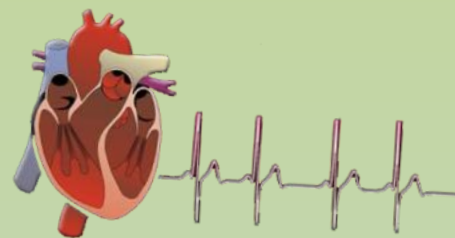


February Heart Health Awareness Month

Congestive Heart Failure (CHF)



In congestive heart failure, a person's heart is weakened and unable to pump enough blood to meet the body's needs. It can be caused by conditions such as high blood pressure and coronary artery disease. The heart's inability to effectively pump blood can cause a buildup of fluid in the lungs, liver, arms, legs and other parts of the body.

According to the American Heart Association, about 5.7 million Americans have heart failure.

One of the most common causes of heart failure is coronary artery disease, a narrowing of the small blood vessels that supply blood and oxygen to the heart. Another common cause is cardiomyopathy, an infection that weakens the heart muscle. Other causes include congenital heart disease, heart attack, damaged heart valves, and some types of abnormal heart rhythms (arrhythmias).

Symptoms of CHF

- Sudden weight gain
- Shortness of breath while at rest, not related to exercise or exertion
- Increased swelling of the legs or ankles
- Swelling of the abdomen
- Trouble sleeping (awakening short of breath, using more pillows)
- Frequent dry, hacking cough
- Loss of appetite; indigestion
- Feeling fatigued, faint or weak
- Irregular or rapid pulse

Risk factors

- High blood pressure
- Coronary artery disease
- Heart attack
- Irregular heartbeats
- Diabetes
- Sleep apnea
- Congenital heart defects
- Some viruses
- Alcohol abuse
- Kidney problems

Living better with CHF

Patients can manage CHF and improve quality of life while minimizing the risk of complications and hospitalization.

- Take all medication as prescribed
- Weigh yourself daily. Report a rapid weight gain to your health care professional (two pounds in a day or five pounds in five days)
- Follow a heart-healthy diet low in sodium and high in whole grains and fresh fruit and vegetables.
- Exercise
- Avoid alcohol
- Don't smoke
- Avoid excessive fatigue. Rest when you're tired.
- Monitor yourself daily for symptoms such as weight gain, coughing, fatigue, or swelling of the feet, ankles, hands or abdomen. Take action immediately when they occur.
- See your doctor regularly



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Franchising Available

Source: www.cdc.gov, www.heart.org, www.niams.nih.gov,
www.nih.gov and www.mayoclinic.com



How our home care team can help



Benefits we deliver to hospitals

- Reduce readmissions
- Reduce length of stay
- Reduce urgent/emergent care
- Utilize outside resources to improve outcomes and control cost

Benefits we deliver to physicians

- Updated clinical assessment data
- Better case management to reduce calls
- Early detection/intervention for better disease management
- Streamlines plan of care
- Improved physician follow-up
- Clinical outcomes feedback

Services related to CHF qualify under Care Plan Oversight.

Benefits we deliver to patient/ family/caregivers

- Improve quality of life
- Maximize activity tolerance
- Educate on early warning signs/symptoms
- Fewer emergency room visits
- Fewer hospital admissions

Home health services may include but are not limited to:

- Observation and assessment
- Management and education
- Wellness education
- Assessment of cardiac complications
- Pain assessment
- Medication education
- Postoperative safety and education
- Wound care
- Exercise instruction
- Diagnostic checks
- Prevention education
- Physician follow-up
- Clinical outcomes feedback
- Case management
- 30-day and 60-day summaries
- Home safety evaluation
- Specialized device and equipment training

This information is for educational purposes only and is not intended to replace the advice of your doctor or health care provider.



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