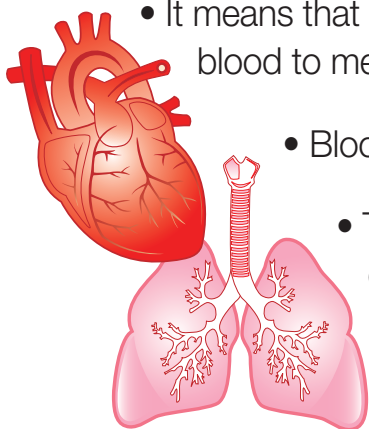
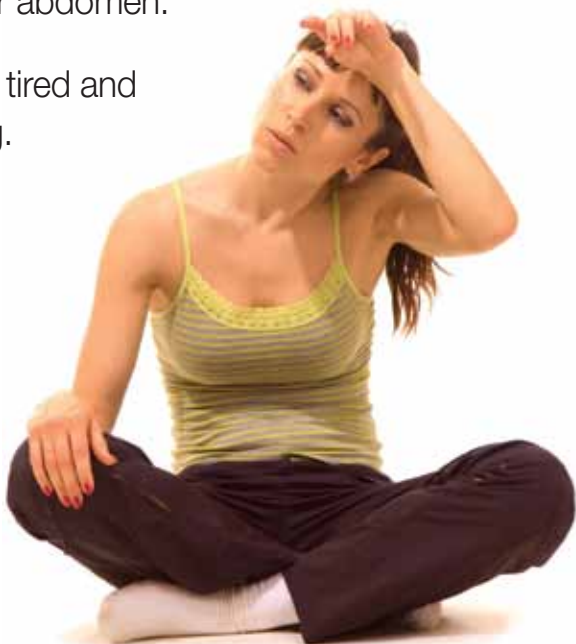


What does **heart failure** mean?

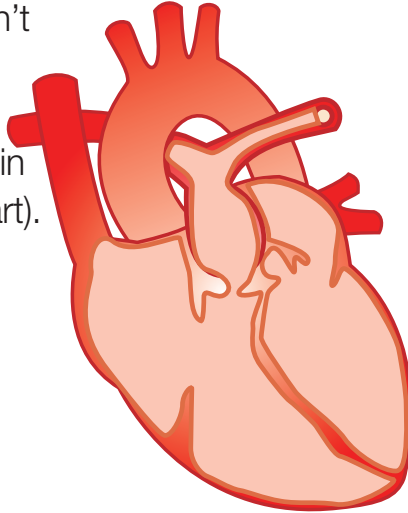


- It means that your heart does not pump enough blood to meet your body's needs.
- Blood can “back up” in your lungs.
- Too much blood in your lungs causes shortness of breath.
- You may cough more or wake up at night short of breath.
- Blood can also “back up” in other parts of your body.
- You may have swelling in your legs and feet or in your abdomen.
- You may also feel tired and not feel like eating.



Systolic Heart Failure:

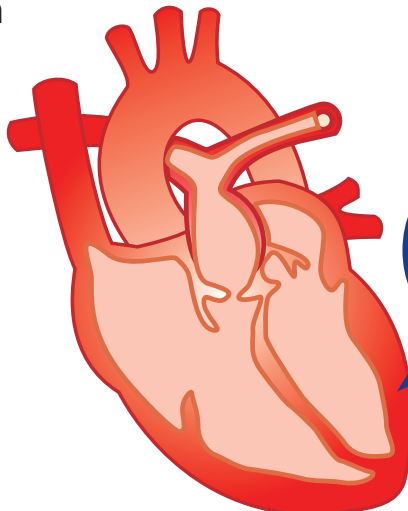
A weak heart muscle is known as systolic heart failure. Your heart doesn't pump out all the blood of the left ventricle (the main pump of the heart). Your EF is 40% or less.



Thin heart walls are a sign of Systolic Failure

Diastolic Heart Failure:

When your heart is thick and stiff you have diastolic failure. Your EF may be normal (over 40%), but your heart resists filling with blood because it cannot relax.



Thick heart walls are a sign of Diastolic Failure

Heart failure can be managed.

This booklet was put together to help you understand your role (“self-care”) in keeping your heart failure under control.

Self-care includes:

1. Taking your medicines as ordered by your doctor
2. Decreasing the amount of sodium in your diet
3. Avoid smoking and alcohol
4. Exercising and staying active
5. Checking your weight daily and taking action right away when your weight goes up
6. Monitoring yourself for symptoms and taking action right away when they occur
7. Seeing your doctor regularly

- It is important to understand the symptoms that you have when your heart failure worsens.
- You will tend to have the same symptoms each time your heart failure worsens.

Symptoms I have had are:



Medicines

- There are 4 types of medicines that are usually used to manage heart failure.
- You may be on more medicines than these.
- Your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist will give you more specific information about your medicine.
- Always check before taking over-the-counter medicine or herbal supplements.
- Some medicine can be harmful for patients with heart failure.
- Your nurse will work with you to make sure you understand all of your medicines.
- If you often forget to take your medicine, your nurse can show you different ways to help you remember to take your medicine at the right times.



Heart Failure Medicines

Diuretics (“water pills”)

[i.e. Lasix, Spironolactone, Bumex, Methazolamide]

These drugs work in your kidney and help you get rid of extra fluid and sodium through your urine.

I am taking: _____

ACE inhibitor *[i.e. captopril, monopril, lisinopril]* **or ARB** *[i.e. irbesartan, losartan, valsartan]*

These drugs work to open up blood vessels. This makes it easier for your heart to pump. Blood pressure is lowered. Use of ACE inhibitors for heart failure contributes to a longer, healthier life.

I am taking: _____

Beta blockers

[i.e. Metoprolol, Coreg]

These drugs work to improve heart muscle function and block chemicals that can make your heart failure worsen. Blood pressure is lowered. Use of beta blockers in heart failure contributes to a longer, healthier life.

I am taking: _____

Warfarin

[i.e. Coumadin]

Warfarin thins your blood to prevent blood clots. These blood clots can cause serious medical problems. You will need to have your INR or Protime regularly checked at your doctor’s office to monitor the levels of this medication.

I am taking: _____



Diet & Nutrition:

- *Sodium* makes your body retain fluid.
- Too much fluid makes your heart work harder and can make your heart failure worse.
- Your weight will increase and you may develop symptoms.
- Try to keep your sodium intake about 2000 milligrams (mg) per day or as ordered by your doctor.
- Salt is a major source of sodium. One teaspoon of salt contains 2400 mg of sodium!
- Your nurse or a dietitian will help you look at your own diet, read food labels, and can give you lists of foods that are high and low in sodium.
- Avoid alcohol as it can make your heart failure worsen.



- Some patients with heart failure should limit the amount of liquids they drink.

I should limit my liquids to:

How can I lower my sodium intake?

Check off the things you think you can do.

- Do not add salt to my foods during cooking.
- Take the salt shaker off of my kitchen table.
- Try other seasonings to add flavor such as lemon juice, onion or garlic powder, or herbs.
- Read food labels to see which foods are high in sodium

I will avoid high sodium foods such as:

- Canned soups and vegetables
- Hot dogs or packaged lunch meats
- Cheese and cheese spreads
- Deli meats such as ham
- Ketchup, soy sauce, salad dressings, barbeque sauce
- Frozen dinners that are high in sodium

I will eat lower sodium foods more often such as:

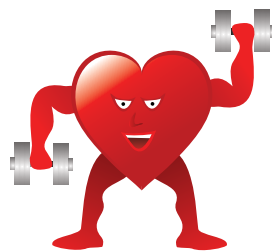
- Lean meats
- Low fat milk
- Reduced sodium cheese
- Cereals low in sodium
- Fresh fruits and vegetables



When going out to eat, I will:

- Choose items that are listed as “healthy choice” or “low sodium” on the menu
- Choose broiled or grilled foods instead of fried foods
- Ask for sauces and salad dressings “on the side”

Staying Active and Safe:



- Exercise provides many benefits for you when you have heart failure.
- Activities such as walking, bike riding, or swimming are good exercise options.



- Exercise will:
 - ♥ Improve your muscle tone
 - ♥ Strengthen your heart
 - ♥ Increase your energy
 - ♥ Make you feel better

- Before starting an exercise program, your condition should be stable.
- Your weight should be at baseline and you should not be experiencing symptoms.
- Start slowly and build up. Aim for 30 minutes total of activity everyday. Take periodic breaks.
- Stop if you have chest pain, severe shortness of breath, nausea, or dizziness.



You should monitor yourself for *fatigue* and *shortness of breath* when you exercise. Your nurse or therapist can teach you to use the Borg scale so that you can rate your shortness of breath and/or fatigue during activity and exercise.

Modified Borg Scale

Scale	Severity
0	No breathlessness/fatigue at all
1	Very Slight Breathlessness/Fatigue
2	Slight Breathlessness/Fatigue
3	Moderate Breathlessness/Fatigue
4	Somewhat Severe Breathlessness/Fatigue
5	Severe Breathlessness/Fatigue
6	
7	Very Severe Breathlessness/Fatigue
8	
9	Very Very Severe Breathlessness/Fatigue
10	Maximum Breathlessness/Fatigue

REPORT! Weight gain of **2–3 lbs** in one day or **5 lbs** in one week

A sudden increase in weight means that your body is retaining fluid. If your weight goes up, this is the time to TAKE ACTION. Do not wait for other symptoms to occur. An extra diuretic pill for a day or two is usually prescribed until your weight comes back down.



Action taken right away will help keep you out of the hospital.

If you do have a weight gain, think about possible reasons why. *Did I forget to take my medicine? Did I eat high sodium foods in the last few days?*

Your Action Plan:

Use this guide to help you report changes in your symptoms to your doctor or home care provider.



Reporting symptoms early may keep you out of the hospital.

You are doing **WELL** when:

- ♥ Your weight is stable
- ♥ You have no trouble breathing
- ♥ You can do your normal activities
- ♥ You have no changes in your symptoms

Call your doctor in the **NEXT 24 hours** when:

- ♥ Your weight goes up 2 – 3 pounds overnight
- ♥ You have new swelling in your feet, ankles, hands, or abdomen
- ♥ You have a dry, harsh cough that does not go away
- ♥ You use 2 or more pillows or a recliner to breathe better at night if this is different from how you usually sleep
- ♥ You feel more tired or have less energy than usual
- ♥ You have side effects from your medicines

Call your doctor **RIGHT AWAY** when:

- ♥ You have trouble breathing – *Call 911 for severe shortness of breath*
- ♥ You feel dizzy
- ♥ You feel very anxious
- ♥ *Call 911 if you have chest pain that does not go away*

My Personal Plan:

I would like to work on the following areas to manage my heart failure:

Monitoring My Weight

Taking My Medicines

Eating Healthy

Regular Exercise

Quit Smoking

My GOAL for the next month is:

Possible problems in meeting my goal:

Take this booklet with you to your doctor appointment.

Things that would help me meet my goal:

My confidence in being able to meet my GOAL:

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Not Confident *Very Confident*

For More Information:

Heart Failure Society of America

www.abouthf.org

1-651-642-1633

American Heart Association

www.americanheart.org

1-800-242-8721

For classes in your area:

www.centura.org

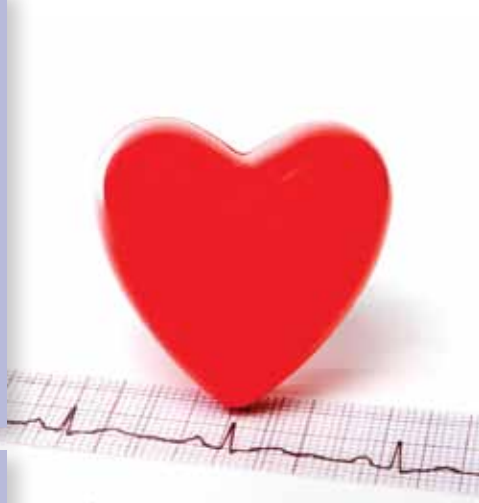
Smoking Cessation Resources:

CO Quitline:

1-800-639-7848

www.quitline.com

Talk to your doctor about medications to help you quit smoking.



Produced by:

*Quality Insights of Pennsylvania,
July 2005*

This booklet printed by:

*Centura Health with materials
prepared by OASIS Answers, Inc.*

Name and Phone Numbers

	Name	Phone
PCP		
Specialist		
Specialist		
Home Health		
Medical Equipment		

Don't hesitate to call your doctor!

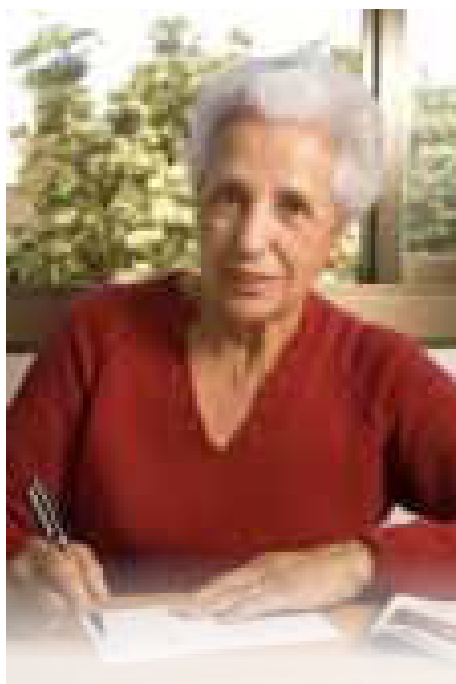
Here is what you can say:

Hi, I need to speak with Dr._____. I have gained ____ pounds overnight.

I have the following symptoms:

- increased shortness of breath
- new swelling in my feet, ankles, belly, or hands
- a dry harsh cough
- am more tired than usual

I think my heart failure is acting up and I need a call back today.



Heart Failure Symptom Tracker

Every day, watch for signs and symptoms that you are retaining water.

Call your doctor for:

- ♥ Weight gain of 2 – 3 pounds overnight OR 5 pounds in 1 week.
- ♥ Worsening symptoms (swelling, breathing, fatigue, lightheadedness, heart racing)

Weight at discharge: _____

Daily Weight Log and Symptom Tracker

Date	Missed Medicines	Weight	Blood Pressure & Pulse	Blood Sugar (if diabetic)	Symptoms OR Comments
Sun					
Mon					
Tues					
Wed					
Thurs					
Fri					
Sat					