

ANTIARRHYTHMICS

■ WHAT ARE ANTIARRHYTHMICS?



Antiarrhythmics affect the electrical system in your heart. You can understand the purpose of antiarrhythmics by looking at the root words of the term.

anti = counter or against

arrhythmia = an abnormal heartbeat or heart rhythm

Some generic and brand names of common antiarrhythmia drugs include:

- Amiodarone (Cordarone)
- Flecainide (Tambocor)
- Procainamide (Procanbid)
- Sotalol (Betapace)

■ WHAT ARE THEY USED FOR?

Antiarrhythmias are used to prevent and treat arrhythmias (abnormally fast or slow heartbeats, or heart rhythms). They are also used to keep the heart from beating dangerously fast or to restore normal heart rhythm.

■ HOW DO THEY WORK?

Antiarrhythmia medications work by changing the electrical activity in the heart. The purpose is to restore a normal heart rhythm, or to prevent abnormally fast rhythms.