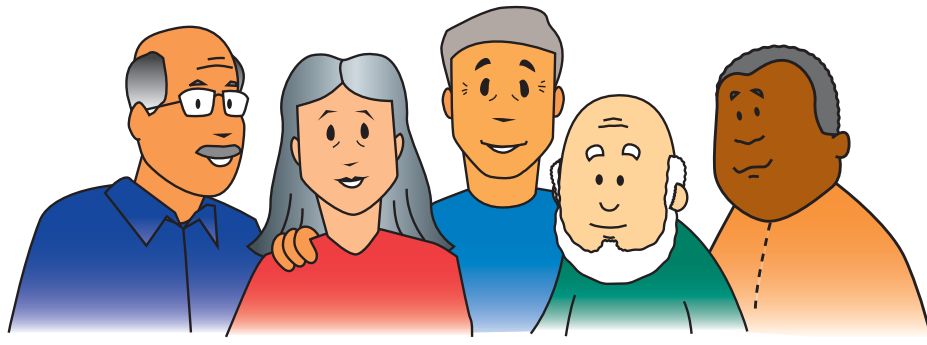




My Heart Failure Care Book



Name _____



My Heart Failure Care Book



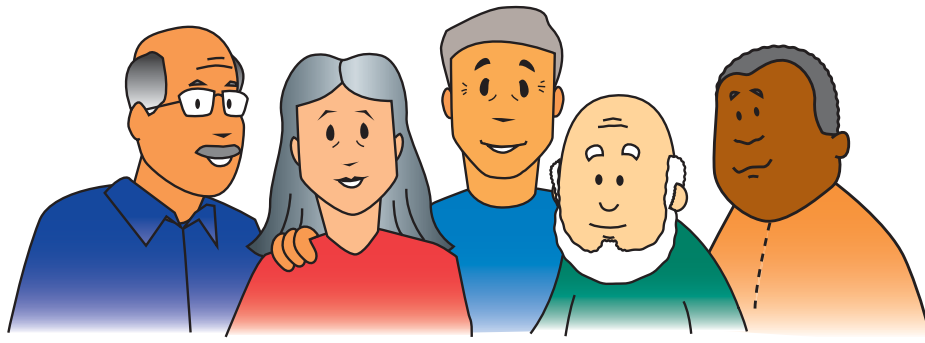
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Table of contents

How to use your Heart Failure Care Book.	1
What is heart failure?.	3
Your treatment for heart failure.	21
More things you can do to feel better.	37
Notes	47

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How to use your Heart Failure Care Book



Many people are living with heart failure. You are not alone.

Heart failure is a serious problem, but you can take steps to control it. This workbook will show you how.

Ask your doctor or care manager to work with you while you use this book.

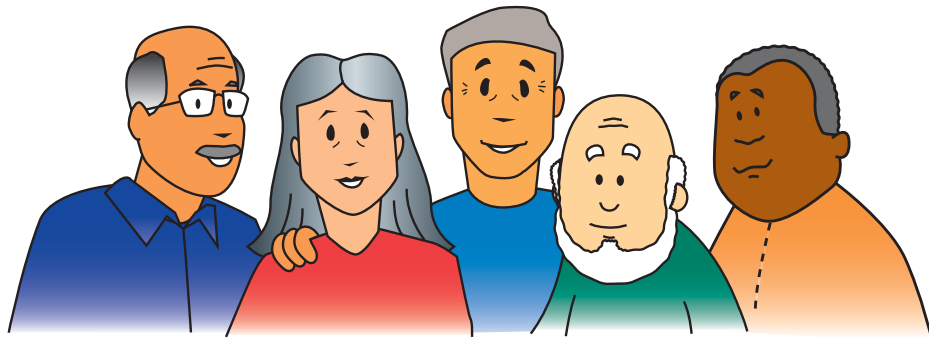
My doctor's name: _____

My doctor's phone number: _____

My care manager's name: _____

My care manager's phone number: _____

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What is heart failure?



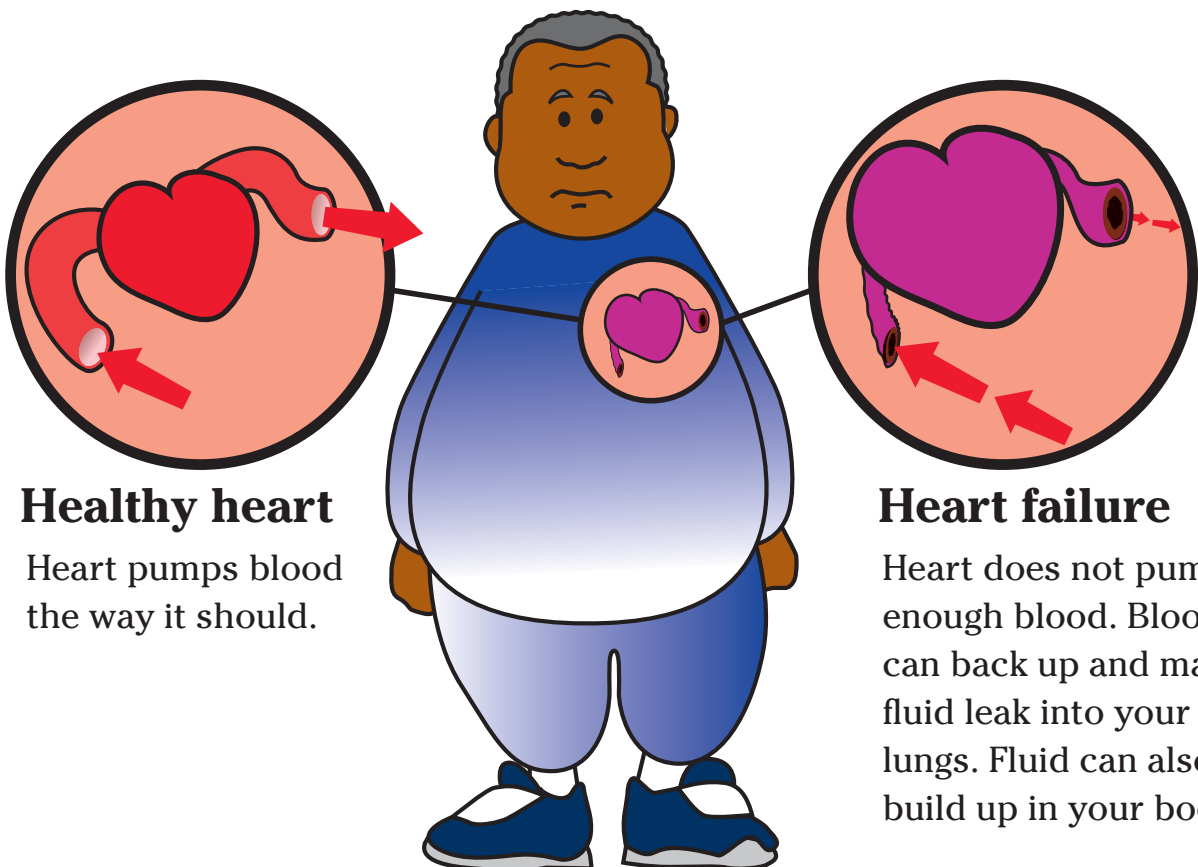
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What is heart failure?

Heart failure means your heart is not pumping blood as well as it should.

Because your heart does not pump enough blood, your body does not get the oxygen and food it needs. This makes you feel out of breath, tired, and weak.

Without treatment, your heart may get weaker. You may have less energy. And you may not be able to live an active life.



Healthy heart

Heart pumps blood the way it should.

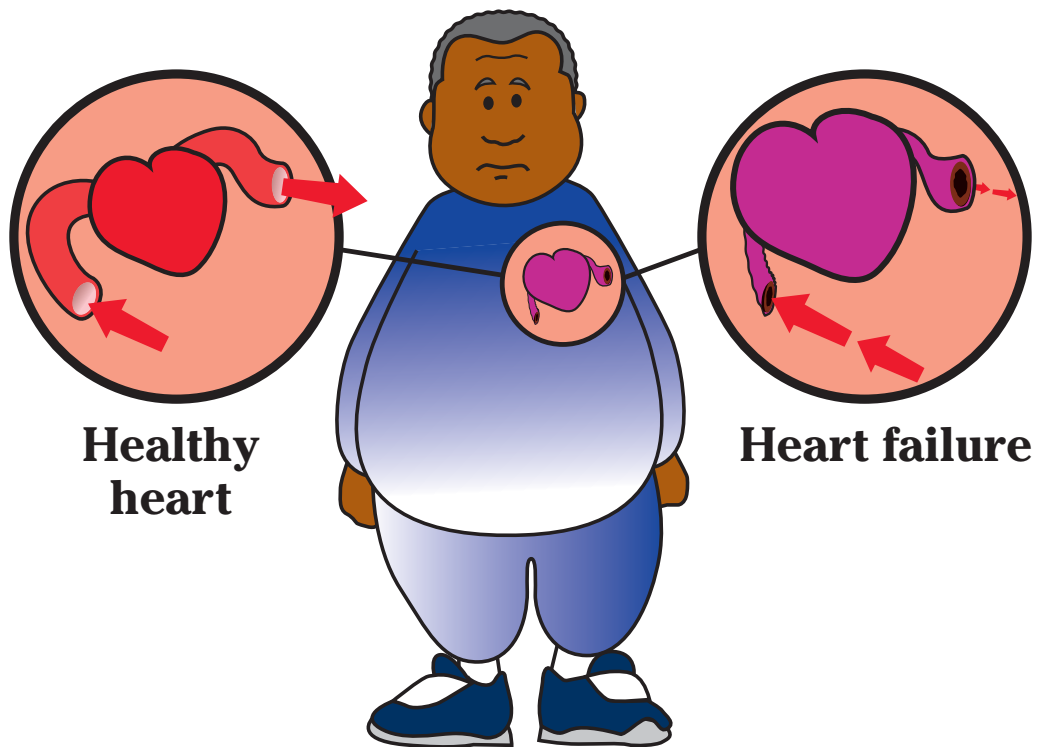
Heart failure

Heart does not pump enough blood. Blood can back up and make fluid leak into your lungs. Fluid can also build up in your body.


What causes heart failure?

- High blood pressure, which makes the heart work harder
- Not enough blood getting to the heart muscle
- A heart attack that injures the heart

There can be other causes.




Ask your doctor what caused your heart failure. Knowing the cause will help you get the treatment you need.

My heart failure was caused by: 

What may make your heart failure worse?

Here are some things that may make heart failure worse.

Check the things that apply to you. Ask your doctor what you can do about them. 

I smoke.

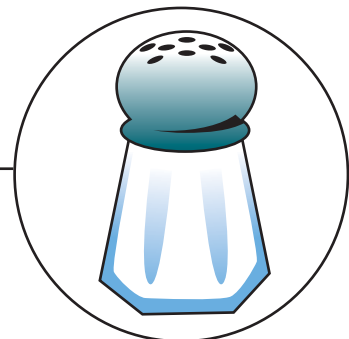


I am overweight.



I eat too much salt.

Learn how to eat less salt. See pages 30 to 31.



I do not exercise.

Learn how to exercise. See page 32.



What are the signs of heart failure?

Here are some signs of heart failure.

Check off those that happen to you. Talk to your doctor about them.



I feel out of breath, with or without exercise.



I gain weight.



I have swelling in my legs and feet or around my waist.

To check for swelling, push in on your skin. You have swelling if the mark that your finger made stays for more than a few seconds.



I feel tired or weak all the time.

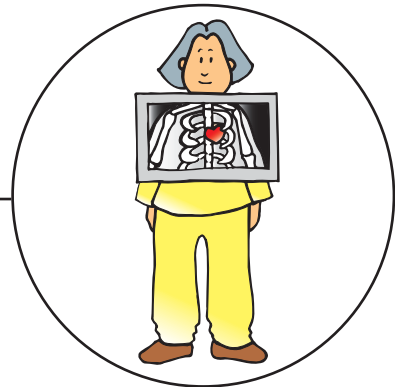


How does the doctor find out you have heart failure?

Your doctor will first do a physical examination to check you for signs of heart failure.

If you have them, your doctor will order tests for you.
Some common tests are:

- A chest x-ray.



- An electrocardiogram (e-LEK-tro-KAR de-o-gram), also called an EKG or ECG.



- An echocardiogram (eko-KAR-de-o-gram).



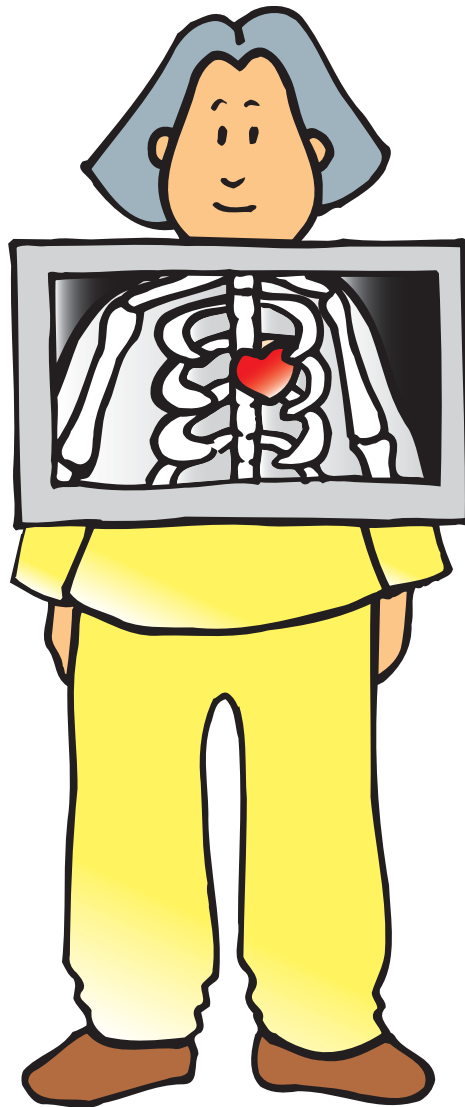
These tests can help your doctor plan your treatment.

What will a chest x-ray show?

A chest x-ray is a picture of your heart and lungs. It will show if:

- Your heart has gotten bigger.
- You have fluid in your lungs.

Both of these can happen with heart failure.

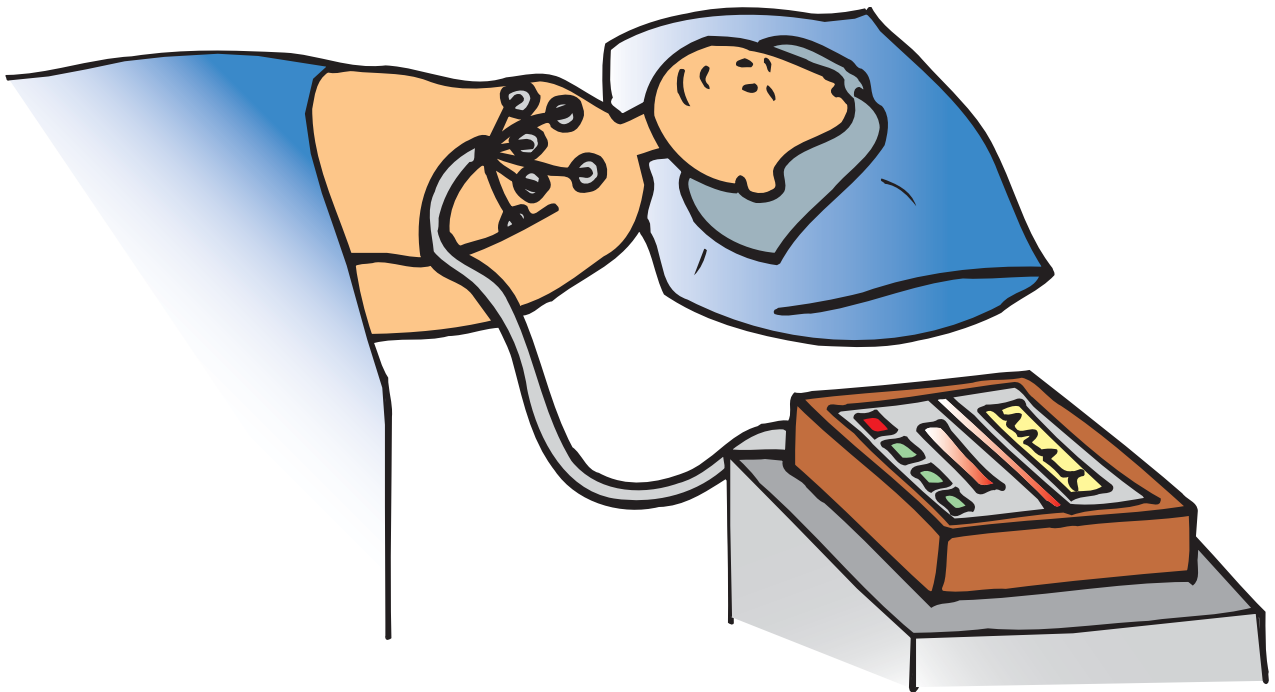


What is an EKG?

Your heart has an electrical system like a house does.

Electricity makes your heart beat faster when you are in a hurry. It makes your heart beat slower when you rest.

An EKG machine shows if your heart's electrical system is working right. This test does not hurt.



What is an echocardiogram (eko-KAR-de-o-gram)?

This test looks at how your heart is built and how it moves.

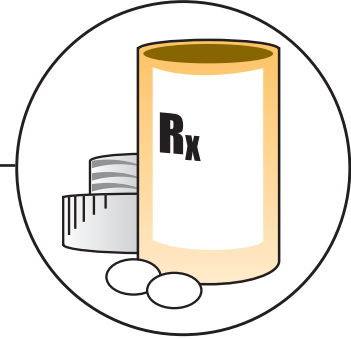
The test does not hurt. It can be used to measure how much blood your heart pumps out (also called ejection fraction).



How is heart failure treated?

Heart failure is treated with:

- Medicines.

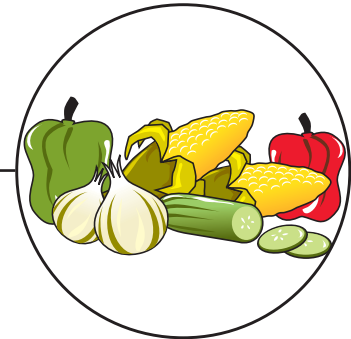


- Changes you make in the way you live.

— Get exercise. Talk to your doctor first.



— Eat healthy, low-salt, low-fat foods.



— Get help to stop smoking.



You are a very important part of your treatment for heart failure.

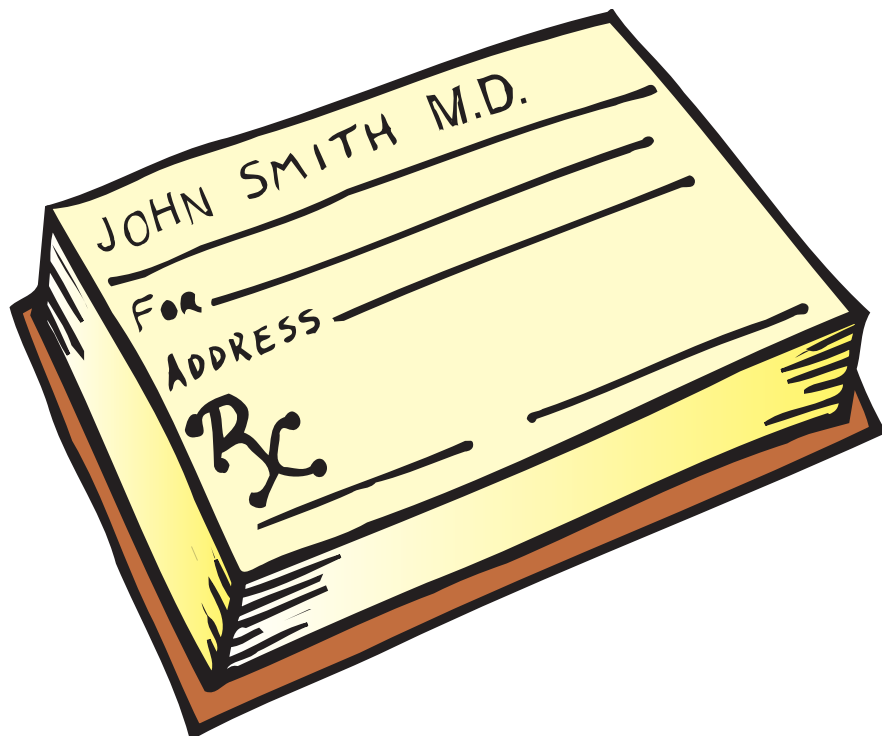
What medicines are used to treat heart failure?

Many kinds of medicines are used to help people with heart failure feel better.

Talk to your doctor about which are best for you. You may need to take more than one. Also, ask your doctor any questions you have about these medicines.

Doctors may prescribe:

- Diuretics (dy-u-RET-iks) or water pills.
- ACE inhibitors.
- Beta blockers.
- Digitalis (dij-i-TAL-is).
- ARBs [angiotensin receptor blockers].



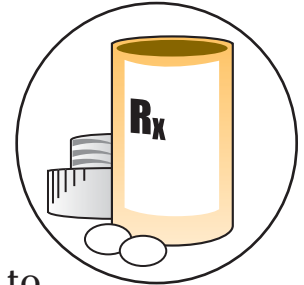
What should you know about diuretics?

Diuretics are also called water pills.

They help remove extra fluid from your body.

They do this by making you go to the bathroom more often. This helps your heart by giving it less fluid to pump.

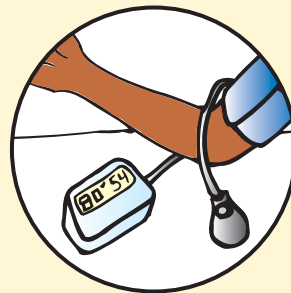
When you start to take a water pill, your doctor will ask you to weigh yourself each day. This will tell your doctor how well the pill is working. It will help the doctor know if you are taking the right dose.



Common side effects from these medicines



Feeling tired



Too low blood pressure

Water pills may make you lose potassium. You may need a pill to replace it. This mineral helps your heart and other muscles work. Your doctor may use blood tests to check your potassium.



If you are having any side effects, talk to your doctor.

What should you know about ACE inhibitors?

ACE inhibitors help lower your blood pressure.

Lower blood pressure means that your heart does not have to work as hard to pump blood.

These medicines can help keep your heart failure from getting worse. They may help you live longer.



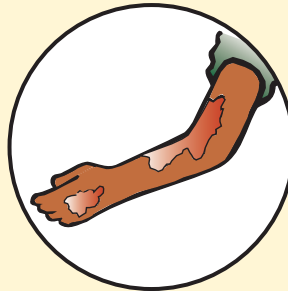
Common side effects from these medicines



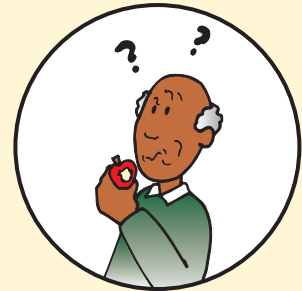
Cough



Feeling weak
or dizzy



Skin rashes



Changes in the
way things taste

This kind of medicine can affect your kidneys. Your doctor may order blood tests to see how well your kidneys work.

The blood tests will also show if you have too much potassium in your blood. Potassium is a mineral that helps your heart and other muscles work. But too much can hurt you.



If you are having any side effects, talk to your doctor.

What should you know about beta blockers?

Beta blockers make your heart beat slower.

That means that your heart does not have to work as hard.

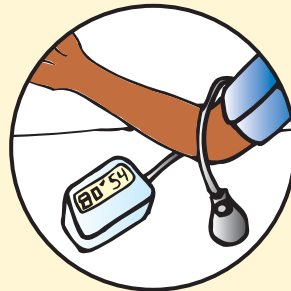
These medicines can help keep your heart failure from getting worse. They may help you live longer.



Common side effects from these medicines



Feeling tired
or weak



Blood pressure too low



Making signs
of asthma worse,
if you have asthma



If you are having any side effects, talk to your doctor.

What should you know about digitalis?

Digitalis helps your heart pump more strongly.

This helps make your signs of heart failure go away.

Your doctor may do blood tests to make sure that you have the right amount of medicine in your body.



This drug can cause changes in your heartbeat. Your heartbeat may get slower or may not beat evenly. Your heart can also feel as if it is pounding.

If that happens, you should call your doctor right away.



Common side effects from these medicines



Not wanting
to eat



Bad taste
in the mouth



Feeling sick to
your stomach
and throwing up



Headaches



If you are having any side effects, talk to your doctor.

What should you know about ARBs?

ARBs help lower your blood pressure.

That means that your heart does not have to work as hard to pump blood.



Common side effects from these medicines

- ARBs appear to have fewer side effects than ACE inhibitors that act in a similar way.



If you are having any side effects, talk to your doctor.

Your treatment for heart failure



Your treatment for heart failure



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Your medicines to treat heart failure

Medicine can help control heart failure.

Learn the names of your medicines and what they are for.

My heart failure medicines are:





For your medicines to work well, you should:

- Take them every day just as your doctor tells you to.
- Talk to your doctor if you have side effects.

Do not make changes unless your doctor says to. You should not:

- Change the time that you take your medicine.
- Change how much medicine you take.
- Stop taking your medicine.

What you need to know about your medicine

It is important for you to know what your medicines are for. You should also know the answers to all these questions about your medicine.

- What is the name of the medicine?
- What is the dose of the medicine?
- Does this medicine cause side effects?
- How much should I take each time?
- How often should I take this medicine?
- How do I take this medicine?



Compare each new prescription to your old one. If they are not the same, talk to your doctor.

Medicines you should not take

Some medicines may cause problems for you.

Tell your doctor about all the medicines you take. This includes medicines doctors prescribe and those you buy without a prescription, like vitamins, pain relievers, or cold, cough, or flu medicines.


Ask your doctor about any medicines you should not take. These include medicines called NSAIDs. You might take these for a headache, arthritis, or fever.



Talk to your doctor or pharmacist before you take any new medicine.

Your Daily Plan

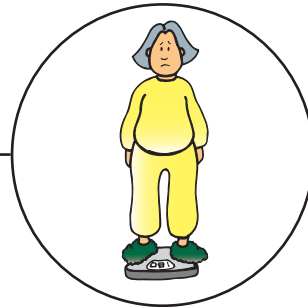
To feel your best, you should do certain things every day.

Check off those that you will do. 

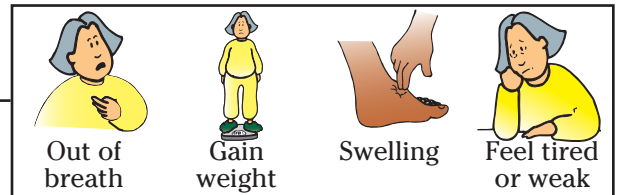
Take my medicine just as my doctor told me to.



Weigh myself.



Check my signs.



Eat less salt.



Avoid alcohol.



Follow the exercise plan my doctor gave me.



Your Daily Plan: Know your medicines.

Keep a list of the medicines you take.

(EXAMPLE)

I take:

Name of medicine: quinapril

How much I take: 1 tablet

When I take it: 2 times a day at breakfast and dinner

I take it for: high blood pressure



I take these medicines:

1. Name of medicine: _____

How much I take: _____

When I take it: _____

I take it for: _____

2. Name of medicine: _____

How much I take: _____

When I take it: _____

I take it for: _____

3. Name of medicine: _____

How much I take: _____

When I take it: _____

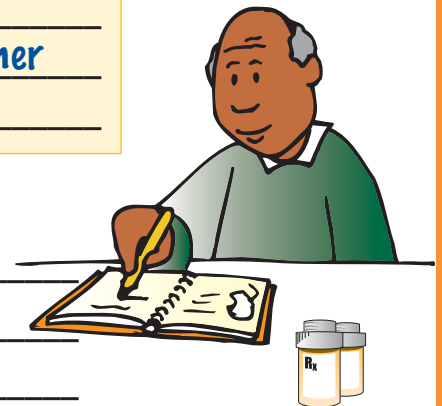
I take it for: _____

4. Name of medicine: _____

How much I take: _____

When I take it: _____

I take it for: _____



You can write your medicines on the lines above, in a notebook, or on the “Notes” pages in the back of this workbook. You can also make copies of this page if you take more than 4 medicines.

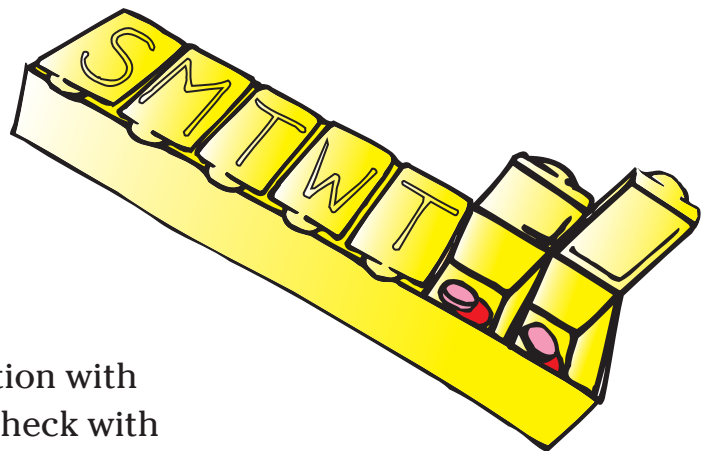
Your Daily Plan: Manage your medicines.

You may take more than one medicine to treat your heart failure.

For medicines to work, you need to take them the right way.

Here are some tips:

- Keep a list of your medicines. Write the name, how much you take, and when you take each one.
- Try to take medicines at the same time as you do something else.
 - When you eat
 - When you brush your teeth
 - At your coffee break
 - At bedtime
- Use a pill box with a space for each day of the week. Fill the pill box on the same day each week.
- Plan to get refills at least 3 days before you run out. Mark the day on your calendar.
- Compare any refill or new prescription with your old one. If they are different, check with your doctor.



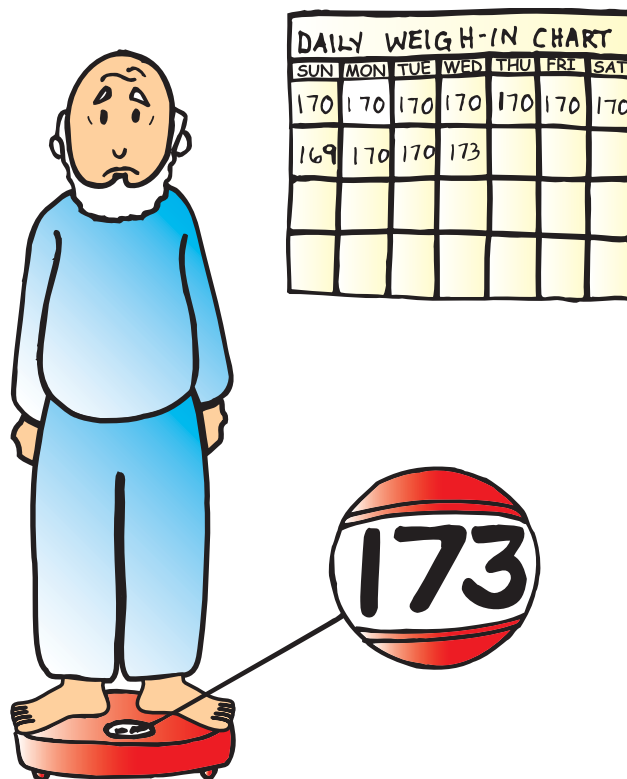
Your Daily Plan: Weigh yourself.

It is important that you weigh yourself every day.

Weight gain can be an early sign of fluid build-up. You can treat the signs.

Follow these steps:

- Weigh yourself in the morning.
 - **After** you go to the bathroom
 - **Before** you eat breakfast
- Always use the same scale.
- Write down your weight on your Daily Calendar right away.
- Look at what you wrote down yesterday to see if there is a change.
- Call your doctor if you have gained 2 or more pounds in the last day or two. Also call your doctor if you have gained 4 or more pounds in a week.



Your Daily Plan: Eat less salt.

Salt makes your body hold on to liquid.

The extra fluid may cause:

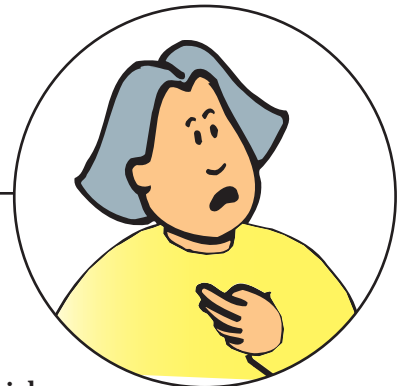
- Swelling.



- Weight gain.



- Shortness of breath.



Your heart has to work harder to pump the extra liquid.



Ask your doctor how much salt (sodium) you can eat each day.

Your Daily Plan: Eat less salt.

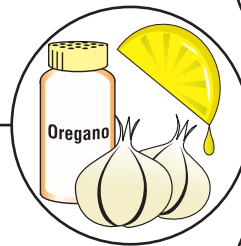
How should you eat less salt?

Do:

- Use salt substitutes. Check with your doctor first.



- Use herbs, spices, or lemon juice instead of salt.



- Use low-salt recipes.



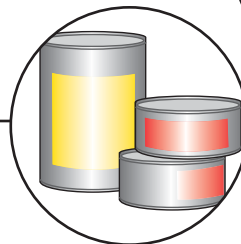
- Read food labels. Salt is listed as sodium. Avoid foods with more than 140 mg per serving.



- Eat fresh vegetables and fruit when you can.



- Drain and rinse canned foods.



Do not:

- Add salt to your food.



- Keep a salt shaker on the table.

- Eat seasonings that taste salty.





Your Daily Plan: Exercise.

Exercise can:

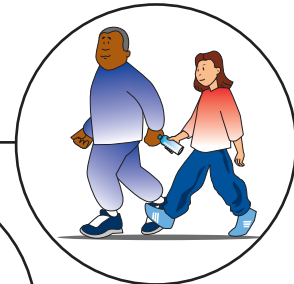
- Give you more energy.
- Help you to do more before you get signs of heart failure.



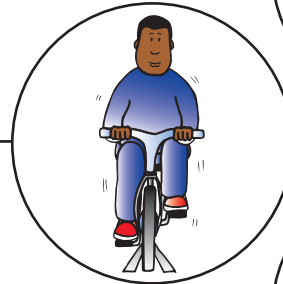
Ask your doctor to help you choose an activity. Be sure to start slowly and build up slowly.

Check off the things you would like to try.  

Walk



Ride a bicycle



Swim



Other exercise I would like to try:

Try to be active every day.



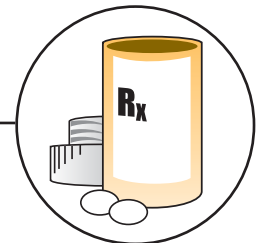
If you start to get more signs when you exercise, STOP! Call your doctor right away!

Your Daily Calendar

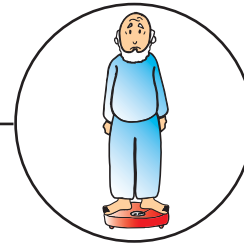
Keep a daily calendar. This will help you control your heart failure and feel better.

You will find your daily calendar on the next page. Use it each day to make sure that you have:

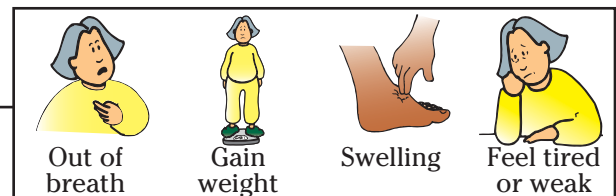
- Taken your medicines.



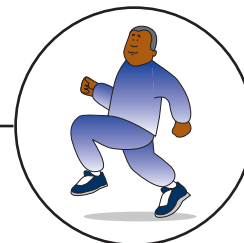
- Weighed yourself.



- Checked your signs of heart failure.



- Exercised as your doctor told you to.



Call your doctor if:

- You gain 2 or more pounds in one or two days or 4 or more pounds in a week.
- Your signs of heart failure get worse.

Your Daily Calendar: Use it every day.

My Daily Calendar

EXAMPLE

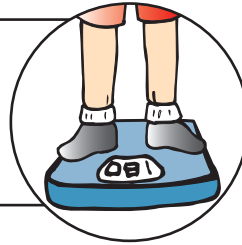
My Daily Calendar May 3, 2004 (date)	My Daily Calendar _____ (date)	My Daily Calendar _____ (date)	My Daily Calendar _____ (date)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Took all medicines (see the list you made on page 27)	<input type="checkbox"/> Took all medicines (see the list you made on page 27)	<input type="checkbox"/> Took all medicines (see the list you made on page 27)	<input type="checkbox"/> Took all medicines (see the list you made on page 27)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Checked signs	<input type="checkbox"/> Checked signs	<input type="checkbox"/> Checked signs	<input type="checkbox"/> Checked signs
My weight today is 170 pounds.	My weight today is ____ pounds.	My weight today is ____ pounds.	My weight today is ____ pounds.
Exercised 20 minutes	Exercised ____ minutes	Exercised ____ minutes	Exercised ____ minutes
My Daily Calendar _____ (date)	My Daily Calendar _____ (date)	My Daily Calendar _____ (date)	My Daily Calendar _____ (date)
<input type="checkbox"/> Took all medicines (see the list you made on page 27)	<input type="checkbox"/> Took all medicines (see the list you made on page 27)	<input type="checkbox"/> Took all medicines (see the list you made on page 27)	<input type="checkbox"/> Took all medicines (see the list you made on page 27)
<input type="checkbox"/> Checked signs	<input type="checkbox"/> Checked signs	<input type="checkbox"/> Checked signs	<input type="checkbox"/> Checked signs
My weight today is ____ pounds.	My weight today is ____ pounds.	My weight today is ____ pounds.	My weight today is ____ pounds.
Exercised ____ minutes	Exercised ____ minutes	Exercised ____ minutes	Exercised ____ minutes

You can write these things on your calendar or in a notebook. You can also make copies of this page.

When should you call the doctor?

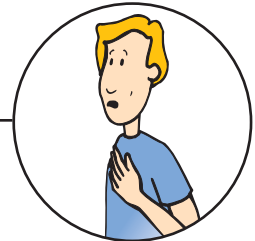
Call the doctor if you:

- Have gained 2 or more pounds in one or two days.



- Have gained 4 or more pounds in a week.

- Have a harder time breathing.



- Have swelling in your legs, feet, or around and below your waist.



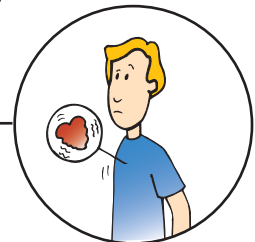
- Have breathing problems that wake you up at night.



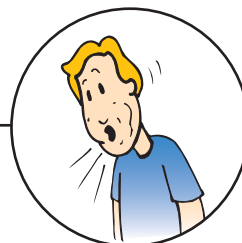
- Have a need to sleep with more pillows.



- Have a fast or fluttering heartbeat.



- Have a cough you did not have before.



- Have a fever, bad headache, or signs of the flu that will not go away.



Your Rescue Plan

You may need to get help quickly. Be ready!

Write important telephone numbers below. Keep this page handy.



My doctor's telephone number:



My emergency services telephone number:



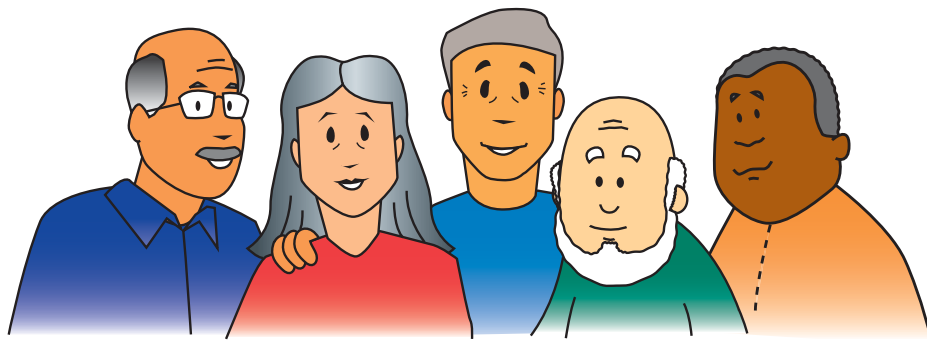
Other important telephone numbers:

Ask your doctor about when you should call for help.

I will call for help if this happens:



More things to do to feel better



More things you can do to feel better



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What else can you do to feel better?

There are other steps that you can take to feel better.

Check off the ones you will try. 

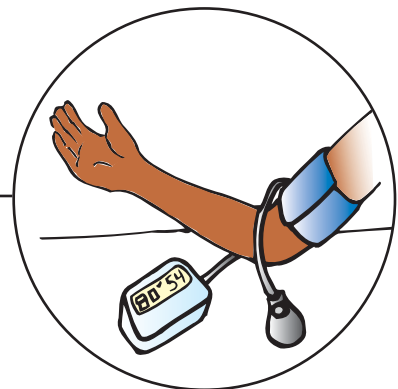
- Stop smoking.
If I smoke, ask my doctor for help to stop.



- Lose weight if I need to.
Talk to my doctor about ways to lose weight.



- Control other health problems like:
- High blood pressure.
 - Diabetes.
 - High cholesterol.

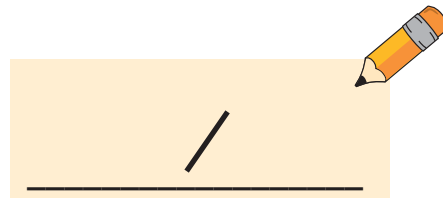


Control health problems.

Do you have high blood pressure, diabetes, or high cholesterol?

If yes, work with your doctor to control them. They can make your heart failure worse. Ask your doctor for help.

If you have high blood pressure,
write your blood pressure goal here:



If you have diabetes,
write your blood sugar goals here:

Before meals _____
After meals _____

If you have high cholesterol,
write your cholesterol
goals here:

Total _____
LDL _____
HDL _____
Triglycerides _____



Be sure to get and keep a copy of your lab or test results.

Reach your healthcare goals.

Check the things you will do to reach your goals:



- Take medicine as my doctor tells me to.
- Follow the food plan my doctor gives me.
- Follow the exercise plan my doctor gives me.
- Ask my doctor any questions I have.




Tell your doctor if you are taking medicine for any other health problem. This includes medicines you buy yourself, like vitamins, pain relievers, or cough, cold, or flu medicines.



How can you deal with your feelings about heart failure?

People feel many things when they learn they have heart failure.

How do you feel? 

Confused



Angry



Scared



Other _____

Talking about your feelings may help you deal with them. You can:



- Talk to the doctor or nurse about how you feel. Ask them questions.
- Talk to other people about it! It feels good to get things off your mind.
- Ask for help from family and friends.

If you are very sad

When you learn you have heart failure, you may feel sad. Many people do.

If you are very sad for more than 2 weeks, you may have “depression” (de PRESH-un). Depression is not good for people with heart failure.



Check any signs you may have.  

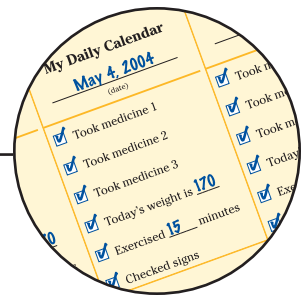
- Feel sad or “empty”
- Do not like doing things I used to like
- Feel there is no hope
- Cannot think clearly
- Wake up very early and cannot get back to sleep
- Sleep too much
- Feeling anxious or feeling slowed down



If you have any of these signs, talk to your doctor. There is treatment that can help you.

How can you get the most from your doctor visit?

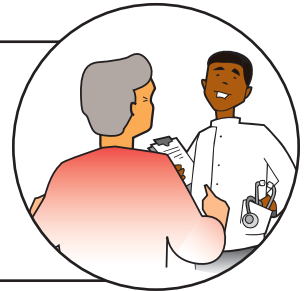
- Show your doctor your Daily Calendar.



- Write down your questions.
Bring them to your doctor visits.



- Tell your doctor the truth about what you eat
and how much you exercise.



- Tell your doctor if you smoke.



Three good questions to ask the doctor about your heart failure

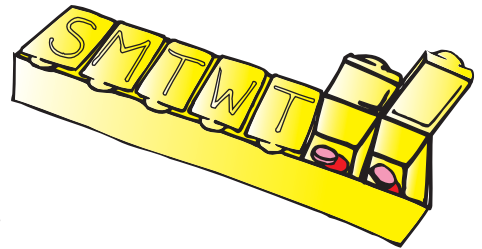
1. What is my main problem? Is my heart failure under control?
2. If not, what do I need to do?
3. Why is it important for me to do this?

If you do not understand the answers, tell your doctor.

Helpful hints for common problems

Problem: “I keep forgetting to take my medicine.”

- Try to take your medicine at the same time each day.
- Try to take your medicine at the same time you do something else, like brush your teeth.
- Try to use a pillbox with a section for each day.



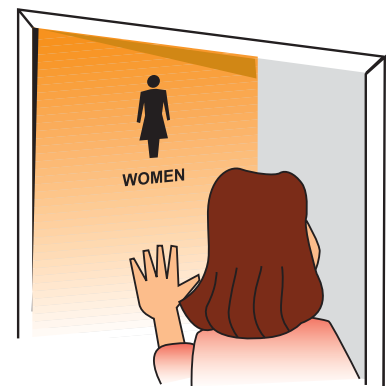
Problem: “I can’t pay for my medicine.”

- Talk to your doctor about a different medicine.
- Ask your doctor about programs for people who cannot pay.




Problem: “My water pills keep me in the bathroom.”

- Talk to your doctor about the best time for you to take your water pill.

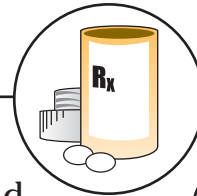


You can live better with your heart failure.

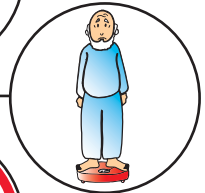
You can help yourself feel better and stay active.

Every day I will: 

Take medicine as my doctor tells me.



Weigh myself. Weight gain may mean too much fluid.



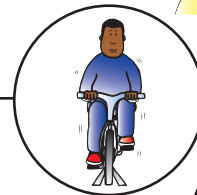
Use less salt and eat healthy foods.



Check my signs of heart failure.



Exercise as my doctor tells me to.



Get plenty of rest.



I will be part of my treatment. I will: 

Go for all my doctor visits.

Tell my doctor if I have side effects from medicine.

Tell my doctor if I feel very sad.

Tell my doctor the truth about how much I eat and exercise.

Tell the doctor if I smoke.



