

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

HEART FAILURE
Patient Education Handbook

This handbook is designed to provide you with additional information about heart failure, a low-sodium diet, activity, medications, and resources. Please refer to *Living Well with Heart Failure* for the complete list of recommendations. The “Heart Failure Zones” has been designed to help you know when to seek medical attention.

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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 into 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 rhythm
- Alcohol
- Amphetamine drug use
- 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.

MANAGING HEART FAILURE

Following the self-care strategies in *Living Well with Heart Failure* can mean the difference between frequent severe symptoms and mild to no symptoms at all. Use the “Heart Failure Zones” as a guide to know when your heart failure is controlled, you need to call your doctor to report warning signs, or the symptoms require emergency treatment.

LOW-SODIUM DIET

Excess sodium in the body causes you to retain fluids. These fluids increase the workload of your heart, making your heart failure worse now and in the future. Your doctor recommends that your diet contain no more than 2,000 milligrams (mg) of sodium per day.

Salt is made of sodium and chloride and is found abundantly in nature. Sodium is naturally in nearly everything we eat and drink. It is added to processed foods for flavor and as a preservative. It also helps products retain moisture. Unfortunately, it does the same thing in the body.

More than 75 percent of the sodium consumed in the United States comes from packaged and restaurant foods. Many foods contain sodium but do not taste salty. Nutrition labels and regulations on what manufacturers can claim about sodium help consumers maintain a healthy heart (see page 5). Low-sodium food that you eat several times a day can add up to a lot of sodium (see pages 6 and 7).

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

- Prepare your own food when you can. Don't salt foods when cooking. Instead use spices, salt-free seasonings, juices, or vinegar.
- Talk to your doctor about using salt substitutes because they could be high in potassium, which can be dangerous for people with heart failure.
- Consider your condiments. The sodium in soy sauce, ketchup, salad dressing, and seasonings can add up.
- Choose fresh or frozen fruits and vegetables.
- Look for canned food that is marked "no added salt." If you must use higher-sodium canned fish, meat, or vegetables, rinse them under running water for about a minute first. This will decrease the amount of sodium by two-thirds.
- Examine your dairy products. Use fat-free or low-fat milk, yogurt, cheese, and fortified soymilk instead of processed cheese and spreads that are high in sodium.
- Choose fresh or frozen meat, poultry, and fish. Check the packages to see if saltwater or saline has been added. Cold cuts, sausages, and corned beef are high in sodium.
- Consider making your own soups and casseroles and freezing portions.
- Unsalt your snacks. Choose unsalted nuts and seeds, popcorn, and vegetable sticks. Eat products marked "low sodium" or "no salt added" in moderation.
- Choose wisely at restaurants. The sodium content is required only if the menu claims an item is "low sodium."
- When dining out, be sure to request that food be cooked without salt or MSG (monosodium glutamate). Avoid sauces and dressings or request them "on the side" so that you can control the amount.
- Never use baking soda to treat heartburn or an upset stomach.

The US 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 at least 25 percent less than in the original product
- Light in sodium or lightly salted at least 50 percent less than in the original product
- Unsalted or no salt added no salt added during processing but not necessarily sodium-free—check the Nutrition Facts label to be sure

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.

High levels of sodium may seem “hidden” in packaged food, particularly when a food doesn’t taste salty—but sodium is not hidden on the Nutrition Facts label.

READING LABELS

When you want to know how much fat, cholesterol, sodium, fiber, and other nutrients are found in processed foods, look at the panel on the box package where such information is listed. This panel often also includes the “Percentage of the US Recommended Daily Allowance” of some vitamins and minerals. If a nutrient such as fiber is not present in a product, it is not listed.

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

Serving size in grams (g) and milligrams of sodium per serving

Nutrition Facts	
Serving Size	1 cup (30 g)
Servings per Container	12
Amount per Serving	
Calories 90	Calories from Fat 10
% Daily Value	
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) BEST	Moderate in Sodium (140 to 400 mg per serving)	High in Sodium (more than 400 mg per serving) AVOID
Spices, Sauces, and Condiments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Herbs and spices • Low-sodium seasoning mixtures (Mrs. Dash, Parsley Patch) • The following seasonings contain sodium; suggested servings are 1 teaspoon per day: mustard, Tabasco/red pepper sauce 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Salted seasonings (limit 2 tablespoons per day) • Barbecue sauces • Catsup • Chili sauce • Gravy • Mayonnaise and salad dressings • Steak sauce • Tomato purée and sauce • Worcestershire sauce 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High-sodium seasonings • Bouillon and meat tenderizers • Salt and salt substitute mixtures • Salted seasonings (garlic salt, onion salt, seasoning salt) • Soy sauce and teriyaki sauce
Grains and Cereals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bread • Low-sodium crackers • Hot cereals (except instant) • Low-sodium cereals (shredded wheat, puffed rice, wheat granola) • Matzo and noodles • Rice and tortillas • Unsalted popcorn and whole grains 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bread and rolls • Doughnuts • Dry cereals • Biscuits and muffins • Cakes and cookies • Instant hot cereals • Pancakes and waffles • Pastries and pies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frozen and canned spaghetti and pasta dishes • Salted crackers and chips • Salted popcorn • Salted pretzels
Vegetables and Fruits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fruits • Fruit juices • Unsalted vegetables (fresh, frozen, canned—<i>read the label</i>) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canned vegetables 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Olives and pickles • Pickled vegetables • Sauerkraut • Vegetable juices • Vegetables with seasoned sauces

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

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

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	Frozen, 4-inch	260
Banana bread, half slice	180	Beans, plain, 1 cup, cooked, no salt	15
Biscuit, from recipe 2½-inch diameter	350	Kidney beans, canned, 1 cup	660
Biscuit, from refrigerated can, 2½-inch	292	Pork and beans, canned, 1 cup	1,106
Bread, 1 slice (<i>read the label</i>)	100–185	Refried beans, canned, 1 cup	1,131
Breadcrumbs, seasoned, ¼ cup	530	Tofu, ½ cup	126
Bun, hamburger or hot dog, 1 plain	206	Chow mein noodles, 1 cup	45
Cereal, 1 ounce (<i>read the label</i>)	0–350	Egg noodles, 1 cup, cooked, no salt	10
Cornbread, from mix, 3¾ x 2½-inch	465	Pasta, plain, 1 cup, cooked, no salt	0
Crackers:		Rice, plain, 1 cup, cooked, no salt	0–15
Saltines, 4	134	Rice and pasta, seasoned mix, 1 cup	500–1,500
Wheat Thins, 4	70	Flour:	
Croissant, plain, 4½ x 4-inch, 2 ounces	425	All-purpose, wheat, 1 cup	2
Danish pastry, fruit, 4¼-inch	250	Self-rising, 1 cup	1,588
Dinner roll, 1 ounce	150	Desserts and Snacks	Sodium (mg)
Doughnut:		Cake, ½ of 9- to 10-inch cake:	
Cake-type, 3-inch	255	Angel food, without frosting	210
Raised, glazed, 3¾-inch	210	Chocolate, without frosting	299
English muffin, plain, 2 ounces	265	White, without frosting	242
French toast, 1 slice	310	Frosting, ready-to-eat, ½ package	35–70
Muffin, bran, 2¼-inch	235	Cheesecake, ⅛ of 9-inch cake	166
Pancake:		Chips:	
From mix, 4-inch	240	Potato, 1 ounce	149
Frozen, 4-inch	185	Tortilla, plain, 1 ounce	119
Stuffing, bread mix, dry, 6 ounces	170	Chocolate bar, 1 ounce	22
Tortilla, 1 medium:		Cookies:	
Corn	12	Brownie, from mix, 2-inch square	85
Flour	204	Chocolate chip, 2¼-inch diameter, 1	60
Waffle:		Graham cracker, 2½-inch square, 1	40
From mix, 7-inch	383	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	Burger King:	
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, 1/8 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	Domino's Pizza:	
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	KFC:	
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
		Breast	1,230
Fast Foods	Sodium (mg)	Drumstick	420
Arby's:		Thigh	710
Roast beef sandwich:		Potatoes and gravy	480
Junior	740	Cole slaw	300
Regular	1,379	Biscuit	580
Large	1,869	McDonald's:	
Beef N' Cheddar	1,274	Hamburger, small	530
French Dip	1,282	With cheese	740
French Dip N' Swiss	1,679	Quarter Pounder	730
Chicken Fillet	913	With cheese	1,330
Turkey Sub	2,029	Big Mac	1,010
Baked potato:		Filet-O-Fish	640
Plain	20	McChicken	810
Deluxe	346		

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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
Taco Bell:		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
Condiments and Seasonings	Sodium (mg)		
Salt, 1 teaspoon	2,325	Vegetables and Fruits	Sodium (mg)
Garlic and onion salt, 1 teaspoon	960	Fruits and fruit juices, 1 cup	1–15
Garlic and onion powder, 1 teaspoon	0	Fresh or plain frozen vegetables except as listed below, 1 cup	10–50
Pepper, 1 teaspoon	0	Artichoke, 1 medium	80
Most herbs and spices, 1 teaspoon	trace	Asparagus, canned, 4 spears	280
Meat tenderizer, 1 teaspoon	1,480	Beets, fresh, 1 cup, cooked	85
Taco seasoning, 2 tablespoons	428	Beets, canned, 1 cup	330
Baking powder, 1 teaspoon	490	Beet greens, 1 cup, cooked, no salt	347
Baking soda, 1 teaspoon	1,260	Carrots, fresh, 1 cup, cooked, no salt	90
Barbecue sauce, 1 tablespoon	196	Carrots, canned, 1 cup	350
Broth, beef or chicken, canned, 1 cup	780	Celery, raw, 1 cup	105
Butter:		Corn, canned, 1 cup:	
Salted, 1 tablespoon	82	Whole	546
Unsalted, 1 tablespoon	0	Cream-style	730
Catsup, 1 tablespoon	155	Green beans, canned, 1 cup	354
Cheese or hollandaise sauce, ¼ cup	522	Mixed vegetables, 1 cup:	
Gravy, canned, ¼ cup:		Frozen	65
Beef	326	Canned	245
Chicken	355	Mushrooms, canned, 1 cup:	665
Margarine, 1 tablespoon	135–155	Peas, 1 cup	
Mayonnaise, 1 tablespoon	105	Frozen	115
Mustard, 1 teaspoon	65	Canned	495
Oil or shortening, 1 tablespoon	0	Potato:	
Olives, ripe, 5 large	192	Plain, 1 medium	15
Peanut butter, 1 tablespoon:			
Salted	78		
Unsalted	5		

SODIUM CONTENT OF COMMON FOODS *(continued)*

Au gratin, from mix, 1 cup	1,075	Fish , 3-ounce cooked portion, no salt added except as noted:	
Mashed, 1 cup	620	Cod, fresh or plain frozen	65
Chips, 1 ounce	149	Catfish, breaded and fried	240
Salad, 1 cup	1,320	Fish sticks, 3, frozen	354
Scalloped, 1 cup	820	Lox, 1 ounce	570
Sauerkraut, 1 cup	1,560	Salmon, fresh	50
Spinach, 1 cup:		Canned, 3 ounces	471
Fresh, cooked	120	Smoked, 1 ounce	220
Frozen	184	Sardines, Atlantic, in oil, 2, 1 ounce	143
Canned	746	Snapper or pike, fresh or plain frozen	45
Sweet potato:		Sole or ocean perch	85
Canned, 1 cup	135	Tuna, fresh	40
Fresh, baked	53	Tuna, 3 ounces, canned	300
Tomatoes, canned, 1 cup	564	Shellfish:	
Tomato or vegetable juice, canned, 1 cup	654	Clams, $\frac{3}{4}$ cup, breaded and fried	834
Tomato sauce, 1 cup	1,284	Crab, 3 ounces, cooked:	
Fish and Poultry	Sodium (mg)	Alaska King	915
Chicken , medium piece		Dungeness	320
Half breast:		Blue	235
Fried, batter-dipped	385	Lobster, 3 ounces cooked	325
Fried, flour-dipped, no salt	75	Shrimp, 4 large:	
Roasted, no salt	70	Breaded and fried	103
Thigh:		Boiled or steamed	50
Fried, batter-dipped	250	Beef, Pork, Lamb, and Veal	Sodium (mg)
Fried, flour-dipped, no salt	65	Beef:	
Roasted, no salt	50	Fresh, all cuts, 3 ounces, cooked, no salt	55-75
Chicken liver, 1 cooked, no salt	25	Cured or processed:	
Chicken frankfurter, 1.5 ounce	447	Bologna, 2 slices, 2 ounces	784
Duck , roasted, half duck	144	Salami, dry, 2 slices, 2 ounces	1,407
Turkey , 3 ounces, roasted, no salt:		Corned-beef brisket, 3 ounces	965
Light meat	50	Pastrami, 3 ounces	707
Dark meat	70	Dried beef, 1 ounce	791
Ground, 3 ounces, cooked	88	Frankfurter, 1.5 ounces	604
Turkey ham or pastrami, 2 slices, 2 ounces	560	Liver, 3 ounces	79
Frozen entrées and meals, 8-12 ounces	750-1,500		

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SODIUM CONTENT OF COMMON FOODS *(continued)*

Frozen entrées and meals, 8–12 ounces	650–1,500	Sweetened condensed milk, 1 cup	395
Canned stew/hash/chili, 1 cup	1,000–1,600	Half and half, 1 tablespoon	5
Pork:		Heavy cream, 1 tablespoon	5
Fresh, all cuts, 3 ounces, cooked, no salt	50–70	Frozen dessert topping, 1 tablespoon	1
Cured or processed:		Nondairy creamer, 1 tablespoon	10
Bacon, 3 slices	575	Cheese, 1 ounce:	
Canadian-style bacon, 3 ounces	1,074	American processed	422
Ham, extra lean, 3 ounces	1,113	Blue	395
Sausage, 3 ounces	786	Cheddar or Colby	175
Smoked sausage, 3 ounces	868	Cheese food, processed	359
Vienna sausage, 3 ounces	1,017	Cheese spread, processed	380
Italian or Polish sausage, 3 ounces	920	Mozzarella	150
Bologna, 2 slices, 2 ounces	784	Muenster	170
Salami, dry, 1 ounce	1,407	Parmesan, grated, 1 tablespoon	95
Frankfurter, 1½ ounces	604	Provolone	250
Pepperoni, 1 ounce	463	Roquefort	515
Salt pork, 1 ounce	405	Swiss	54
Lamb:		Cottage cheese, ½ cup:	
Chop, 3 ounces	70	Creamed or low-fat	380–460
Leg, 3 ounces	60	Dry curd	239
Veal:		Cream cheese, 1 tablespoon	47
Loin chop, 3 ounces	75	Neufchatel, 1 ounce	95
Rib roast, 3 ounces	95	Ricotta, ½ cup	153
Dairy Products and Eggs	Sodium (mg)	Sour cream, 1 tablespoon	5
Milk, 1 cup	98	Yogurt, 8 ounces:	
Buttermilk, salted, 1 cup	255	With fruit	135
Chocolate milk or hot cocoa, 1 cup	165	Plain	165
Eggnog, 1 cup	140	Egg, whole, 1 large	65
Evaporated milk, 1 cup	294	Egg, white only, 1 large	55
		Egg, yolk only, 1 large	10
		Egg substitute, frozen, ¼ cup	111

Sources:

US Department of Agriculture (USDA) National Nutrient Database for Standard Reference, Release 21: www.nal.usda.gov/fnic/foodcomp/search
www.dietbites.com
www.weightcommander.com

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. When traveling by car, stop every two hours and walk around. This will improve blood flow in 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.

ACTIVITY

Listen to your body. It is 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.
- Elevate your feet and legs for a few minutes every one to two hours. This gives your heart time to rest.
- Get plenty of sleep at night and take naps during the day if needed.
- Use extra pillows to prop yourself up if you have trouble breathing when lying flat.

About exercise:

- Get your doctor's okay before starting an exercise program.
- Start gradually and aim for 30 minutes per day, five days a week.
- 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 and biking can strengthen your heart and help you lose weight.
- 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 is okay, avoid work that involves pushing, pulling, or raising heavy objects above your shoulders. Such activity increases the pressure and the workload of 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 excess sweating
- 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 with you.

ANGIOTENSIN CONVERTING ENZYME (ACE) INHIBITORS *(Treat high blood pressure)*

Trade Names	Purpose	Possible Side Effects
Accupril (quinapril) Altace (ramipril) Capoten (captopril) Lotensin (benazepril) Mavik (trandolapril) Monopril (fosinopril sodium) Prinivil, Zestril (lisinopril) Univasc (moexipril) Vasotec (enalapril maleate)	<p>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.</p> <p>Special Instructions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid taking cough, cold, or allergy medications without consulting your doctor. • Do not use salt substitutes containing potassium without consulting your doctor. • Capoten: Take one hour before meals, on an empty stomach. 	<p>Notify your doctor if you develop any of the following symptoms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Persistent dizziness or light-headedness • Skin rash or itching • Loss of taste or smell • Nausea or loss of appetite that lasts for more than one day • Vomiting or diarrhea that lasts for more than one day • Dry, hacking cough • Swollen or puffy feet, ankles, hands, lips, or face • Changes in your heart rhythm—skipping beats, pounding, rapid, or very slow

ANGIOTENSIN RECEPTOR BLOCKERS (ARBs) *(Treat high blood pressure)*

Trade Names	Purpose	Possible Side Effects
Atacand (candesartan) Avapro (irbesartan) Benicar (olmesartan) Cozaar (losartan) Diovan (valsartan) Micardis (telmisartan) Tevetan (eprosartan)	<p>Angiotensin blockers are used to treat high blood pressure, prevent fluid retention, and prevent shortness of breath from heart disease.</p> <p>Special Instructions</p> <p>If you feel dizzy when getting up from a sitting or lying position, getting up slowly often lessens the problem.</p>	<p>Notify your doctor if you develop any of the following symptoms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unexplained fever • Mouth sores • Insomnia • Rapid weight gain or swelling in the hands, feet, or ankles • Changes in your heart rhythm—skipping beats, pounding, rapid, or very slow • Chest pain • Persistent chest or nasal congestion or persistent cough • Persistent muscle aches or cramps • Persistent dizziness or light-headedness • Loss of appetite • Nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea that lasts for more than one day • Loss of your sense of taste or smell

BETA-BLOCKERS *(Control heart rate and blood pressure)*

Trade Names	Purpose	Possible Side Effects
<p>Bystolic (nebivolol) Coreg (carvedilol) Inderal, InnoPran XL (propranolol) Lopressor, Toprol XL (metoprolol) Normodyne, Trandate (labetalol) Tenormin (atenolol) Zebeta (bisoprolol)</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>Special Instructions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take Coreg with food and at evenly spaced intervals. • Tell your doctor if you are taking any green-colored herbal products. • Do not take tranquilizers or sleeping pills or drink alcoholic beverages unless you have first checked with your doctor. • Never discontinue taking a beta-blocker without first consulting your doctor. You may need to taper off this drug before stopping. • Check with a pharmacist before using over-the-counter cold, sinus, or nasal medications. • Beta-blockers may decrease or increase blood-sugar levels and mask symptoms of very low blood sugar. Tell your doctor if your levels change. 	<p>Notify your doctor if you develop any of the following symptoms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shortness of breath, wheezing, or tiredness, especially after mild exercise • Coughing at night • Persistent dizziness, weakness, or fainting • Swollen or puffy feet, ankles, or hands • Unusually slow (below 55 beats per minute) or fast heart rate that cannot be explained • Confused or depressed feelings • Skin rash or itching • Yellow in the whites of the eyes or yellowing of the skin • Clay- or light-colored stools • Dark yellow/orange urine • Persistent nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea • Unusual bleeding or bruising

DIGOXIN (*Strengthens heartbeat and controls rhythm*)

Trade Name	Purpose	Possible Side Effects
Lanoxin (digoxin)	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"> • Nausea or loss of appetite that lasts for more than one day • Vomiting or diarrhea that lasts for more than one day • Blurred, hallow, or flickering vision • Changes in your heart rhythm—skipping beats, pounding, rapid, or very slow
	Special Instructions Take this medication around the same time each day.	

DIURETICS (*“Water pills”*)

Trade Names	Purpose	Possible Side Effects
Aldactone (spironolactone) Bumex (bumetanide) Demadex (torsemide) Diuril (chlorothiazide) Diazide, Dyrenium, Maxide (triamterene/HCTZ) Hydrodiuril, Oretic, Esidrix (hydrochlorothiazide) Inspira (eplerenone)* Lasix (furosemide) Lozol (indapamide) Midamor (amiloride) Mykrox, Zaroxolyn (metolazone)	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 are 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"> • Muscle cramps or numbness in the hands or feet • Extreme fatigue or weakness • Shortness of breath • Dizziness • Blurred vision • Irregular heartbeat • Rapid weight gain or swelling in the hands, feet, or ankles
	Special Instructions 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.	
<i>*Inspira blocks the binding of aldosterone in the angiotensin system.</i>		

POTASSIUM SUPPLEMENTS *(Replace potassium lost in urine)*

Trade Names	Purpose	Possible Side Effects
<p>K-Dur, K-Lor powder, K-lyte, K-Tabs, Micro K, Slow K (potassium chloride)</p>	<p>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.</p>	<p>Notify your doctor if you develop any of the following symptoms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weakness or confusion • Nausea or loss of appetite that lasts for more than one day • Vomiting or diarrhea that lasts for more than one day • Abdominal discomfort • Changes in your heart rhythm—skipping beats, pounding, rapid, or very slow
	<p>Special Instructions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take after meals to reduce stomach irritation. • Mix liquid or powdered preparations in a glass of fruit juice, water, or carbonated beverage. • 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"> · Dried fruits (apricots, dates, prunes, raisins) · Fresh fruits (apricots, bananas, strawberries, honeydew melon, watermelon, cantaloupe, oranges, pears, peaches) · Fruit juices · Fresh vegetables (avocados, broccoli, peas, potatoes, spinach, tomatoes, celery) · Legumes (beans) · Fresh meats and poultry 	

NOTES

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.

Websites

www.americanheart.org

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

www.clevelandclinic.org/heart

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

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.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 US 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