

YOUR GUIDE TO  
CONTINUING  
**Heart and  
Vascular Care**

**HEART FAILURE**  
Patient Education Handbook

*The Heart and Vascular Center at*



[www.rvmc.org](http://www.rvmc.org)

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You can help control your symptoms and feel better by remembering these important things, which are covered in more detail on the following pages:

- Know when to call your doctor.
- Follow a low-sodium (low-salt) diet.
- Weigh yourself every day.
- If you smoke, quit.
- Balance activity and rest.
- Follow your doctor’s instructions regarding medication.

## UNDERSTANDING HEART FAILURE

Heart failure is not “the end of the world.” You can take an active part in your care—more than you might think. You may be able to lead a full, more active life if you get good medical care, follow your doctor’s advice, and understand the disease and its treatment. Doing so may also mean the difference between frequent, severe symptoms and mild to no symptoms at all.

*Heart failure* is a scary term, but it does not mean your heart has stopped beating or that you are about to die. It means that your heart is not pumping (contracting and relaxing) as efficiently as it should. Because of this, not enough blood is being pumped to your tissues and organs, and fluid can back up to your lungs or your ankles, legs, and abdomen. The degree of heart failure or heart weakness a person can have ranges from mild to severe.

### Some causes can include:

High blood pressure  
 Hardening of the arteries  
 Muscle disease of the heart (cardiomyopathy)  
 Abnormal heart valves  
 Anemia  
 Abnormal heart rhythms  
 Alcohol  
 Heart attack  
 Congenital heart defect  
 Rheumatic fever  
 Severe lung disease  
 Overactive thyroid  
 Infection

## WHAT IS “EJECTION FRACTION”?

My EF: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Ejection fraction (EF) is a measurement of how much blood is being pumped from the heart. An echocardiogram is the most common test for evaluating ejection fraction.

- An EF of 50 to 75 percent is normal.
- An EF of 36 to 49 percent is below normal.
- An EF of 35 percent and below is extremely low.

You can have a normal ejection fraction and still have heart failure. It is important for you and your doctor to know your EF because it can help your doctor choose the best treatment for you. Ask your doctor how often you should have it checked.

## WHEN TO CALL THE DOCTOR

My doctor’s  
 phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

If you notice one or more of the following symptoms, report them to your doctor immediately. It is a good idea to have your list of current medications handy when you call.

- **Increased swelling of feet, ankles, legs, or waist**
- **Increased shortness of breath, especially when lying down**
- **Hacking cough**
- **Rapid weight gain (3 pounds in one day, 5 pounds in five days, or as your doctor instructs you)**
- **Extreme weakness, fatigue, forgetfulness, or dizziness**
- **Unexplained loss of appetite**
- **Pain or symptoms increasing in severity**
- **Side effects from any of your medications**
- **Palpitations associated with dizziness or feeling faint**

It is important that you follow up with your doctor after your hospital stay. If you have not received a follow-up appointment, please call your doctor to schedule one.

## ABOUT SMOKING

If you are a smoker, the best thing you can do for yourself is quit. Smoking and secondhand smoke are harmful to your heart and lungs. If you are being discharged from the hospital, you have already enjoyed tobacco-free days. Take advantage of this and remain a nonsmoker! If you can't quit by yourself, ask your doctor for help.

## DIET

Your doctor will probably recommend a low-sodium (low-salt) diet. Salt acts like a sponge and can cause you to retain fluids, which causes your heart to work harder. Salt (sodium plus chloride) is found in most food and is often added to food as it is processed. The usual recommendation is 2,000 milligrams (mg) of sodium per day, unless your doctor tells you otherwise. You can tell how much sodium you are getting by reading food labels carefully.

### Here are some tips for following a low-sodium diet:

- Limit salt in cooking and do not add salt to foods at the table.
- Season food with fresh or dried herbs and spices, salt-free seasoning mixtures, juices, or vinegar.
- Avoid salts or powders such as garlic or onion salt and seasoned salts.
- Avoid processed and canned food.
- Look for canned food that is marked “no added salt.” If you have to use higher-sodium canned fish or vegetables, rinse them under running water for about a minute first. This will decrease the amount of sodium by two-thirds.
- Choose fresh meats, vegetables, and fruits.
- Consider making your own soups and casseroles and freezing portions.
- Avoid breading, sauces, and marinades.
- When dining out, be sure to request that food be cooked without salt or MSG (monosodium glutamate). Avoid sauces, or request them “on the side” so you can control the amount.
- Never use baking soda to treat heartburn or an upset stomach.
- Check with your doctor before using a potassium chloride salt substitute.

## ALCOHOL

Alcohol makes it harder for the heart to work. Many doctors tell their heart failure patients to avoid alcohol. Ask your doctor how much alcohol, if any, is safe for you.

The Food and Drug Administration defines the sodium terminology used on product labels to mean the following:

- Low sodium . . . . . less than 140 mg per serving
- Very low sodium . . . . . less than 35 mg per serving
- Sodium-free . . . . . less than 5 mg per serving
- Reduced sodium . . . . . reduction of 75 percent or more
- Unsalted . . . . . no salt added

Staying with low-sodium food of less than 140 mg is preferable. As a rule, try to keep the combined sodium content of all food in each meal to 600 mg or less.

## READING LABELS

When you want to know how much fat, cholesterol, fiber, sodium, and other nutrients are found in processed packaged foods, turn to the panel on the box where such information is listed. This panel often includes the “Percentage of the U.S. Recommended Daily Allowance” of some vitamins and minerals. Where it is found and the format of the list will vary from product to product.

All the nutrition information listed is based on the serving size of the product. Always note the serving size (such as ½ cup) and compare it with how much you actually eat so you know the true amount you are getting of the listed nutrients. If a nutrient such as fiber is not present in a product, it will not be listed.

It is important to understand how to read product labels so you are informed and can better watch your heart-healthy diet.

**Serving size and milligrams of sodium per serving**

<b>Nutrition Facts</b>	
Serving Size	1 cup (30 g)
Servings per Container	12
<b>Amount per Serving</b>	
Calories 90	Calories from Fat 10
<b>% Daily Value</b>	
Total Fat 1 g	2%
Saturated Fat 0 g	0%
Cholesterol 0 mg	0%
Sodium 190 mg	8%
Total Carbohydrate 22 g	7%
Dietary Fiber 3 g	
Sugars 9 g	
Protein 3 g	

## GUIDELINES FOR A LOW-SODIUM DIET

Food Group	Low in Sodium (less than 140 mg per serving) <b>BEST</b>	Moderate in Sodium (140 to 400 mg per serving)	High in Sodium (more than 400 mg per serving) <b>AVOID</b>
<b>Spices, Sauces, and Condiments</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Herbs and spices</li> <li>• Low-sodium seasoning mixes (Mrs. Dash, Parsley Patch)</li> <li>• The following seasonings contain sodium; suggested servings are 1 teaspoon per day: mustard, Tabasco/red pepper sauce</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Salted seasonings (limit 2 tablespoons per day)</li> <li>• Barbecue sauces</li> <li>• Catsup</li> <li>• Chili sauce</li> <li>• Gravy</li> <li>• Mayonnaise and salad dressings</li> <li>• Steak sauce</li> <li>• Tomato purée or sauce</li> <li>• Worcestershire sauce</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High-sodium seasonings</li> <li>• Bouillon and meat tenderizers</li> <li>• Salt and salt substitute mixtures</li> <li>• Salted seasonings (garlic salt, onion salt, seasoning salt)</li> <li>• Soy sauce and teriyaki sauce</li> </ul>
<b>Grains and Cereals</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bread</li> <li>• Low-sodium crackers</li> <li>• Hot cereals (except instant)</li> <li>• Low-sodium cereals (shredded wheat, puffed rice, wheat granola)</li> <li>• Matzo and noodles</li> <li>• Rice and tortillas</li> <li>• Unsalted popcorn and whole grains</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bread and rolls</li> <li>• Doughnuts</li> <li>• Dry cereals</li> <li>• Biscuits and muffins</li> <li>• Cakes and cookies</li> <li>• Instant hot cereals</li> <li>• Pancakes and waffles</li> <li>• Pastries and pies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Frozen or canned spaghetti and pasta dishes</li> <li>• Salted crackers and chips</li> <li>• Salted popcorn</li> <li>• Salted pretzels</li> </ul>
<b>Vegetables and Fruits</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fruits</li> <li>• Fruit juices</li> <li>• Unsalted vegetables (fresh, frozen, canned—<i>read the label</i>)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Canned vegetables</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Olives and pickles</li> <li>• Pickled vegetables</li> <li>• Sauerkraut</li> <li>• Vegetable juices</li> <li>• Vegetables with seasoned sauces</li> </ul>

**GUIDELINES FOR A LOW-SODIUM DIET** *(continued)*

<b>Food Group</b>	<b>Low in Sodium</b> (less than 140 mg per serving) <b>BEST</b>	<b>Moderate in Sodium</b> (140 to 400 mg per serving)	<b>High in Sodium</b> (more than 400 mg per serving) <b>AVOID</b>
<p><b>Meat, Fish, Poultry, and Other Main Dishes</b></p> <p><i>To reduce fat, choose lean meats, poultry, fish, and beans.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Beef and veal</li> <li>• Dried beans (cooked without salt or ham hocks)</li> <li>• Eggs and fish</li> <li>• Lamb</li> <li>• Poultry</li> <li>• Pork</li> <li>• Tuna (canned, low-sodium)</li> <li>• Peanut butter</li> <li>• Unsalted nuts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Canned beans (rinsed and drained)</li> <li>• Frozen dinners (500 mg or less per serving)</li> <li>• Garden burgers</li> <li>• Shellfish and fresh fish</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Smoked, cured, or pickled products</li> <li>• Bacon and ham</li> <li>• Corned beef</li> <li>• Fried meat or fish</li> <li>• Lunch meats, sausages, and frankfurters</li> <li>• Canned or dried soups</li> <li>• Ramen noodles</li> <li>• Canned refried beans</li> <li>• Canned crab, salmon, shrimp, and tuna</li> <li>• Frozen dinners and entrées</li> <li>• Imitation crab or shrimp</li> </ul>
<p><b>Dairy Products</b></p> <p><i>To reduce fat, choose low-fat dairy products; limit butter, margarine, and cream.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cream cheese</li> <li>• Milk</li> <li>• Ricotta cheese</li> <li>• Sherbet and sorbet</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Buttermilk</li> <li>• Aged, brick-type cheeses</li> <li>• Feta and Parmesan cheeses (limit to 1 tablespoon)</li> <li>• Cottage cheese (limit to ½ cup)</li> <li>• Frozen desserts (ice cream, frozen yogurt, ice-cream bars)</li> <li>• Pudding</li> <li>• Yogurt</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cheeses, processed (such as American cheese slices)</li> <li>• Blue cheese</li> <li>• Roquefort cheese</li> </ul>
<p><b>Beverages</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Carbonated beverages (pop and soda)</li> <li>• Milk</li> <li>• Coffee and tea</li> <li>• Most mineral waters—<i>read the label</i></li> </ul>		

## SODIUM CONTENT OF COMMON FOODS

Use this chart as a guide in planning meals. It is not meant to be a substitute for reading labels, however, as the sodium content of products may change.

1 teaspoon of salt has 2,325 mg of sodium.

Your sodium limit is \_\_\_\_\_ milligrams.

Beans, Grains, and Nuts	Sodium (mg)
Bagel, plain, 3½-inch diameter	359
Banana bread, half slice	180
Biscuit, from recipe 2½-inch diameter	350
Biscuit, from refrigerated can, 2½-inch	292
Bread, 1 slice ( <i>read the label</i> )	100–185
Breadcrumbs, seasoned, ¼ cup	530
Bun, hamburger or hot dog, 1 plain	206
Cereal, 1 ounce ( <i>read the label</i> )	0–350
Cornbread, from mix, 3¾ x 2½-inch	465
Crackers:	
Saltines, 4	134
Wheat Thins, 4	70
Croissant, plain, 4½ x 4-inch, 2 ounces	425
Danish pastry, fruit, 4¼-inch	250
Dinner roll, 1 ounce	150
Doughnut:	
Cake-type, 3-inch	255
Raised, glazed, 3¾-inch	210
English muffin, plain, 2 ounces	265
French toast, 1 slice	310
Muffin, bran, 2¼-inch	235
Pancake:	
From mix, 4-inch	240
Frozen, 4-inch	185
Stuffing, bread mix, dry, 6 ounces	170
Tortilla, 1 medium:	
Corn	12
Flour	204
Waffle:	
From mix, 7-inch	383

Frozen, 4-inch	260
Beans, plain, 1 cup cooked, no salt	15
Kidney beans, canned, 1 cup	660
Pork and beans, canned, 1 cup	1,106
Refried beans, canned, 1 cup	1,131
Tofu, ½ cup	126
Chow mein noodles, 1 cup	45
Egg noodles, 1 cup, cooked, no salt	10
Pasta, plain, 1 cup, cooked, no salt	0
Rice, plain, 1 cup, cooked, no salt	0–15
Rice and pasta, seasoned mix, 1 cup	500–1,500
Flour:	
All-purpose, wheat, 1 cup	2
Self-rising, 1 cup	1,588

Desserts and Snacks	Sodium (mg)
Cake, ½ of 9- to 10-inch cake:	
Angel food, without frosting	210
Chocolate, without frosting	299
White, without frosting	242
Frosting, ready-to-eat, ½ package	35–70
Cheesecake, ⅛ of 9-inch cake	166
Chips:	
Potato, 1 ounce	149
Tortilla, plain, 1 ounce	119
Chocolate bar, 1 ounce	22
Cookies:	
Brownie, from mix, 2-inch square	85
Chocolate chip, 2¼-inch diameter, 1	60
Graham cracker, 2½-inch square, 1	40
Peanut butter, 2¼-inch diameter, 1	105
Frozen desserts:	
Fruit or juice bar, 1	5
Ice cream, vanilla, 1 cup	105

**SODIUM CONTENT OF COMMON FOODS** (continued)

Orange sherbet, 1 cup	60	<b>Burger King:</b>	
Popsicle, 1	10	Hamburger	551
Yogurt, vanilla, 1 cup	125	With cheese	800
Gelatin, 1 cup	202	Whopper	1,000
Granola bar, plain, 1 ounce	80	With cheese	1,431
Nuts:		BK Griller	760
Salted, 1 ounce	190	BK Big Fish	1,160
Unsalted, 1 ounce	5	Chicken Tenders, 6	663
Pie, 1/6 of 8-inch pie, from recipe:		Fries, medium	532
Chocolate cream	144	Chicken salad, Caesar, no dressing	730
Custard	252	Croissan'wich: egg and cheese:	
Apple	327	With bacon	900
Lemon meringue	307	With sausage	1,090
Pecan	320	<b>Domino's Pizza:</b>	
Pumpkin	349	Pizza, 1/4 of 14-inch pizza, 1 slice:	
Popcorn, 2 cups popped:		Cheese	507
Air-popped, no salt added	0	Pepperoni	608
Microwave, low fat	65-105	<b>KFC:</b>	
Popcorn cake, 1	30	Original recipe chicken pieces:	
Pudding, from mix, 1/2 cup:		Wing	370
Chocolate, cooked	155	Breast	1,150
Chocolate, instant	420	Drumstick	440
Sunflower seeds, 1 ounce:		Thigh	1,060
Salted	116	Extra Crispy chicken pieces:	
Unsalted	0	Wing	390
<b>Fast Foods</b>	<b>Sodium (mg)</b>	Breast	1,230
<b>Arby's:</b>		Drumstick	420
Roast beef sandwich:		Thigh	710
Junior	740	Potatoes and gravy	480
Regular	1,379	Cole slaw	300
Large	1,869	Biscuit	580
Beef N' Cheddar	1,274	<b>McDonald's:</b>	
French Dip	1,282	Hamburger, small	530
French Dip N' Swiss	1,679	With cheese	740
Chicken Fillet	913	Quarter Pounder	730
Turkey Sub	2,029	With cheese	1,330
Baked potato:		Big Mac	1,010
Plain	20	Filet-O-Fish	640
Deluxe	346	McChicken	810

continued on page 10

## SODIUM CONTENT OF COMMON FOODS (continued)

McNuggets, 6	675	Pickle:	
Chicken salad, Caesar	890	Dill, 4-inch	1,181
Fries:		Sweet, 2½-inch	69
Small	140	Sweet relish, 1 tablespoon	122
Large	330	Salad dressing, 1 tablespoon	100–200
Egg McMuffin	860	Soup, canned or dry, diluted per directions, 1 cup	800–1,405
Sausage biscuit	990	Onion soup, dry mix, 1 packet	3,132
<b>Taco Bell:</b>		Spaghetti sauce, from jar, 1 cup	1,000–1,600
Taco, regular	350	Soy sauce, 1 tablespoon	900–1,300
Bean Burrito, regular	1,200	Tartar sauce, 1 tablespoon	125–360
Chicken Quesadilla	1,380	Teriyaki sauce, 1 tablespoon	690
		Vinegar, 1 tablespoon	0
		White sauce, ¼ cup	220
<b>Condiments and Seasonings</b>	<b>Sodium (mg)</b>	<b>Vegetables and Fruits</b>	<b>Sodium (mg)</b>
Salt, 1 teaspoon	2,325	Fruits and fruit juices, 1 cup	1–15
Garlic and onion salt, 1 teaspoon	960	Fresh or plain frozen vegetables except as listed below, 1 cup	10–50
Garlic and onion powder, 1 teaspoon	0	Artichoke, 1 medium	80
Pepper, 1 teaspoon	0	Asparagus, canned, 4 spears	280
Most herbs and spices, 1 teaspoon	trace	Beets, fresh, cooked, 1 cup	85
Meat tenderizer, 1 teaspoon	1,480	Beets, canned, 1 cup	330
Taco seasoning, 2 tablespoons	428	Beet greens, cooked, no salt, 1 cup	347
Baking powder, 1 teaspoon	490	Carrots, fresh, cooked, no salt, 1 cup	90
Baking soda, 1 teaspoon	1,260	Carrots, canned, 1 cup	350
Barbecue sauce, 1 tablespoon	196	Celery, raw, 1 cup	105
Broth, beef or chicken, canned, 1 cup	780	Corn, canned, 1 cup:	
Butter:		Whole	546
Salted, 1 tablespoon	82	Cream-style	730
Unsalted, 1 tablespoon	0	Green beans, canned, 1 cup	354
Catsup, 1 tablespoon	155	Mixed vegetables, 1 cup:	
Cheese or hollandaise sauce, ¼ cup	522	Frozen	65
Gravy, canned, ¼ cup:		Canned	245
Beef	326	Mushrooms, canned, 1 cup	665
Chicken	355	Peas, 1 cup	
Margarine, 1 tablespoon	135–155	Frozen	115
Mayonnaise, 1 tablespoon	105	Canned	495
Mustard, 1 teaspoon	65	Potato:	
Oil or shortening, 1 tablespoon	0	Plain, 1 medium	15
Olives, ripe, 5 large	192		
Peanut butter, 1 tablespoon:			
Salted	78		
Unsalted	5		





## MONITORING YOUR WEIGHT

An unexplained weight gain is a warning sign that your treatment for heart failure may not be working as well as it has been. Calling your doctor when you first notice a weight gain may help prevent trips to the emergency room or a hospital stay.

### What to do:

- Make copies of the blank Daily Weight Log in this handbook.
- Weigh yourself at the same time each day, on the same scale, with an empty bladder and while wearing the same clothes. (A good time is when you first get up in the morning.)
- Write down your weight every day.
- Call your doctor if you see a rapid weight gain—3 pounds in one day, 5 pounds in five days, or as your doctor instructs you.

There are times when you may retain fluid but not see a change on your scale, so it is important to call your doctor if you notice any increased symptoms such as those listed on page 3, even if you don't see a weight gain.

## WHEN YOU TRAVEL

- When planning to travel, ask your doctor for a copy of your latest history and physical exam to take with you in case of an emergency.
- Check with your doctor before taking a long trip. If you travel, stop every two hours and walk around. This will improve blood flow from your legs, which helps prevent swelling.
- Always remember to pack your scale in your luggage or car when traveling. Monitoring your weight is especially important when you travel because your diet will change and salt will be harder to control.
- Always carry an accurate list of your medications in your wallet or purse.

## DAILY WEIGHT LOG

Weight at last doctor visit \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Weight at the end of the previous month \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Month \_\_\_\_\_

Date	Weight	Date	Weight	Date	Weight
1		12		23	
2		13		24	
3		14		25	
4		15		26	
5		16		27	
6		17		28	
7		18		29	
8		19		30	
9		20		31	
10		21			
11		22			

Weigh yourself on the same scale each morning after urinating but before eating. Be sure the scale is on a hard surface—not on a rug. Write your weight on this log. At the beginning of each month, enter your weight from the last day of the previous month at the top of the chart.

**Note:** If you gain 3 pounds in one day or 5 pounds in five days, **call your doctor.**

**Suggestion:** Make photocopies of this page before using.

## ACTIVITY

Listen to your body. It's good to be active, but be careful not to overdo it.

- Space your activities during the day. Allow time between activities for your heart to rest.
- Stop and rest when you are tired or become short of breath. Do not push yourself to finish a project.
- Get plenty of sleep at night and take naps during the day if needed.

## About exercise:

- Get your doctor's okay before starting an exercise program.
- People who have mild to moderate heart failure should make exercise a habit. Do not work too hard, too fast, or too long. Slowly increase your time and pace as you become more fit. Walking is a good exercise, or you could ask your doctor for more exercise options and guidelines.
- If you have severe heart failure, you may have to limit your daily exercise to stretching and avoid anything more strenuous.
- Unless your doctor tells you it's okay, avoid work that involves pushing, pulling, or raising heavy objects above your shoulders. Such activity increases the pressure and the workload on the heart.

- Stop what you are doing and rest if you have any of these symptoms while you are exercising:

- Dizziness, light-headedness, or confusion
- Slow, rapid, or irregular heartbeat
- Coughing or shortness of breath
- Palpitations
- Weakness, fatigue, or sweating a great deal
- Leg pain or cramping
- Chest discomfort (angina)—take nitroglycerine if your doctor has prescribed it for you

When these symptoms go away, resume what you were doing but at a lower level; if the symptoms do not go away in a few minutes, call your doctor

## ABOUT YOUR MEDICATIONS

Many medications can help your heart pump better and reduce the extra fluid. It is important that you take your medications as prescribed. Stopping a medication for just a few days can cause you to feel worse and possibly lead to a return to the hospital. It is important to keep your doctor informed of any problems you are having with your medications.

Always carry an up-to-date list of your medications in your wallet or purse.

## COMMON MEDICATIONS USED IN THE TREATMENT OF HEART FAILURE

Medication	Purpose	Possible Side Effects
<b>Angiotensin Converting Enzyme (ACE) Inhibitors</b> <i>Treat high blood pressure</i>	ACE inhibitors cause blood vessels to relax or dilate. They are used to treat high blood pressure and to prevent fluid retention and shortness of breath from heart disease.	Notify your doctor if you develop any of the following symptoms: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Persistent dizziness or light-headedness</li> <li>• Skin rash or itching</li> <li>• Loss of taste or smell</li> <li>• Nausea or loss of appetite that lasts for more than one day</li> <li>• Vomiting or diarrhea that lasts for more than one day</li> <li>• Dry, hacking cough</li> <li>• Swollen or puffy feet, ankles, hands, lips, or face</li> <li>• Changes in your heart rhythm—skipping beats, pounding, rapid, or very slow</li> </ul>
Trade Names	Special Instructions	
<b>Accupril</b> (quinapril) <b>Altace</b> (ramipril) <b>Capoten</b> (captopril) <b>Lotensin</b> (benazepril) <b>Mavik</b> (trandolapril) <b>Monopril</b> (fosinopril sodium) <b>Prinivil, Zestril</b> (lisinopril) <b>Univasc</b> (moexipril) <b>Vasotec</b> (enalapril maleate)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Avoid taking cough, cold, or allergy medications without consulting your doctor.</li> <li>• Do not use salt substitutes containing potassium without consulting your doctor.</li> <li>• Capoten: Take one hour before meals, on an empty stomach.</li> </ul>	
Medication	Purpose	Possible Side Effects
<b>Angiotensin Receptor Blockers (ARBs)</b> <i>Treat high blood pressure</i>	Angiotensin blockers are used to treat high blood pressure, prevent fluid retention, and prevent shortness of breath from heart disease.	Notify your doctor if you develop: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unexplained fever</li> <li>• Mouth sores</li> <li>• Insomnia</li> <li>• Rapid weight gain or swelling in the hands, feet, or ankles</li> <li>• Changes in your heart rhythm—skipping beats, pounding, rapid, or very slow</li> <li>• Chest pain</li> <li>• Persistent chest or nasal congestion or persistent cough</li> <li>• Persistent muscle aches or cramps</li> <li>• Persistent dizziness or light-headedness</li> <li>• Loss of appetite</li> <li>• Nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea that lasts more than one day</li> <li>• Loss of your sense of taste or smell</li> </ul>
Trade Names	Special Instructions	
<b>Atacand</b> (candesartan) <b>Avapro</b> (irbesartan) <b>Benicar</b> (olmesartan) <b>Cozaar</b> (losartan) <b>Diovan</b> (valsartan) <b>Inspira</b> (eplerenone)* <b>Micardis</b> (telmisartan) <b>Tevetan</b> (eprosartan)	If you feel dizzy when getting up from a sitting or lying position, getting up slowly often lessens the problem.	
<i>*Inspira blocks the binding of aldosterone in the angiotensin system.</i>		

## COMMON MEDICATIONS USED IN THE TREATMENT OF HEART FAILURE *(continued)*

Medication	Purpose	Possible Side Effects
<b>Beta Blockers</b> <i>Control heart rate and blood pressure</i>	Beta blockers help the heart beat more slowly and pump with less force. This decreases the heart's demand for oxygen and helps the heart work more efficiently. It also helps control irregular heartbeat and treat high blood pressure. Recent studies have shown that these drugs may prevent future heart attacks.	Notify your doctor if you develop any of the following symptoms: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shortness of breath, wheezing, or tiredness, especially after mild exercise</li> <li>• Coughing at night</li> <li>• Persistent dizziness, weakness, or fainting</li> <li>• Swollen or puffy feet, ankles, or hands</li> <li>• Unusually slow (below 55 beats per minute) or fast heart rate that cannot be explained</li> <li>• Confused or depressed feelings</li> <li>• Skin rash or itching</li> <li>• Yellow in the whites of the eyes or yellowing of the skin</li> <li>• Clay- or light-colored stools</li> <li>• Dark yellow/orange urine</li> <li>• Persistent nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea</li> <li>• Unusual bleeding or bruising</li> </ul>
Trade Names	Special Instructions	
<b>Inderal, InnoPran XL</b> (propranolol) <b>Lopressor, Toprol XL</b> (metoprolol) <b>Normodyne, Trandate</b> (labetalol) <b>Tenormin</b> (atenolol) <b>Zebeta</b> (bisoprolol)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do not take tranquilizers or sleeping pills or drink alcoholic beverages unless you have first checked with your doctor.</li> <li>• Never discontinue taking a beta blocker without first consulting your doctor. You may need to taper off this drug before stopping.</li> <li>• Check with a pharmacist before using over-the-counter cold, sinus, or nasal medications.</li> <li>• Beta blockers may decrease or increase blood-sugar levels and mask symptoms of very low blood sugar. Tell your doctor if your levels change.</li> </ul>	
Trade Name	Purpose	
<b>Coreg</b> (carvedilol)	Carvedilol is also used to treat mild to moderate heart failure.	
	Special Instructions	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take with food and at evenly spaced intervals.</li> <li>• Tell your doctor if you are taking any green-colored herbal products.</li> </ul>	

## COMMON MEDICATIONS USED IN THE TREATMENT OF HEART FAILURE *(continued)*

Medication	Purpose	Possible Side Effects
<b>Digoxin</b> <i>Strengthens heartbeat and controls rhythm</i>	Digoxin strengthens the contractions of the heart and helps regulate the heart rate and the heart rhythm.	Notify your doctor if you develop any of the following symptoms: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nausea or loss of appetite that lasts for more than one day</li> <li>• Vomiting or diarrhea that lasts for more than one day</li> <li>• Blurred or flickering vision</li> <li>• Changes in your heart rhythm—skipping beats, pounding, rapid, or very slow</li> </ul>
Trade Name	Special Instructions	
<b>Lanoxin</b> (digoxin)	Take this medication around the same time each day.	

Medication	Purpose	Possible Side Effects
<b>Diuretics</b> <i>“Water pills”</i>	Diuretics, or “water pills,” help the kidneys eliminate excess fluid and sodium from the body. This will increase urine output. When there is less fluid stored in the blood, blood pressure and the workload on the heart is reduced.	Because diuretics can also cause loss of potassium in the urine, you may need to take a potassium supplement. Notify your doctor if you develop any of the following symptoms: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Muscle cramps or numbness in the hands or feet</li> <li>• Extreme fatigue or weakness</li> <li>• Shortness of breath</li> <li>• Dizziness</li> <li>• Blurred vision</li> <li>• Irregular heartbeat</li> <li>• Rapid weight gain or swelling in the hands, feet, or ankles</li> </ul>
Trade Names	Special Instructions	
<b>Aldactone</b> (spironolactone) <b>Bumex</b> (bumetanide) <b>Demadex</b> (torsemide) <b>Diuril</b> (chlorothiazide) <b>Diazide, Dyrenium, Maxide</b> (triamterene/HCTZ) <b>Hydrodiuril, Oretic, Esidrix</b> (hydrochlorothiazide) <b>Lasix</b> (furosemide) <b>Lozol</b> (indapamide) <b>Midamor</b> (amiloride) <b>Mykrox, Zaroxolyn</b> (metolazone)	Diuretics should be taken early in the morning and afternoon (if you’re taking it twice daily) to avoid being awakened during the night to urinate.	

## COMMON MEDICATIONS USED IN THE TREATMENT OF HEART FAILURE *(continued)*

Medication	Purpose	Possible Side Effects
<b>Potassium Supplements</b> <i>Replace potassium lost in urine</i>	Because many diuretics can cause the body to lose potassium, it may be necessary to take a supplement to replace that loss. Potassium is necessary for normal functioning of the body, especially the heart.	Notify your doctor if you develop any of the following symptoms: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Weakness or confusion</li> <li>• Nausea or loss of appetite that lasts for more than one day</li> <li>• Vomiting or diarrhea that lasts for more than one day</li> <li>• Abdominal discomfort</li> <li>• Changes in your heart rhythm—skipping beats, pounding, rapid, or very slow</li> </ul>
Trade Names	Special Instructions	
<b>K-Dur, K-Lor powder K-lyte, K-Tabs, Micro K, Slow K (potassium chloride)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take after meals to reduce stomach irritation.</li> <li>• Mix liquid or powdered preparations in a glass of fruit juice, water, or carbonated beverage.</li> <li>• Your doctor may suggest that you first eat more potassium-rich foods to supplement your potassium. Foods high in potassium but low in sodium include the following:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dried fruits (apricots, dates, prunes, raisins)</li> <li>• Fresh fruits (apricots, bananas, strawberries, honeydew melon, watermelon, cantaloupe, oranges, pears, peaches)</li> <li>• Fruit juices</li> <li>• Fresh vegetables (avocados, broccoli, peas, potatoes, spinach, tomatoes, celery)</li> <li>• Legumes (beans)</li> <li>• Fresh meats and poultry</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	

## READING LIST AND RESOURCES

### Books

*American Heart Association Low-salt Cookbook, Third Edition: A Complete Guide to Reducing Sodium and Fat in Your Diet* by American Heart Association (New York: Clarkson Potter, 2002). America's most trusted authority on heart-healthy eating presents its classic low-salt cookbook, revised and expanded with 50 brand-new recipes.

*The Omega Diet* by Artemis Simopoulos, MD, and Jo Robinson (New York: Collins Living, 1999). The "Mediterranean diet" is the key to better health. This book includes recipes and meal plans, shopping lists, and preparation tips.

*Bartels Community Health Library*. This library of health-related information is open to the public and is free of charge. Information on a variety of topics is available by calling or stopping by the Smullin Health Education Center at Rogue Valley Medical Center. Library hours are Monday, Tuesday, and Friday from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.; and Wednesday and Thursday from 10 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

### Web Sites

***www.americanheart.org***

American Heart Association; a comprehensive resource for cardiovascular diseases; basic tutorial about heart failure

***www.emedicinehealth.com/congestive\_heart\_failure/article\_em.htm***

eMedicineHealth's Heart Center; a consumer health information site written by physicians for patients and consumers

***www.clevelandclinic.org/heart***

Cleveland Clinic Heart Center; contains tutorials and links for patient education

***www.nal.usda.gov/fnic/foodcomp/search***

USDA National Nutrient Database for Standard Reference; search engine for sodium and other nutritional components of many foods

***www.mayoclinic.com***

Mayo Clinic; comprehensive patient education guides

***www.nhlbi.nih.gov***

Federal government site for the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute; the National Institutes of Health; and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; provides heart-failure links

***www.abouthf.org***

Heart Failure Society of America; a forum for patients and medical professionals

***www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/heartfailure.html***

National Institutes of Health "MedlinePlus" patient education

***www.heartfailure.org***

Heart Failure Online; an educational site dedicated to heart-failure patients

***www.mrsdash.com/recipes***

Low-sodium recipes

***www.fightheartfailure.com***

Patient education campaign developed by the American Association of Heart Failure Nurses, the Preventive Cardiovascular Nurses Association, and the Society of Chest Pain Centers