

BLOOD PRESSURE VARIABILITY

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Abstract

For a given patient, there is second to second, minute to minute, hour to hour, diurnal and seasonal variation in blood pressure. Until recently, intraindividual visit-to-visit variability of blood pressure has been dismissed as random fluctuation. This simplistic concept was challenged by demonstrating that visit-to-visit blood pressure variability, independent of average blood pressure, was a powerful risk factor for stroke. Moreover, other studies have consistently shown adverse outcomes with high variable blood pressure both in patients with and without coronary artery disease. In addition, antihypertensive therapies are currently available with lower blood pressure variability (the smoothness index). It is therefore time to focus not just on blood pressure but also on its variability to optimize care.

Keywords

blood pressure; mortality; variability