One direct-acting vasodilator, nitroprusside, is specifically used for those clients who have aggressive, life-threatening hypertension that must be quickly controlled. Nitroprusside, with a half-life of only 2 minutes, has the capability of lowering blood pressure almost instantaneously upon IV administration. It is essential to continuously monitor clients receiving this drug in order to avoid hypotension because of over-treatment. In conditions such as malnutrition or surgery or high rates of infusion, nitroprusside may lead to depletion of sulfur stores and accumulation of cyanide and its toxic metabolites.