

10710 COMPETITIVE PROBLEMS IN THE DRUG INDUSTRY

Patients with renal insufficiency are apt to be unusually sensitive to digoxin. See Action Section for mechanism.

PRECAUTIONS

"Potassium depletion" sensitizes the myocardium to digitals and toxicity is apt to develop even with usual dosage. Hypokalemia also tends to reduce the positive inotropic effect of digitals.

Potassium wastage may result from diuretic, corticosteroid, hemodialysis and other therapy. It is apt to accompany malnutrition, old age and long-standing congestive heart failure.

"Acute myocardial infarction," severe pulmonary disease, or far advanced heart failure are apt to be more sensitive to digitals and more prone to disturbances of rhythm.

"Calcium" affects contractility and excitability of the heart in a manner similar to that of digitals. Calcium may produce serious arrhythmias in digitalized patients.

"Myxedema"—Digitals requirements are less because excretion rate is decreased and blood levels are significantly higher.

"Incomplete AV block," especially patients subject to Stokes Adams attacks, may develop advanced or complete heart block. Heart failure in these patients can usually be controlled by other measures and by increasing the heart rate.

"Chronic constrictive pericarditis," is apt to respond unfavorably.

"Idiopathic hypertrophic subaortic stenosis" must be managed extremely carefully. Unless cardiac failure is severe it is doubtful whether digitals should be employed.

"Renal insufficiency" delays the excretion of digitals and dosage must be adjusted accordingly in patients with renal disease.

Note: This applies also to potassium administration should it become necessary.

Electrical conversion of arrhythmias may require adjustment of digitals dosage.

ADVERSE REACTIONS

Cynecomastia, uncommon.

Overdosage or toxic effects. Gastrointestinal-- anorexia, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea are the most common early symptoms of overdosages in the adult (but rarely conspicuous in infants). Uncontrolled heart failure may also produce such symptoms. Central Nervous System - headache, weakness, apathy, visual disturbances.