

Hypotension

Hippo-BP

By blocking calcium channels and consequentially relaxing smooth muscle in vasculature, these medications can lead to the side effect of hypotension.

Constipation

Corked Con-toilet

Calcium channel blockade in this drug class leads to decreased smooth muscle motility and can manifest as constipation. This occurs more often with verapamil than with diltiazem.

Peripheral Edema

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Peripheral edema is an annoying, common side effect of these medications. It occurs due to arteriolar dilation, leading to capillary hypertension, which causes fluid extravasation into tissues.

Gingival Hyperplasia

Gums and Teeth Wind-up Toy

Verapamil is known for having the side effect of gingival hyperplasia, which is described as an enlargement and overgrowth of the gums.

Nursing Consideration

Medication Education

Medication Educator

It is important to provide medication education to the patients. Inform them to notify health care providers of peripheral edema, and patients should monitor swelling in ankles and feet. They should not crush or chew sustained-release oral medications. Patients should avoid grapefruit juice, as it can raise blood levels and lead to toxicity.