Health Promotion and Disease Prevention in Heart Failure Care

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Office of Patient Care Services

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VA

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Veterans Health Administration

Patient Care Services

Health Promotion and Disease Prevention

A Better Way to **LIVE**

Talk with your health care team about your goals.

Learn more at **www.prevention.va.gov**

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Be Tobacco Free

- Tobacco use increases risk of developing HF and mortality from HF
- Quitting smoking especially important for patients with HF
  - Nicotine has vasoconstrictor activity, can worsen hemodynamics, antagonize vasodilators
- Smoking cessation aids available
  - No increased CV risk from NRT, bupropion, varenicline

Limit Alcohol

- Heavy use of alcohol increases risk for HF
- General alcohol recommendations apply
  - No more than 2 drinks/day for men
  - No more than 1 drink/day for women
- No alcohol use if cardiomyopathy thought to be alcohol-related

Get Recommended Screening Tests and Immunizations

- Annual influenza immunization
- Pneumococcal immunization with PPSV23
  - Once at diagnosis
  - Repeat at age 65 after at least 5 years from last dose, if received previously
- Other recommendations as for general population groups

Strive for a Healthy Weight

- Overweight/obesity increases risk for HF
  - Likely due to increased risk for CVD, diabetes
- Weight management important for control of diabetes, other weight-related conditions
- "Obesity paradox" in patients with CVD, including HF
  - Better survival in patients with overweight/obesity
  - Underlying cause not clear
  - Class II/III obesity (BMI ≥35) may be associated with increased mortality

Eat Wisely

- Lack of studies about ideal level of sodium restriction in patients with HF
- Sodium restriction improves BP control, decreases K^+ wasting from diuretics
- Based on consensus, dietary sodium restriction to 2-3 g/day recommended
- Requires clear instructions about specific foods, cooking instructions

Be Physically Active

- HF-ACTION randomized controlled trial
  - 2331 patients with stable HF (LVEF of ≤35%)
  - Usual care vs. usual care plus aerobic exercise training (36 supervised sessions followed by home-based training)
  - Followed for 30 months

Be Physically Active

- Results
  - After adjustments for baseline prognostic factors, found modest reduction in all-cause and CV mortality and all-cause and HF hospitalizations
  - Also found modest improvement in self-reported health status and reduction in depression symptoms
  - No safety concerns from exercise
- Recommend physical activity/cardiac rehab for patients with class II/III HF without contra-indications
- Medicare now covers cardiac rehab for HF patients

Be Involved in Your Health Care

- Self-care/self-management critically important aspect of HF care
- Includes:
  - Managing medications
  - Daily monitoring of symptoms (daily weights, checking for edema, symptom severity, etc.)
  - Following dietary (salt, fluids, alcohol) recommendations
  - Following physical activity recommendations
  - Monitoring emotional state

Be Involved in Your Health Care

- Evidence about benefits of self-management interventions limited, inconsistent
- Self-care challenges
  - Anxiety, depression
  - Low health literacy
- Promoters of self-care
  - Skill development, behavior change
  - Social support
  - Systems of care

Self-Management Support for HF: A VHA Best Practice

Heart Fit BootCamp

- Supported by Cleveland VAMC (Brook Watts, MD, MS: PI)
- Grant from Specialty Care Services
- 4 sessions, 1 month apart
- Invite 12-15 Veterans; expect 8-10
- Engaging, interactive (NO lecturing)
- Focus on skill building

Heart Fit Boot Camps: Address 4 Key Elements of Self-Management

Symptom recognition and management

Managing medications and medication changes

Managing salt intake

Weighing daily

Each of the 4 Boot Camps Focus on Skill Development through Activities + Tools

Boot Camp	Skill Set Focused On	Activities	Take Home Tools and Reminders
Defend Your Heart	1) the symptoms of heart failure 2) how symptoms present 3) self-management strategies for symptoms 4) who to call when experiencing such symptoms	• Symptom Discussion in Two Teams • Family Feud Version of Symptoms • Creating Your Symptom Identification and Management Magnet	• HF symptom education sheets • Pens • Personalized Symptom and Management Magnet • Duffle bag with reminder message

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Boot Camp	Skill Set Focused On	Activities	Take Home Tools and Reminders
Pill Defense	1. Ability to manage medications (including what to do for refills and expired medications) 2. Ability to manage common changes to medication schedules	• Symptom Discussion in Two Teams • Family Feud Version of Symptoms • Creating Your Symptom Identification and Management Magnet	• Reading a Med Label • Refill instructions • Pill box if needed • Pill cutter • Magnifying card • Pill pad with reminder message • Alarm Clock • Cinch bag with reminder message

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Boot Camp	Skill Set Focused On	Activities	Take Home Tools and Reminders
Weigh In to Stay in the Game	Improving management skills related to weight monitoring and weight gain (e.g., quick vs. slow weight gain)	• Scales Differ • What's Wrong Game: Scale/Time/ Clothes? • What's Your Call: Call /No Call Calendar Game	• Calendar with weight zone space (chooses one of three options) • Set of three hand towels with reminder message • Reusable shopping bag with reminder message

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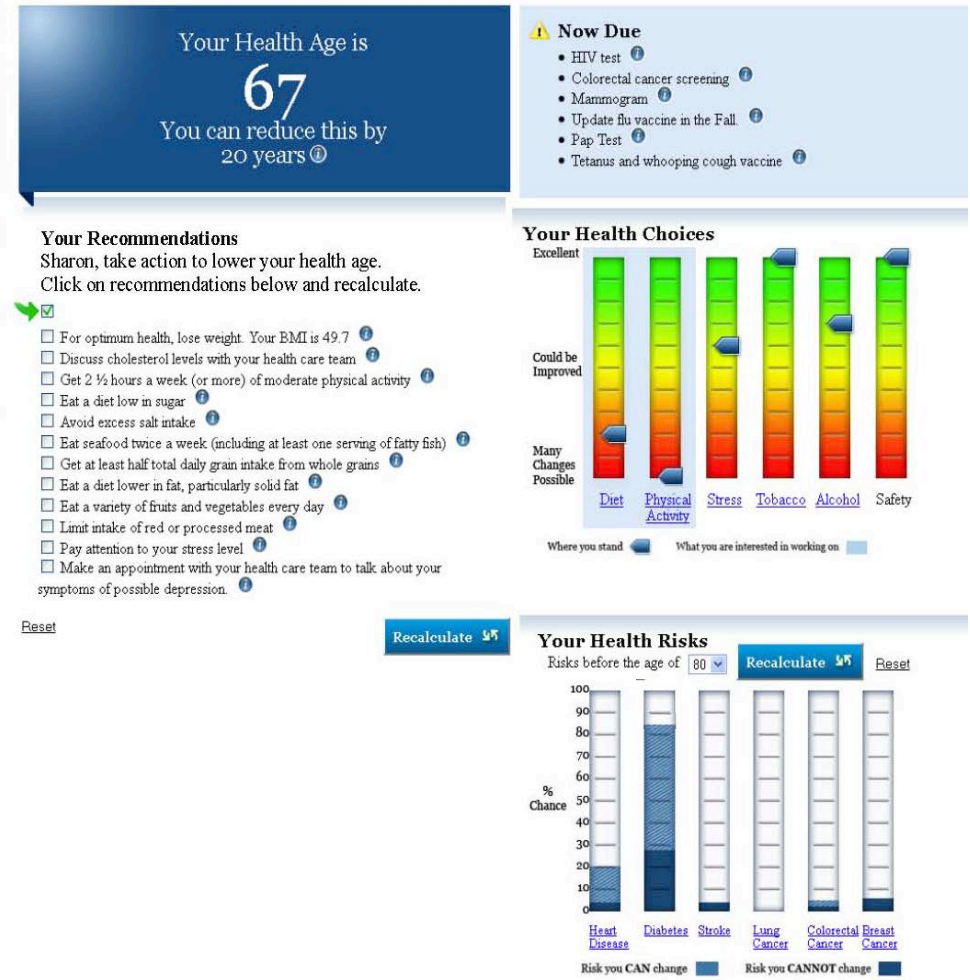
Boot Camp	Skill Set Focused On	Activities	Take Home Tools and Reminders
Eating and Snacking: Halt the Salt	1. Sodium counting and exchange food items for typical meals and snacks to better understand current sodium intake 2. Choices to lower sodium intake	• Serving Size and Total Sodium • Pick an Item and Complete a worksheet • Placemat Board Game	• Calculators • Magnifying bookmark • Hats with reminder message • How to Read a Nutrition Label • Reusable lunch carrier with reminder message

Veterans Health Library

- Available on My HealtheVet or www.veteranshealthlibrary.org
- Comprehensive collection of patient information (text, video)
- Content from Krames Staywell
- Reviewed by VHA SMEs
- Beginning work to integrate with CPRS

Health*e*Living Assessment

- Health risk assessment on My Health*e*Vet
- Set of questions customized to user
- Takes ~20 minutes
- Calculates a “health age”
- List of personalized *do-able* actions
- Instant *what-if* scenarios simulating healthy changes



Gateway to Healthy Living Program

- Beginning development of model program
- 1-2 sessions for Veterans
  - Introduce Healthy Living topics
  - Complete Health***e***Living Assessment
  - Teach SMART goal-setting, self-monitoring, problem solving skills
  - Evaluate need for further support and refer to appropriate programs/resources, as needed
- Participants leave with new skills, health behavior goal, action plan, follow-up steps