

# Living with heart failure

 LIFEBRIDGE  
HEALTH.  
**CARE BRAVELY**



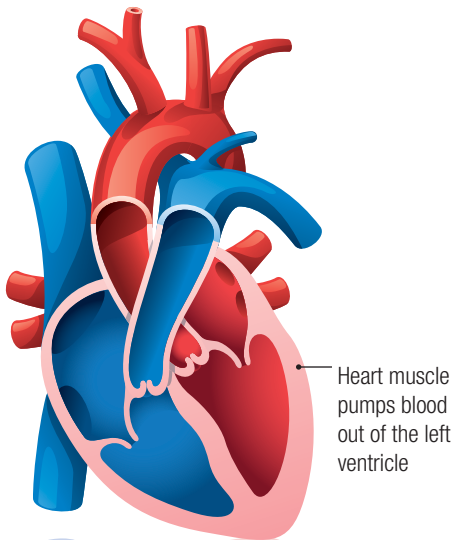
# What is heart failure?

Heart failure is a serious condition that occurs when your heart is not pumping enough blood to meet your body's needs. As a result, fluid collects in your lungs or other parts of your body, causing symptoms like fatigue, swelling and breathing difficulties. Heart failure is a lifelong medical condition that may get worse over time if not managed properly.

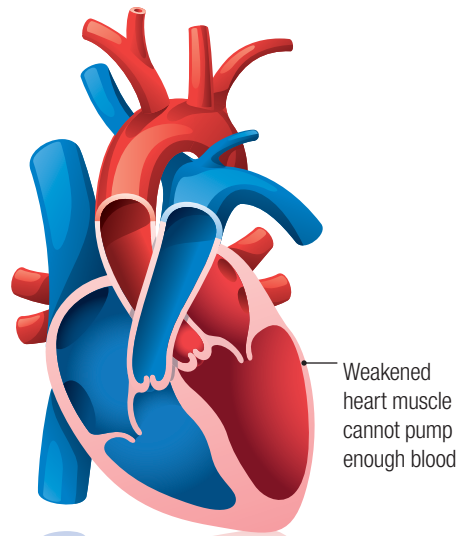
Heart failure does not mean your heart has stopped beating.

## Heart failure is caused by:

- A weak heart muscle that can't squeeze out enough blood
- A stiff heart muscle that can't relax and fill with blood correctly
- Heart valve problems
- Any combination of the above



Normal Heart



Failing Heart



# Know your warning signs.



Shortness of breath



Chronic coughing or wheezing



Fatigue or feeling tired



Sudden weight gain



Increased urination at night



Nausea or lack of appetite



Swelling of feet, ankles or legs



Difficulty sleeping due to breathing problems



Confusion or impaired thinking

## What are my warning signs?

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# Heart failure zone self-check

## To Do Daily

1. Weigh yourself every morning before breakfast.
2. Write down your weight and compare to your weight from the previous day.
3. Check your blood pressure.
4. Take your medicine as prescribed.
5. Exercise.
6. Eat low-salt foods (1500 mg per day).
7. Limit fluid intake to 1.5-2 liters per day.
8. Go to your follow-up visits.
9. Get enough rest.

## Green - Goal Zone

My symptoms are under control!

- No change from baseline symptoms or any new symptoms
- No increase in swelling
- No shortness of breath during activity or lying down
- Weight is stable

## Yellow - Warning Zone

If you have one or more of these symptoms, call your heart doctor, the Heart Failure Clinic at Northwest or Sinai Hospital, or your home health nurse (if you have one):

- Difficulty breathing when lying down
- Dry, hacking cough
- Swelling in feet, ankles, legs or abdomen
- Waking up with trouble breathing
- Weight gain of 2-3 pounds in one day or 5 pounds in one week
- Worsening shortness of breath with activity

## Red - Emergency Zone

Take immediate action if you have any of these symptoms.

**Go to the emergency room (don't drive yourself) or call 911.**

- Can't do your daily activities because your symptoms are too bad
- Frequent dry, hacking cough
- Gained more than 5 pounds since yesterday
- Loss of appetite
- Increase in discomfort or swelling in lower body
- New or worsening dizziness, confusion, sadness or depression
- Struggling to breathe even while sitting still

# All about salt

Salt (sodium) causes you to hold onto fluid, which makes your weak heart work harder. When this happens, fluid builds up in your body (causing swelling) and lungs (causing shortness of breath).

## The salty six



### BREAD AND ROLLS

A few slices of bread over the course of a day can add up to a lot of sodium. Choose low-sodium bread when possible.



### COLD CUTS AND CURED MEAT

Just six thin slices of deli meat can contain half your daily recommended salt. Avoid or choose lower-sodium varieties.



### PIZZA

You can consume more than half your daily salt with just one slice of pizza. Limit the amount of cheese and pile on the veggies for a healthier option.



### POULTRY

Depending on how it is prepared, poultry can be high in salt. Always check labels and opt for a low-salt marinade.



### SOUP

A single serving of soup contains, on average, 600 mg of salt. Avoid canned soup or choose low-salt versions.



### SANDWICHES

Between the deli meat, cheese and bread, a sandwich can contain your entire daily salt limit. Opt for half a sandwich and salad instead.

# How much salt is in your food?

Salt is often hidden in the foods we eat, so you have to read food labels.  
**Limit salt to 1,500 mg per day.**

THIS	MEANS THIS
Sodium-free	Less than 5 mg per serving
Very low sodium	35 mg or less per serving
Low sodium	140 mg or less per serving

### Caution: may still be high in salt

Reduced sodium/ less sodium	25% less sodium per serving than regular product
Light in sodium	50% less sodium per serving than regular product

1 teaspoon baking powder = 48.8 mg sodium      1 teaspoon MSG = 700 mg sodium  
 1 teaspoon baking soda = 1,259 mg sodium      1 teaspoon salt = 2,300 mg sodium

Labels tell you how much salt is in the food you eat and how much each serving counts toward your daily value (DV). In the label to the right, 660 mg of sodium is 28% of your daily value.

Nutrition Facts	
Serving Size: 1 cup (228g)	
Servings Per Container: 2	
Amount Per Serving	
<b>Calories: 260</b> <b>Calories from Fat: 120</b>	
% Daily Value*	
<b>Total Fat</b> 13g	20 %
Saturated Fat 5g	25 %
Trans Fat 2g	
<b>Cholesterol</b> 30mg	10 %
<b>Sodium</b> 660mg	28 %
<b>Total Carbohydrate</b> 31g	10 %
Dietary Fiber 0g	0 %
Sugars 5g	
<b>Protein</b> 5g	
Vitamin A 4%	• Vitamin C 2%
Calcium 15%	• Iron 4%

There may be more than one serving in the package, so be sure to check serving size.

This number tells you the % DV for sodium in one serving.

\* Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet.

# Medications for heart failure

Medications can help your heart by improving symptoms, reducing hospital stays and preventing worsening heart failure. Some of your medications and doses (amount you take) may change in order to keep you healthy.

If you are pregnant or thinking about becoming pregnant, you must tell your healthcare provider.

## **Angiotensin-converting enzyme (ACE) inhibitors**

**Examples: Lisinopril (Prinivil), captopril (Capoten), enalapril (Vasotec)**

- These medications relax your blood vessels, lower your blood pressure and make it easier for your heart to pump.
- While taking an ACE inhibitor, if you experience a reaction such as hives, difficulty breathing or swelling in your face, lips, tongue or throat, call 911 immediately.
- Possible side effects: cough, dizziness, lightheadedness, tiredness

## **Angiotensin receptor blockers (ARBs)**

**Examples: valsartan (Diovan), candesartan (Atacand)**

- These medications work similarly to ACE inhibitors. They are often used in patients who do not tolerate ACE inhibitors.
- Possible side effects: dizziness, headache, drowsiness, nausea, diarrhea

## **Angiotensin-receptor neprilysin inhibitors (ARNIs)**

**Examples: valsartan/sacubitril (Entresto)**

- These medications relax your blood vessels, reduce the volume of your blood and lower your blood pressure
- You will not be able to take ARNIs if you are allergic to ACE inhibitors or ARBs.
- If you experience a reaction such as hives, difficulty breathing or swelling of your face, lips, tongue or throat, call 911 immediately.
- Possible side effects: dizziness, cough, low blood pressure



## **Beta blockers**

### **Examples: metoprolol ER (Toprol), carvedilol (Coreg)**

- These medications lower your heart rate and allow your heart to relax and pump more efficiently.
- When taking beta blockers, you may feel tired at first. Stick with it! The fatigue usually improves in a few days.
- Possible side effects: fatigue, weakness, dizziness, headache, hypoglycemia (if diabetic), cold hands or feet

## **Diuretics (also known as water pills)**

### **Examples: furosemide (Lasix), bumetanide (Bumex)**

- These medications help your kidneys get rid of extra salt and water in your body. They make you urinate more and decrease swelling and shortness of breath.
- Possible side effects: dry mouth, thirst, weakness, drowsiness, muscle cramps

## **Aldosterone antagonists**

### **Examples: spironolactone (Aldactone), eplerenone (Inspra)**

- These medications make it easier for your heart to pump.
- Possible side effects: dry mouth, thirst, vomiting, diarrhea, enlarged breast tissue or breast pain

# **Taking your medications**

- Take your medications as prescribed. Follow the directions on the bottle.
- Keep a list of all the medications you take (including store-bought or over-the-counter medications) and always have this list with you.
- Check with your provider before taking any store-bought (over-the-counter) medications, because they may interfere with your current prescribed medications.
- Do not run out of your medications. Request refills one week before the bottle is empty.
- If you take a dose late or miss a dose, do not double up on the next dose.
- Bring all pill bottles to your doctor visits.
- Discuss any side effects with your doctor or nurse practitioner.

# The danger of NSAIDs

**Do not take NSAIDs (non-steroidal anti-inflammatory) medications like:**

- Ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin)
- Diclofenac (Voltaren)
- Naproxen (Naprosyn, Aleve)
- Celecoxib (Celebrex)

These medications can make your heart failure worse by causing fluid retention, and increase your risk for a heart attack. NSAIDs can also cause high blood pressure and damage your kidneys. Talk to your doctor or nurse practitioner about other options for pain control, such as acetaminophen (Tylenol) or tramadol (Ultram, ConZip).

## Affording your medications

If you are having trouble paying for your medications, know that most heart failure medications are available through discount programs, such as \$4 low-cost prescription lists at Walmart. Also, some medications have a discounted co-pay card. The GoodRx app has coupons for medications and can compare the cost of prescription medications at retail pharmacy stores.

## What else can I do to help my heart failure?

**Follow up with your provider** within 7 to 10 days after you leave the hospital.

**Attend the Heart Failure Clinic** at Northwest or Sinai Hospital.

- Your nurse practitioner and cardiologist can help you stay healthy and out of the hospital.

**Participate in Carroll Hospital's Care Solution programs.**

- Remote patient monitoring
- Disease management clinic

**Get regular exercise** as directed by your doctor.

**Get physical therapy** (see directory for LifeBridge Health Rehabilitation programs).

- Preserve, enhance or restore movement and physical function that has been impaired or threatened by disease.

**Get education about lifestyle** and dietary changes to improve your quality of life.

**Find social support.**

# Limiting fluids

Limit all fluid intake to 64 ounces per day (2,000 cc/ml) unless otherwise directed.

## Measuring daily fluids



**1 CUP** = 8 ounces = 240 cc/ml

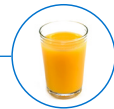


**¾ CUP** = 6 ounces = 180cc/ml

**½ CUP** = 4 ounces = 120cc/ml



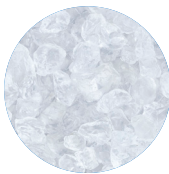
**1 TABLESPOON** = ½ ounce = 15cc/ml



### Keeping track of your fluids

Take an empty 2-liter bottle of soda and cut off the top (2 liters is equal to 64 ounces). When you are finished drinking something, fill that cup or container with water and pour it into the empty 2-liter bottle. (For example, after you drink a cup of coffee, fill the cup with water and empty it into the 2-liter bottle. Repeat this process with all fluid intake throughout each day.) As the bottle fills, you can see when you are approaching your maximum fluid intake for the day.

## Tips for preventing dry mouth



**ICE CHIPS**



**LEMON IN WATER**



**MOUTHWASH**

## Limit alcohol.

- No more than two alcoholic drinks per day for men and one for women
- Heavy and regular use of any type of alcohol can dramatically increase your blood pressure, cause heart failure, stroke or produce irregular heartbeats.
- **Do not drink alcohol** if your heart failure was caused by alcohol (alcoholic cardiomyopathy).



## Quit smoking.

**It is hard, but you can do it!**

- Smoking tobacco or e-cigarettes causes your blood vessels to clamp down and clog. This makes it harder for your heart to pump and worsens heart failure symptoms.
- Visit [smokingstopshere.com](http://smokingstopshere.com) or call 800-QUIT-NOW (800-784-8669) for resources, or talk with your doctor or nurse practitioner about medications that can help you quit smoking.

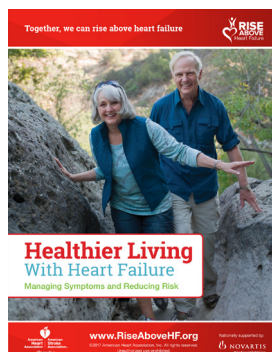


## Additional resources

American Heart Association: visit [heart.org](http://heart.org) or call 800-242-8721.

Connect with others with heart disease by joining the American Heart Association support group at [heart.org/supportnetwork](http://heart.org/supportnetwork).

Find in-depth information in the American Heart Association's interactive heart failure workbook at [ahaheartfailure.ksw-gtg.com](http://ahaheartfailure.ksw-gtg.com).





# Heart failure zone log

Day/date	My warning symptoms	My heart failure zone Call doctor when yellow!
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**Please bring to every appointment:**

- Your filled-out zone log
- Bottles of all medications you are currently taking

<b>Blood pressure and heart rate before your morning medications</b>	<b>Blood pressure and heart rate 2 hrs. after morning medications</b>	<b>Weight before breakfast</b>	<b>Fluid intake</b>

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# Helpful LifeBridge Health phone numbers

## **Sinai Heart Failure Clinic**

(Monday-Friday 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.)  
2401 W. Belvedere Ave.  
Baltimore, MD 21215  
Hoffberger Building, Suite 52  
Phone: 410-601-7750

## **Northwest Heart Failure Clinic**

(Monday-Friday 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.)  
5401 Old Court Road  
Randallstown, MD 21133  
Phone: 410-701-4515

## **Nutrition Center at Northwest Hospital**

Phone: 410-701-4482  
Appointments: 410-601-9729

## **Nutrition Services at Carroll Hospital**

(located in Tevis Center for Wellness)  
Appointments: 410-871-7678, option #4

## **LifeBridge Health Adult Day Services Program**

(across the street from Northwest Hospital)  
5400 Old Court Center  
Randallstown, MD 21133  
Phone: 410-601-2360

## **Tevis Center for Wellness at Carroll Hospital**

291 Stoner Ave.  
Westminster, MD 21157  
Phone: 410-871-7000

## **LifeBridge Health Pharmacy at Sinai Hospital**

Phone: 410-601-7100

## **LifeBridge Health Pharmacy at Northwest Hospital**

Phone: 410-701-4455

## **Cardiac Rehab and Rehab Facilities**

### **Cardiac Rehab at Northwest Hospital**

5401 Old Court Road  
Randallstown, MD 21133  
Phone: 410-701-4333

### **Cardiac Rehab at Carroll Hospital**

(located in East Pavilion)  
200 Memorial Ave.  
Westminster, MD 21157  
Phone: 410-871-6741

## **LifeBridge Health Physical Therapy**

### **Baltimore**

Levindale Hebrew Hospital and Nursing Center  
2434 W. Belvedere Ave.  
Baltimore, MD 21215  
Phone: 410-601-0842

### **Pikesville**

Edward A. Myerberg Center  
3101 Fallstaff Road  
Baltimore, MD 21209  
Phone: 410-601-0842

### **Randallstown**

Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Center  
5400 Old Court Road, Suite 100B  
Randallstown, MD 21133  
Phone: 410-601-0842

## **My important phone numbers:**

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My primary care physician

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My cardiologist (heart)

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My nephrologist (kidney)

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My endocrinologist (thyroid, diabetes)

If you do not have a primary care physician, call 410-601-WELL or visit [lifebridgehealth.org](http://lifebridgehealth.org).

Please visit your doctor or nurse practitioner regularly and keep your scheduled appointments.

**In an emergency, call 911 or go directly to the nearest emergency room.**

