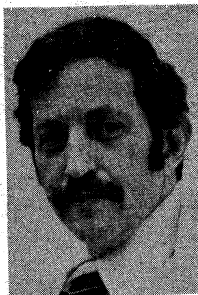


Anticoagulant Drugs:

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This overview of the complex subject of anticoagulant therapy introduces a series of articles that will explore the roles of various drugs in the treatment and possible prevention of thrombosis. The modes of action of heparin, warfarin derivatives, and the new antiplatelet compounds will be discussed in relation to their effect on clotting mechanisms in the veins and arteries and also in relation to their use against a condition that is receiving considerable attention — diffuse, intravascular coagulation. The clinical indications and contraindications for each drug will be delineated, and the results of some of the latest research will be explained.

Thrombosis of arteries and veins is one of the foremost causes of disability and death. Perhaps the most effective way of treating and preventing these conditions is by the use of anticoagulants. And although heparin is effective and widely used, other drugs, such as the warfarin derivatives and compounds that act on the blood platelets, are coming into favor as more is learned about the seemingly endless complexities of blood coagulation.

Highly important has been the discovery that thrombotic disease is in reality two diseases, or perhaps three. One must separately consider venous

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