



CONGESTIVE HEART FAILURE

What Is Heart Failure?

Heart Failure means the heart is having trouble pumping as much blood as the body needs. This causes blood to back up in the veins. And when not treated, fluid will back up in the heart and lungs.

What Causes Heart Failure?

The most common causes of heart failure include:

- High blood pressure
- Heart muscle damage after a heart attack
- Irregular heart rhythm
- Emphysema
- Kidney or liver failure
- Some drugs
- Coronary artery disease
- Cardiomyopathy (damaged heart muscle)
- Diabetes
- Too much salt in the diet
- Anabolic steroid use

What Are The Symptoms?

- Tired, weak, dizzy spells, fainting
- Short of breath
- Sleeping propped-up
- Frequent urination at night
- Abdominal pain/tenderness
- Cough (dry or wet)
- Wheezing
- Swelling in feet, ankles, legs
- Weight gain

What Are The Risk Factors?

Risk factors increase your chance of getting a disease.

- Smoking
- High blood pressure
- Drinking too much alcohol
- Using drugs such as steroids, decongestants, and anti-inflammatory drugs on a frequent basis
- Being overweight
- Inactive lifestyle
- Eating too much salt

How Is Heart Failure Treated?

In addition to taking your **medications exactly as ordered**, there are lifestyle changes that you can do to help control your disease and improve your life.

- Avoid Alcohol
- If overweight, lose weight
- Exercise program
- **Daily Weights** each morning after you go to the bathroom and before you eat.
- Quit Smoking
- Eat a healthy diet – low in fat and salt, and high in fiber

How Do I Know If My Heart Failure Is Getting Worse?

- **Shortness of breath** is more than usual. Notice if you have to use more pillows at night to breathe.
- **Weight Gain:** You gain 2 to 3 pounds in one day or more than 5 pounds in a week.
- **Swelling in hands or legs** is more than usual. Notice if your socks, shoes or rings feel too tight.
- **Abdomen is fuller.** Notice if your belt gets too tight.
- **Cough more at night**, or have to sit up on the side of the bed to get your breath.

IF YOU HAVE ANY OF THESE PROBLEMS CALL THE PROVIDER LISTED BELOW

- ❖ Your symptoms get worse
- ❖ You notice new symptoms from your medication
- ❖ Breathing becomes more difficult, or you start coughing at night
- ❖ You get tired faster
- ❖ You begin urinating less often
- ❖ You gain 2 or more pounds in one day, or 3 to 5 pounds in 1 week
- ❖ Your feet or ankles swell more than usual
- ❖ You have dizzy spells or you faint
- ❖ You have tightness or pain in your chest

Your health care provider is _____

Monday through Friday 8:00 am – 4:00 pm call _____