

ACE INHIBITORS

■ WHAT ARE ACE INHIBITORS?

"ACE" is short for angiotensin-converting enzyme. ACE inhibitors are medications that help prevent your body from producing too much of a natural chemical called angiotensin II. Some common generic and brand names include:

- Benazepril (Lotensin)
- Captopril (Capoten)
- Enalapril (Vasotec)
- Lisinopril (Prinivil, Zestril)

■ WHAT ARE THEY USED FOR?

ACE inhibitors are used to:

- treat high blood pressure;
- treat heart failure and related conditions such as a low ejection fraction (EF);
- reduce the damage from a heart attack; and
- prevent kidney damage (for example, from diabetes).

■ HOW DO THEY WORK?

ACE inhibitors block an enzyme that is needed for angiotensin I to be converted into angiotensin II. Angiotensin II can have harmful long-term effects on your heart and blood vessels. It can cause blood vessels to narrow and can also raise blood pressure.

Taking ACE inhibitors can relax the arteries; lower blood pressure; and lessen work for the heart.