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### **1. Long-Term Regulation of Blood Pressure**

There are several physiological mechanisms that regulate blood pressure in the long-term, the first of which is the renin-angiotensin-aldosterone system (**RAAS**).

#### **Renin-Angiotensin-Aldosterone System (RAAS)**

*Renin* is a peptide hormone released by the granular cells of the **juxtaglomerular apparatus** in the kidney. It is released in response to:

- Sympathetic stimulation
- Reduced sodium-chloride delivery to the distal convoluted tubule
- Decreased blood flow to the kidney

Renin facilitates the conversion of angiotensinogen to angiotensin I which is then converted to angiotensin II using angiotensin-converting enzyme (**ACE**).

Angiotensin II is a potent vasoconstrictor. It acts directly on the kidney to increase sodium reabsorption in the proximal convoluted tubule. Sodium is reabsorbed via the sodium-hydrogen exchanger. *Angiotensin II* also promotes release of **aldosterone**.

ACE also breaks down a substance called **bradykinin** which is a potent vasodilator. Therefore, the breakdown of bradykinin potentiates the overall constricting effect.

Aldosterone promotes salt and water retention by acting at the distal convoluted tubule to increase expression of **epithelial** sodium channels. Furthermore, aldosterone increases the activity of the basolateral sodium-potassium ATP-ase, thus **increasing** the electrochemical gradient for movement of sodium ions.

More sodium collects in the kidney tissue and water then follows by osmosis. This results in decreased water excretion and therefore increased blood volume and thus blood pressure.

### **Anti-Diuretic Hormone (ADH)**

The second mechanism by which blood pressure is regulated is release of Anti Diuretic Hormone (ADH) from the OVLT of the hypothalamus in response to **thirst** or an increased plasma osmolarity.

ADH acts to increase the permeability of the collecting duct to water by inserting **aquaporin channels** (AQP2) into the apical membrane.

It also stimulates sodium reabsorption from the thick ascending limb of the loop of Henle. This increases water reabsorption thus increasing plasma volume and decreasing osmolarity.

## **2. Pulmonary circulation**

Pulmonary circulation is the system of transportation that shunts de-oxygenated blood from the heart to the lungs to be re-saturated with oxygen before being dispersed into systemic circulation. Deoxygenated blood from the lower half of the body enters the heart from the inferior vena cava while deoxygenated blood from the upper body is delivered to the heart via the superior vena cava. Both the superior vena cava and inferior vena cava empty blood into the right atrium. Blood flows through the tricuspid valve into the right ventricle. It then flows through the pulmonic valve into the pulmonary artery before being delivered to the lungs. While in the lungs, blood diverges into the numerous pulmonary capillaries where it releases carbon dioxide and is replenished with oxygen. Once fully saturated with oxygen, the blood is transported via the pulmonary vein into the left atrium which pumps blood through the mitral valve and into the left ventricle.

With a powerful contraction, the left ventricle expels oxygen-rich blood through the aortic valve and into the aorta: This is the beginning of systemic circulation.

### 3. **Circle of Willis**

The circle of Willis encircles the stalk of the pituitary gland and provides important communications between the blood supply of the forebrain and hindbrain (i.e., between the internal carotid and vertebro basilar systems following obliteration of primitive embryonic connections). Although a complete circle of Willis is present in some individuals, it is rarely seen radiographically in its entirety; anatomical variations are very common and a well-developed communication between each of its parts is identified in less than half of the population.

### 4. **Splanchnic Circulation**

The splanchnic circulation is composed of gastric, small intestinal, colonic, pancreatic, hepatic, and splenic circulations, arranged in parallel with one another. The three major arteries that supply the splanchnic organs, celiac and superior and inferior mesenteric, give rise to smaller arteries that anastomose extensively. The circulation of some splanchnic organs is complicated by the existence of an intramural circulation.

Redistribution of total blood flow between intramural vascular circuits may be as important as total blood flow. Numerous extrinsic and intrinsic factors influence the splanchnic circulation. Extrinsic factors include general hemodynamic conditions of the cardiovascular system, autonomic nervous system, and circulating neuro-humoral agents. Intrinsic mechanisms include special properties of the vasculature, local metabolites, intrinsic nerves, paracrine substances, and local hormones. The existence of a multiplicity of regulatory mechanisms provides overlapping controls and restricts radical changes in tissue perfusion.

### 5. **Coronary Circulation**

Coronary circulation, part of the systemic circulatory system that supplies blood to and provides drainage from the tissues of the heart. In the human heart, two coronary arteries arise from the aorta just beyond the semilunar valves; during diastole, the increased aortic

pressure above the valves forces blood into the coronary arteries and thence into the musculature of the heart. Deoxygenated blood is returned to the chambers of the heart via coronary veins; most of these converge to form the coronary venous sinus, which drains into the right atrium.

## 6. **Cutaneous Circulation**

The cutaneous circulation is the circulation and blood supply of the skin. The skin is not a very metabolically active tissue and has relatively small energy requirements, so its blood supply is different to that of other tissues.

Some of the circulating blood volume in the skin will flow through will flow through **arteriovenous anastomoses (AVAs)** instead of capillaries. AVAs serve a role in temperature regulation. In this article we shall consider the different adaptations of the cutaneous circulation, and its role in body temperature control.

## 7. **CARDIOVASCULAR ADJUSTMENT THAT OCCURS DURING EXERCISE**

During exercise, the heart is subjected to intermittent hemodynamic stresses of pressure overload, volume overload, or both. To normalize such stress and to meet the systemic demand for an increased blood supply, the heart undergoes morphological adaptation to recurrent exercise by increasing its mass, primarily through an increase in ventricular chamber wall thickness. This augmentation of heart size is primarily the result of an increase in the size of individual terminally differentiated cardiac myocytes. Adaptive remodeling of the heart in response to exercise typically occurs with preservation or enhancement of contractile function. This contrasts with pathologic remodeling due to chronic sustained pressure overload (e.g., during hypertension or aortic stenosis), which can proceed to a loss of contractile function and heart failure.

