

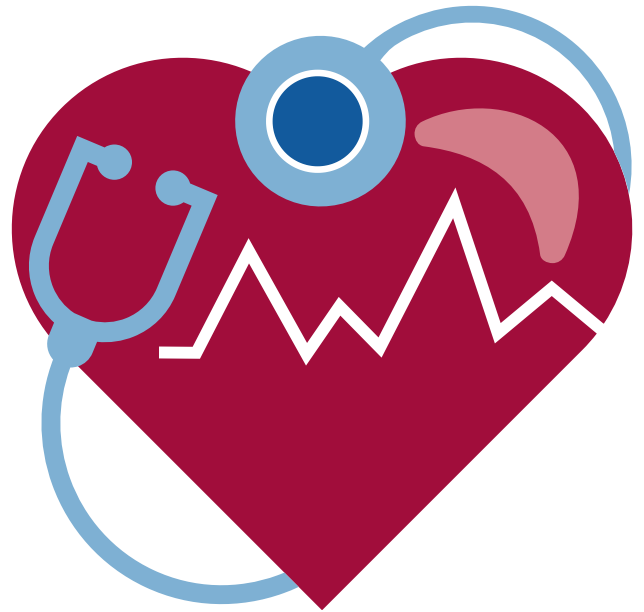
Congestive Heart Failure: A Guide

Understanding Heart Failure

Heart failure happens when the heart cannot pump enough blood to meet the body's needs. A healthy heart pumps out 50-70% of the blood it fills with.

Symptoms include:

- Swelling in legs
- Bloating in abdomen
- Tight pants
- Shortness of breath
- Needing to sleep upright
- Weight gain
- Confusion



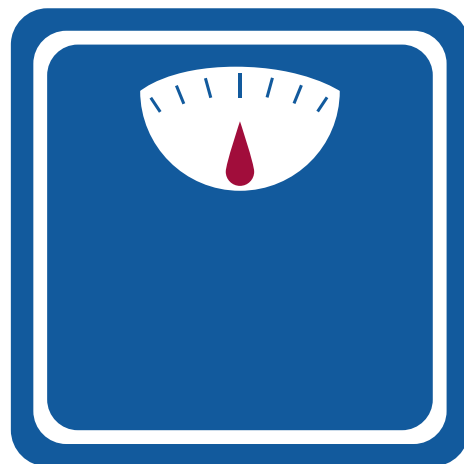
Types of Heart Failure

- **Systolic**—The heart cannot pump enough blood out.
- **Diastolic**—The heart cannot fill with enough blood.
- **Combined**—A mix of systolic and diastolic failure.
- **Valvular**—Caused by damage or defects in heart valves.

Managing Heart Failure

Weigh Yourself Daily

- Weigh every morning after using the restroom.
- Record your weight in a log or on a calendar.
- Call your doctor if you gain 3 lbs in a day or 5 lbs in a week or guidelines provided by your physician



Take Medications & Keep Appointments

- Take medications as prescribed. Do not stop without doctor approval.
- Keep a medication list with you.
- Attend all doctor appointments.

Manage Fluid Intake

- Extra fluids strain the heart. Follow fluid restrictions if prescribed.
- Limit alcohol and caffeine.
- Fluids include: water, milk, coffee, tea, juice, ice cubes, Jell-O, soup, popsicles, ice cream..

Stay Active

- Exercise can boost energy and ease stress on the heart.
- Ask your doctor what is safe.
- Stop and rest if you feel tired.
- Call 911 if you have chest pain, shortness of breath, or dizziness that doesn't go away with rest.

Watch Your Sodium Intake

Too much salt (sodium) makes fluid retention worse. Limit sodium to 1,500-2,000 mg per day.

Salt Content in Common Amounts

- 1/4 teaspoon salt = 575 mg sodium
- 1/2 teaspoon salt = 1,150 mg sodium
- 1 teaspoon salt = 2,300 mg sodium

Real-Life Equivalents

- 12 oz can of Diet Coke = 40 mg sodium
- McDonald's Cheeseburger = 745 mg sodium
- Hungry Man Salisbury Beef Steakettes = 1520 mg sodium

Salt Substitutes Warning

Some salt substitutes contain potassium chloride, which may raise potassium levels. Consult your doctor before using.

High-Sodium Spices to Avoid

- Garlic salt, seasoned salt, sea salt
- BBQ sauce, soy sauce, Worcestershire sauce
- Meat tenderizers, taco seasoning

Low-Sodium Seasonings to Try

- Black pepper, chili powder, oregano
- Lemon juice, fresh garlic, onion powder
- Mrs. Dash (salt-free seasoning)

High-Sodium Foods to Avoid

- Canned meats, fish, chicken
- Frozen dinners
- Processed cheese
- Ketchup, canned soups, soft drinks



Heart-Healthy, Low-Sodium Foods to Try

Grains

- Most breads (avoid salted tops)
- Cold cereals like shredded wheat, bran flakes, puffed rice
- Pasta, rice, and cooked cereals

Vegetables

- Fresh or frozen without added sauces or salt
- Low-sodium canned vegetables and homemade soups

Fruits

- Fresh or canned (without added sugar or salt)

Dairy

- Nonfat, skim, or 1% milk
- Low-fat yogurt
- Small amounts of natural cheese (not processed)

Protein

- Fresh meat and fish (check labels for frozen options)
- Tuna packed in water
- Beans, peas, and edamame
- Eggs (especially egg whites)



Snacks & Desserts

- Fresh fruit, angel food cake, fruit crisps/crumbles
- Unsalted pretzels, popcorn, or nuts
- Low-fat pudding

Fats

- Unsaturated oils like canola, olive, sunflower, or peanut oils
- Tub or liquid margarine

Condiments

- Fresh or dried herbs and spices
- Vinegar, lemon/lime juice
- Hot sauce and salt-free seasoning blends

Following these guidelines can help manage heart failure and improve your quality of life.