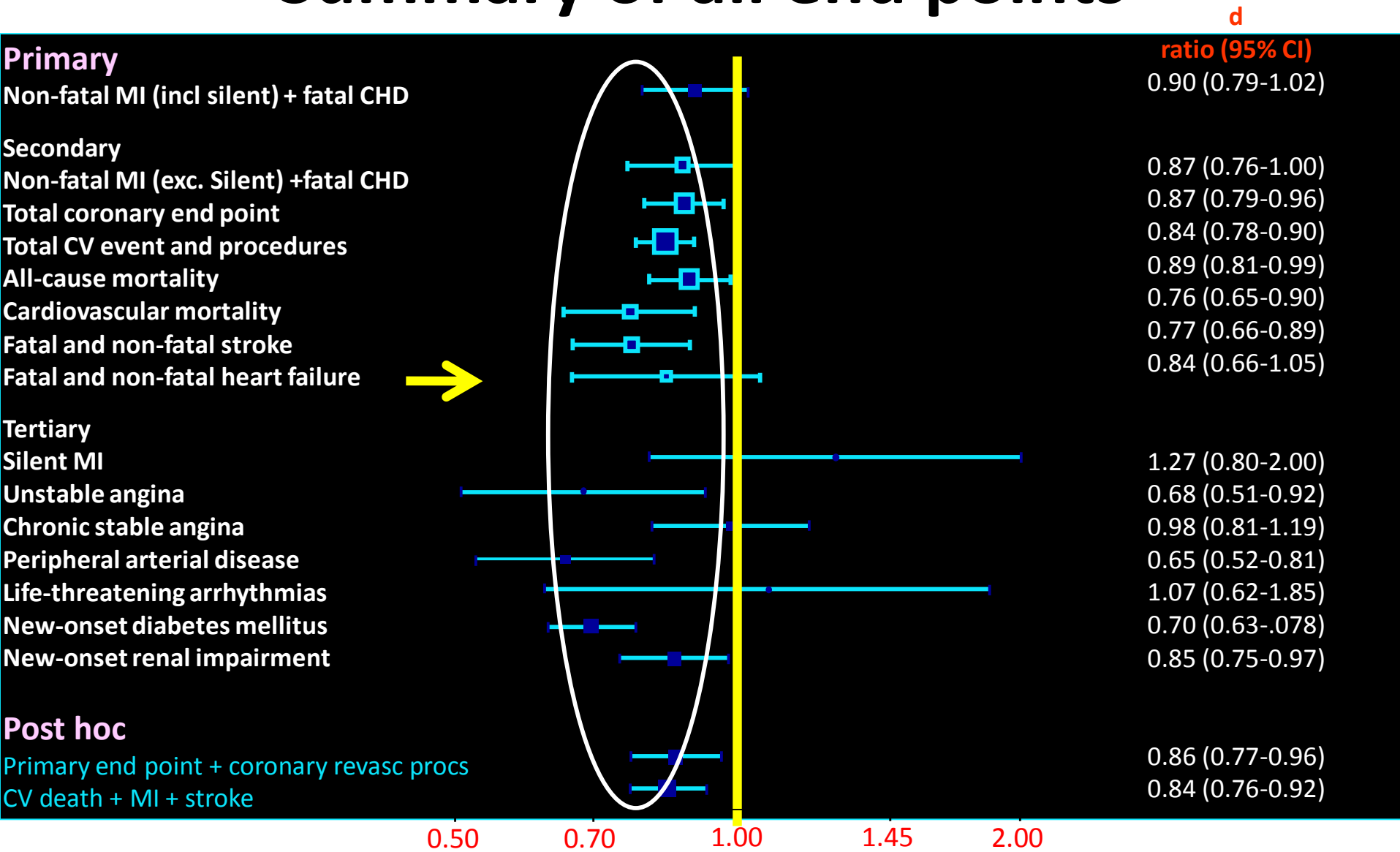
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Fatal and non fatal stroke : $\beta\beta$ Blockers vs. Amlodipine



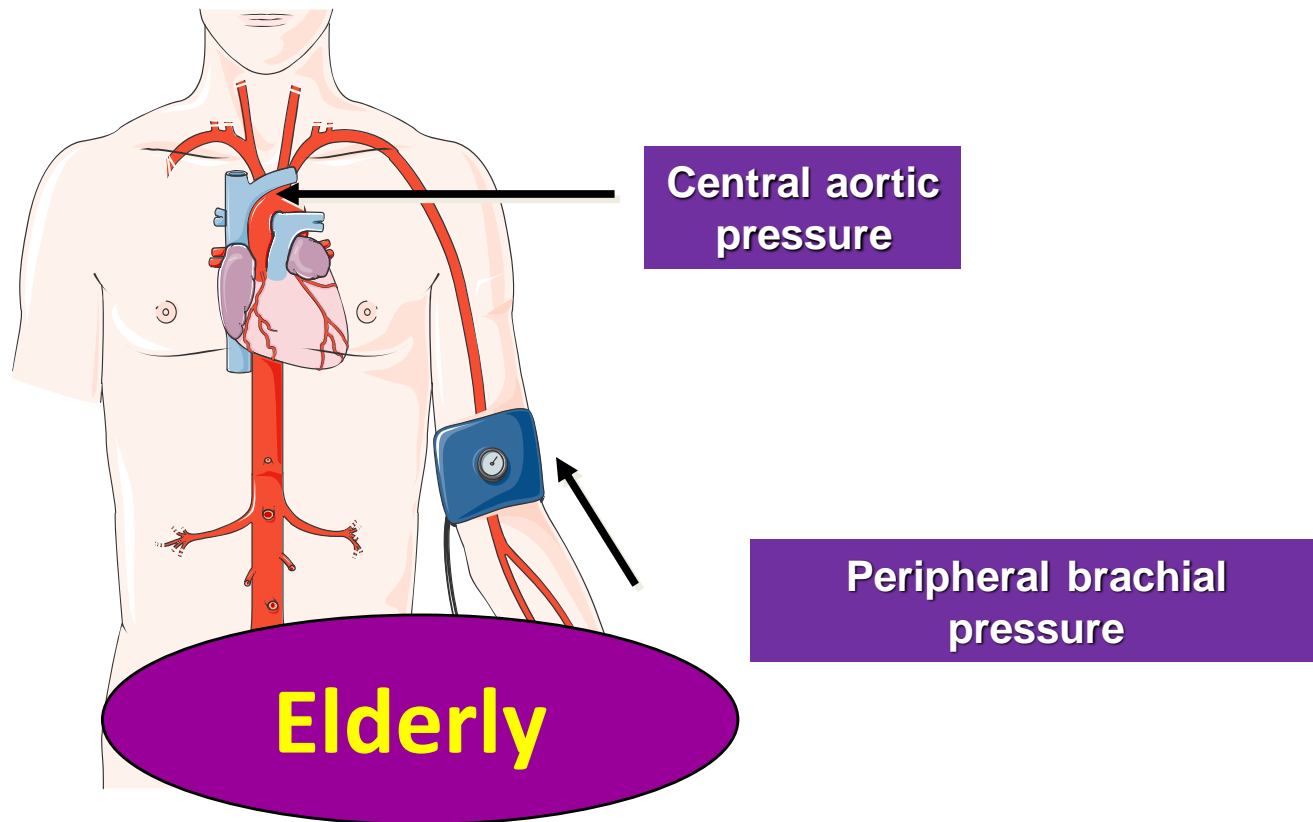
Summary of all end points



Amlodipine ± perindopril better **Atenolol ± thiazide better**

Central Aortic Pressure?

- Blood pressure in the aorta, closer to the vital organs
- CAP is a better predictor of CV events, that's the reason why Atenolol didn't work well in ASCOT



CENTRAL AORTIC PRESSURE

- ▶ Beta blockers does not reduce central aortic pressure equally
- ▶ They reduces heart rate and increase peripheral resistance so that the arterial wave reflection from the periphery returns during systole rather than during diastole
- ▶ This leads to systolic augmentation of BP

• Williams Bet al: differential impact of blood pressure lowering drugs on central aortic pressure and clinical outcomes: CAFÉ study . CIRCULATION 113:1213,2006

CAFE TRIAL

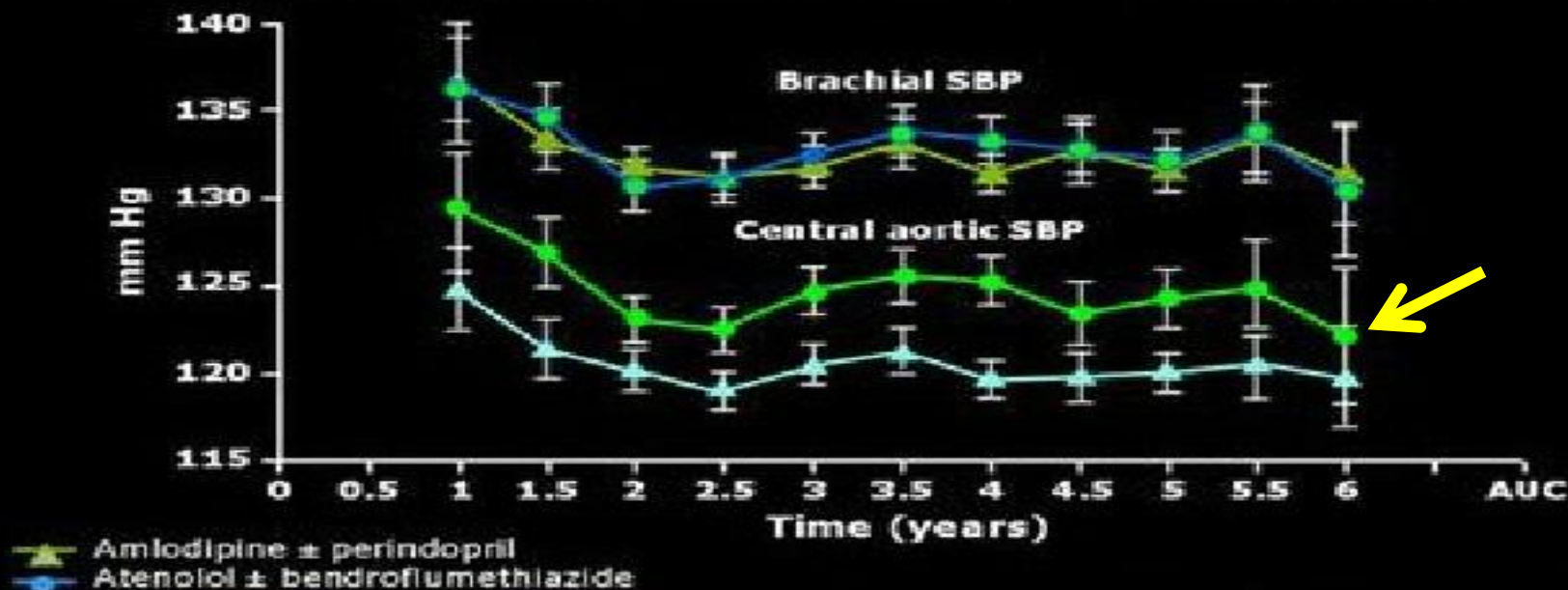
(Prototype: Atenolol)

- The **greater vasodilation seen with amlodipine**-based treatment might translate into a reduction in the strength of the reflected wave velocity from the periphery, thereby reducing central arterial pressures.
- Williams pointed out that a **3- to 4-mm-Hg difference in BP seen between groups in central aortic pressures translates into roughly a 25% difference in stroke risk**— (*similar to the 27% reduction in stroke risk seen in ASCOT in the amlodipine/perindopril arm,*

CAFE TRIAL

(Prototype: Atenolol)

CAFE: Lower central aortic BP with newer vs older antihypertensive regimen despite similar brachial BP



CAFE Investigators. *Circulation*. 2006;113:1162.

CACHET Trial



CACHET

Candesartan **A**tenolol **C**arotid
Haemodynamics **E**ndpoint **T**rial

ARB vs β blocker on

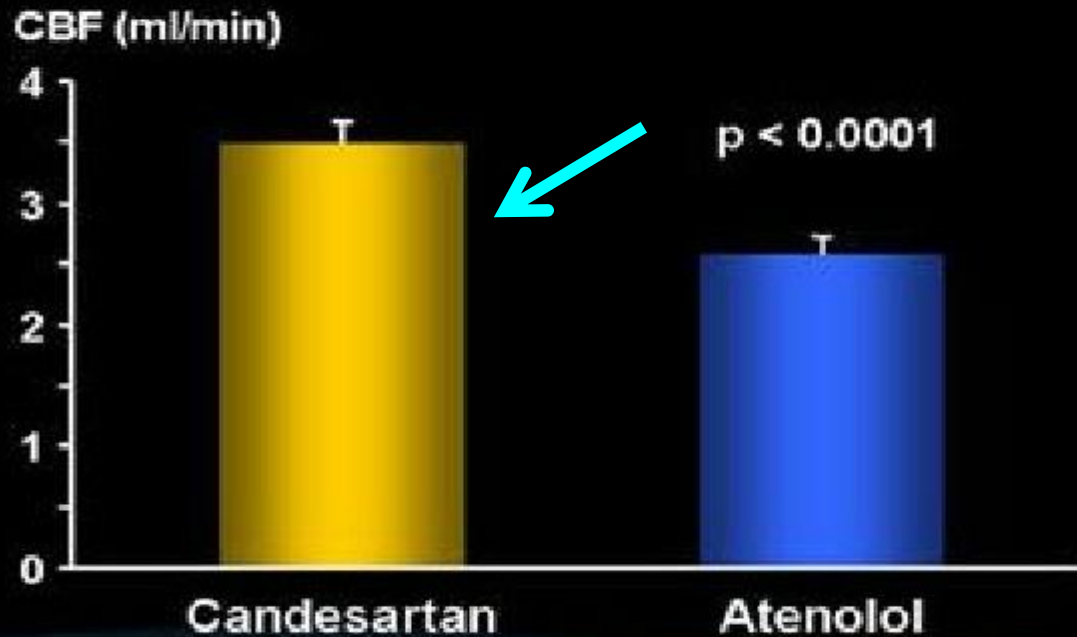
- carotid IMT and
- haemodynamics

Stroke August 2006

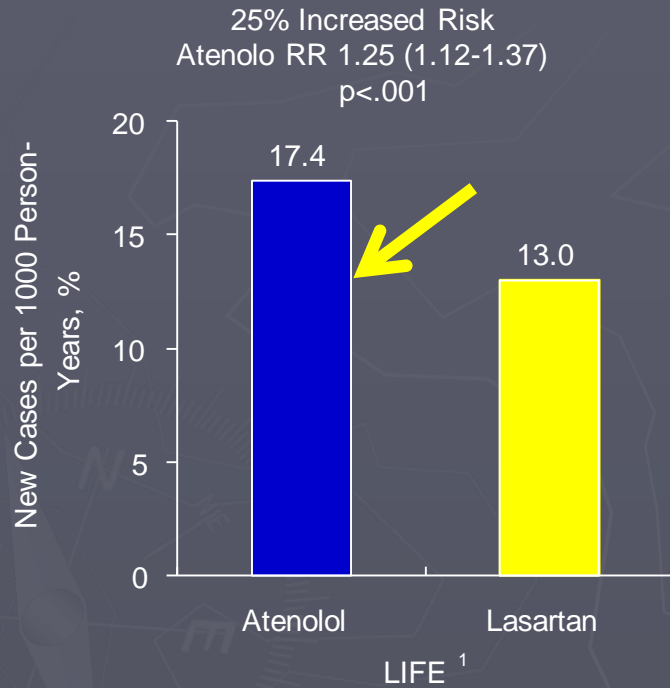
CACHET TRIAL

(Prototype: Atenolol)

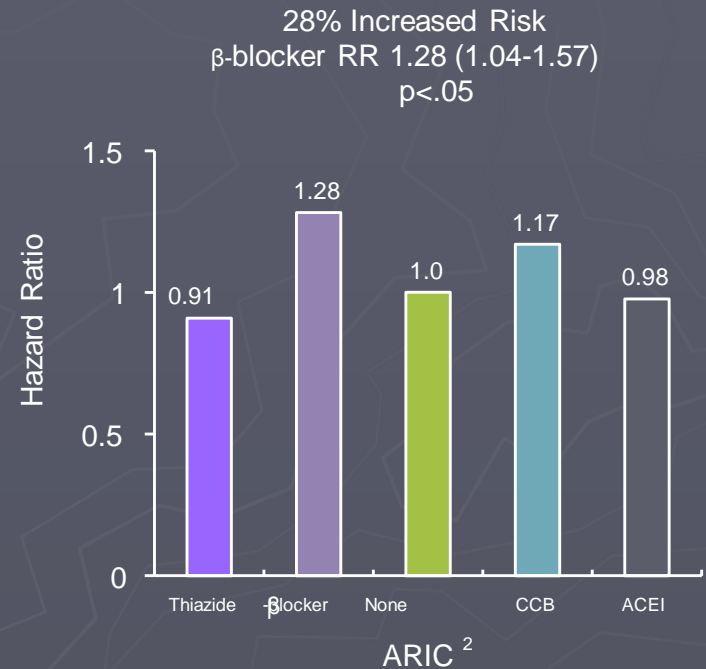
Effect of candesartan- and atenolol-based treatments on carotid blood flow



β Blockers and the Risk of - New onset DM



Prospective study of 9193 patients with hypertension aged 55 to 80 and followed for 4.8 years. Analysis of 7998 without diabetes at baseline



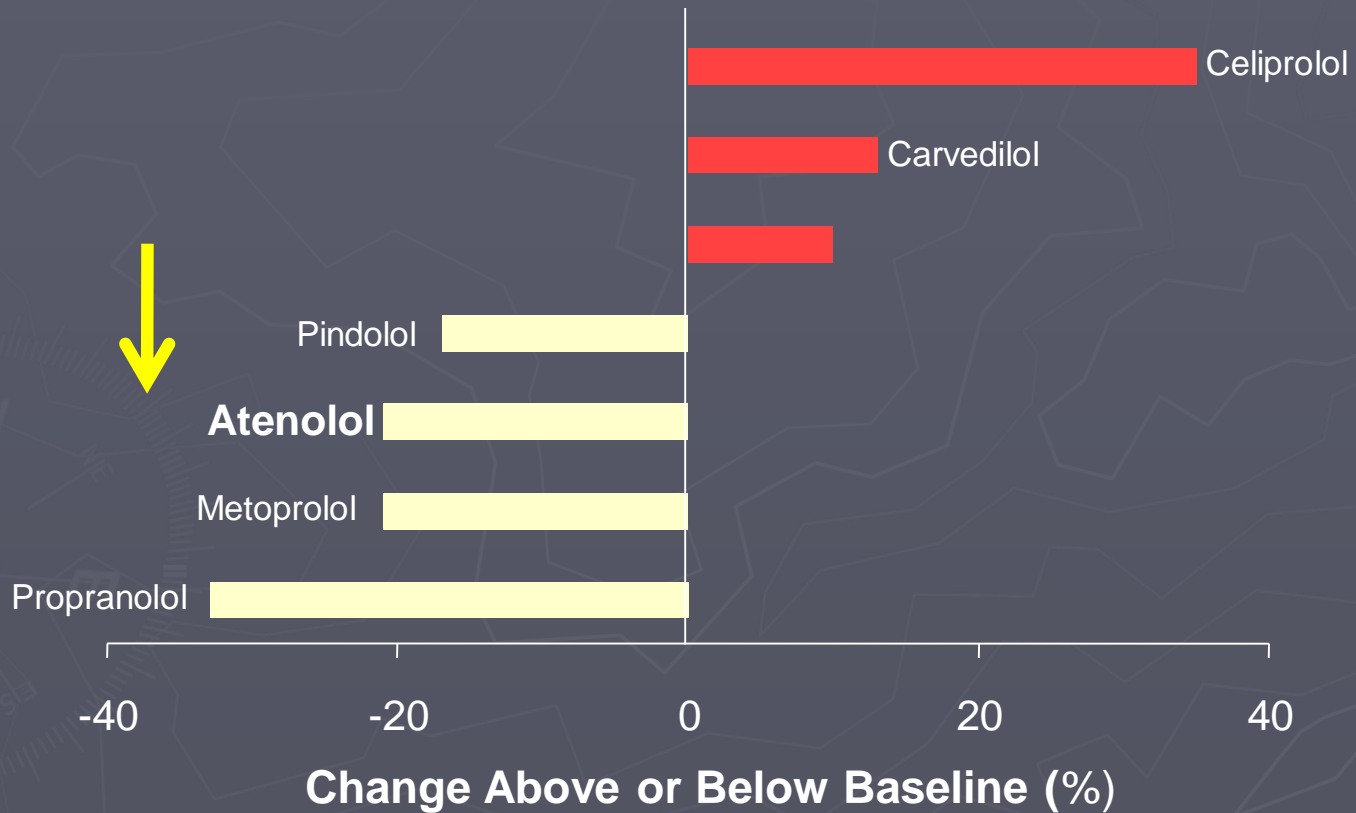
Prospective study of 12,550 patients with diabetes aged 45 to 64 and followed for 6 years. Multivariate analysis of 3804 who had hypertension at baseline.

LIFE. Losartan intervention For Endpoint Reduction; ARIC. Atherosclerosis Risk in Communities.

Comparison

¹Dahiof B, et al. Lancet. 2002;359:995-1003. Gress TW. Et al. N Engl J Med. 2000;342:90

EFFECT OF BETA BLOCKER ON INSULIN SENSITIVITY



NEW ONSET DIABETES: TRIALS

Forest plot of trials using thiazide and β -blocker combination therapy and reported incidence of diabetes



T/B Thiazide- β -blocker combination

† DerSimonian-Laird risk ratio (RR)

Heterogeneity, $p < 0.001$; Size, $p = 0.82$

1/3 1/2 1 2 3
 Favours Risk ratio Favours
 alternative T/B

ASCOT-BPLA: PRIMARY AND SECONDARY END POINTS

(Prototype: Atenolol)



Patients with new or prior diabetes were = **3x more likely to have a CV event** than those without diabetes.

Beta blocker in Diabetic and pre diabetic

- **Worsening of glycemic control**
 - **Induced new cases of diabetes**
 - **Masking of hypoglycemic symptoms**
 - **Other metabolic adverse effects (dyslipidemias)**
 - **Less nephro-protective than ACE inhibitors**
-

Beta blocker in young



Different beta blockers and sexual dysfunction v/s placebo

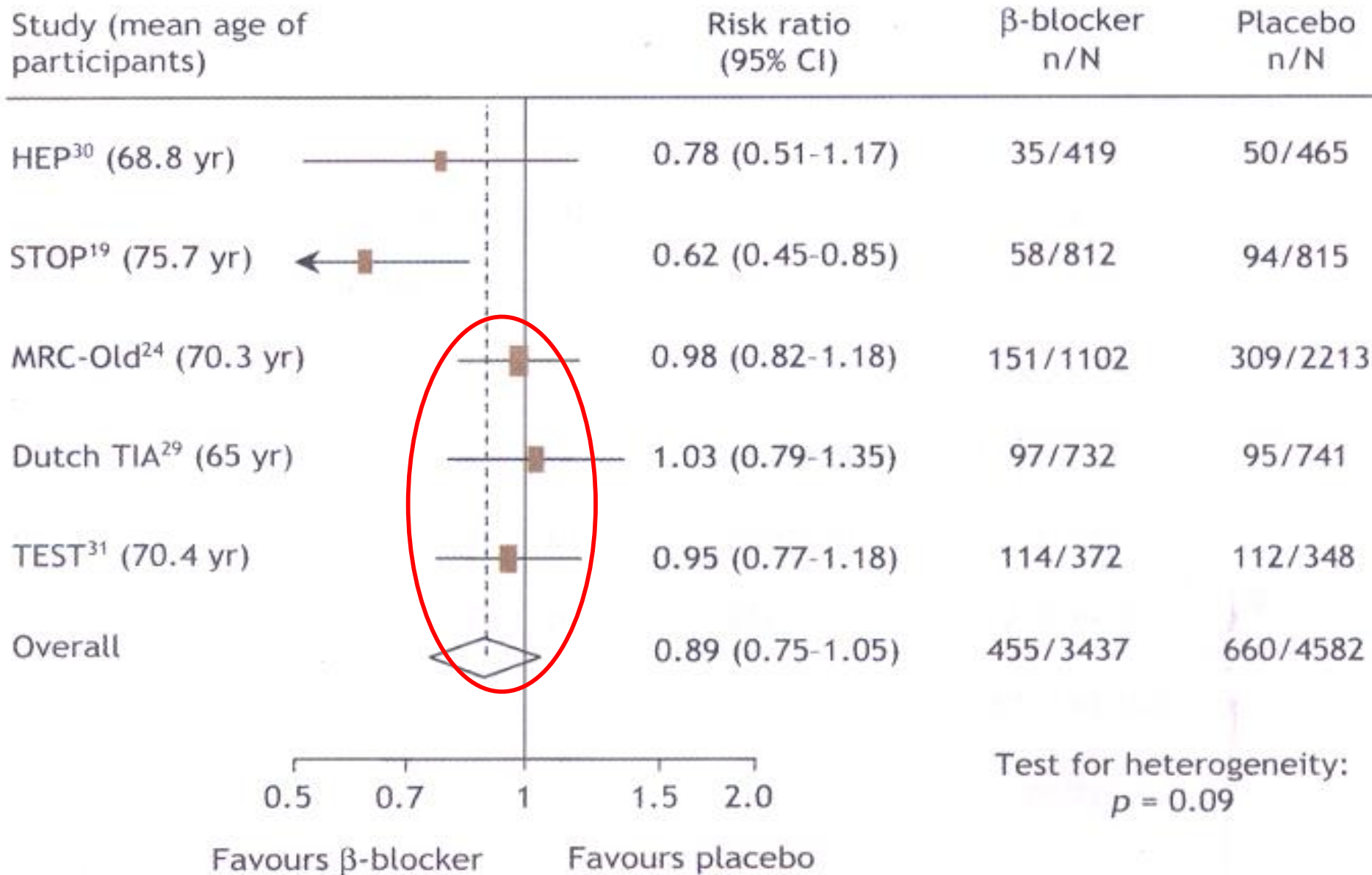
Beta blockers	sexual dysfunction %increase v/s placebo	references
Carvedilol	13.5	Fogari et al 2001
Propranolol	5.0	MRC- 1995
Atenolol	3.0	Silvestri et al 2003
Bisoprolol	0.0	Boeckman et al 1992

Beta blockers in elderly



- Decreased density of Beta receptors results in decreased efficacy in the elderly.
 - Vasodilating BB do not just work by blocking the Beta Receptors.
-

B



Meta-Analysis of Prospective Clinical Trials in Hypertension in the Elderly

Outcome	Active Treatment	Control	Odds Ratio and 95% Confidence Interval
First Drug	# Trials	Events/ Patient	Events/ Patients

All Cause Mortality

Diuretics	7	681/5838	907/6618
β-blockers	2	227-1521	384/2678

0.4 0.6 0.8 1.0 1.2 1.4

Beta blocker in obese patient



- Traditional Beta Blockers **may results in 1.2 Kg/Yr weight gain** due to
 - Reduced resting energy expenditure, and
 - Thermogenesis
(by as much as 10% in some trials).
-

Traditional β Blocker Effects on Peripheral Vasculature

Peripheral Vasoconstriction

Unopposed α_1 stimulation

Increased Total Peripheral Resistance

Decreased Renal Blood Flow

Decreased microvascular surface area within skeletal muscle for insulin-mediated entry of glucose

Erectile Dysfunction

Bell DSH. Endocrinologist. 2003;13:116-123. Packer M. Prog Cardiovasc Dis. 1998;41:39-52. Man In't Veld AJ. Am J Hypertens. 1998;1:91-96.

What about guidelines ?

COCHRANE ON BB in HTN

(Prototype: Atenolol)

- The review, published online January 24, 2007, bases this conclusion on ***"the relatively weak effect of beta blockers to reduce stroke and the absence of an effect on coronary heart disease when compared with placebo or no treatment"*** and ***"the trend toward worse outcomes in comparison with calcium-channel blockers, renin-angiotensin-system inhibitors, and thiazide diuretics."***
- Most of the evidence for these conclusions comes from trials where atenolol was the beta blocker used, and it is not known at present whether there are differences between the different subtypes of beta blockers or whether beta blockers have differential effects on younger and elderly patients.

COCHRANE ON BB in HTN

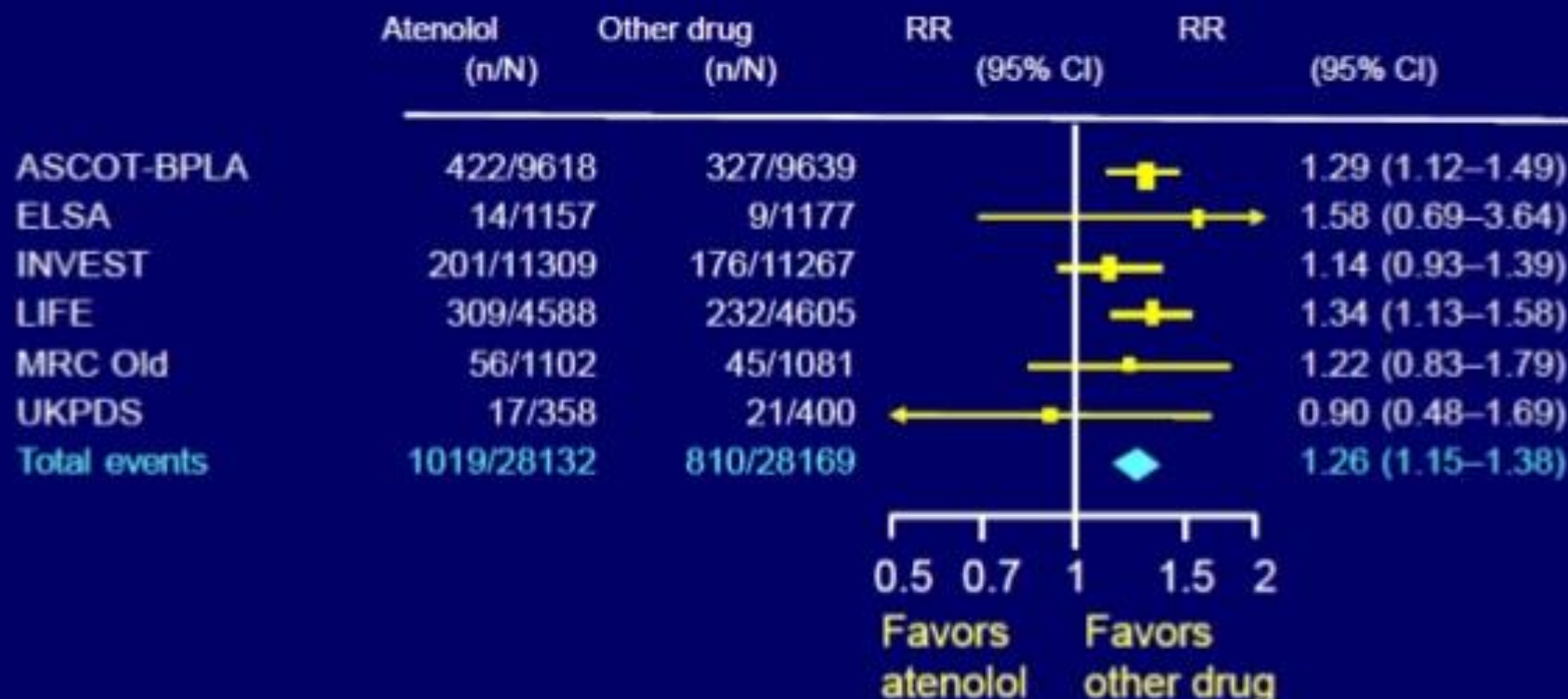
(Prototype: Atenolol)

- Results showed that the **risk of all-cause mortality was not different** between first-line beta blockers and placebo, diuretics, or inhibitors of the renin angiotensin system but was **higher for beta blockers compared with calcium blockers**.

Comparative drug	RR of all-cause mortality for beta blockers	95% CI
Placebo	0.99	0.88-1.11
Diuretics	1.04	0.91-1.19
ACE inhibitors/ARBs	1.10	0.98-1.24
Calcium blockers	1.07	1.00-1.14

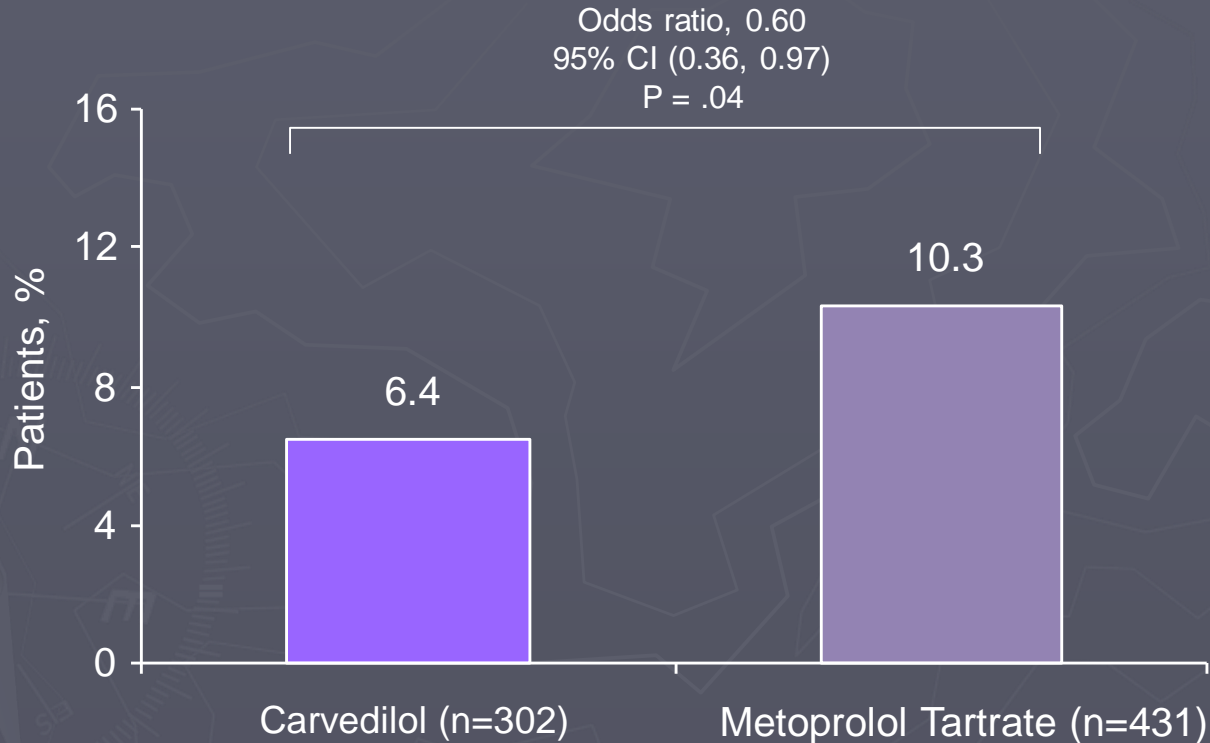
β -Blocker Meta-analysis

Stroke: Atenolol vs Other Antihypertensive Agents



ASCOT-BPLA, Anglo-Scandinavian Cardiac Outcomes Trial–Blood Pressure Lowering Arm; CI, confidence interval; ELSA, European Lacidipine Study on Atherosclerosis; INVEST, International Verapamil-Trandolapril Study; LIFE, Losartan Intervention For Endpoint reduction; MRC, Medical Research Council; RR, relative risk; UKPDS, United Kingdom Prospective Diabetes Study.

Development of Microalbuminuria in Previously Normoalbuminuric Participants



*81% of patients did not have microalbuminuria at screening.

Bakris GL. et al. JAMA. 2004;292:2227-2236.

Summary : *BB may be considered in HTN*

- **Younger individual with increased sympathetic drive**
- **Younger woman with child bearing age**
- **Intolerance and contraindication to ACE I and ARB**
- **In these circumstance initial therapy is with BB and second drug is required add CCB rather than thiazide type diuretic to avoid metabolic disturbance**

BETA BLOCKERS IN HTN – WHERE DO THEY STAND??

- **Atenolol may not be** as a first line drug in uncomplicated HTN.
- **NOT ALL BETA BLOCKERS ARE SAME.**
- The outcomes seen in the recent clinical trials seem to be more of a **DRUG EFFECT than a CLASS EFFECT!!**
- **Newer BB, esp. vasodilatory** BB like nebivolol may be given consideration
- Lack of clinical data on these drugs has limited their recommendation by international guidelines.
- BB **can remain a first line drug** in HTN **in HF** (? Dual benefit).