

**Nitric oxide and the action of ethanol on the potential difference across the stomach wall**

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Potential difference across the stomach wall (*PD*) is determined by the gastric electrolyte mucosal barrier. The decrease in the *PD* by “barrier breakers”, e.g. aspirin, ethanol, cholic acids is a sensitive index of the mucosal damage. We compared in anaesthetized Wistar rats the effect of two exogenous nitric oxide (NO) donors: glyceryl trinitrate (GTN) and molsidomine (MOL) on the *PD* and the injuring action of ethanol on the mucosal barrier. GTN and MOL given intragastrically alone did not significantly change the *PD* and did not damage the barrier, but both of the two NO donors reduce the *PD* drop evoked by ethanol and diminish the damaging action of ethanol on the gastric mucosa.