Welcome to CardioSmart’s Heart Forum on Heart Failure
A Program for Patients & Caregivers
This program is sponsored by Novartis Pharmaceuticals.

The physician speaker is not an employee or agent of the sponsor for this event.

Today’s Program

• About heart failure – what it is, who gets it, symptoms, what to expect
• Treatment options
• Your health care team and doctor visits
• Tips for managing heart failure
• Resources for support
About Heart Failure

Who is at Risk

- People 65+ years old, but it can affect people of all ages
- Being overweight or obese
- Previous heart attack, persistent high blood pressure, certain congenital heart defects or other heart conditions
- Family history
- African Americans are more likely to develop heart failure
  - Also tend to develop symptoms at a younger age and are admitted to the hospital and die more often
- Women tend to have more severe symptoms, limits in activity
Who is at Risk

“I remember thinking to myself that this cannot be possible, I’m only 30 years old.” – Brenda, Heart Failure Patient

“At 47 years old, I weighed a whopping 120 pounds, didn’t smoke and walked several miles a day, so I didn’t fit the bill for someone who would have heart disease.” – Lori, Heart Failure Patient

Heart Failure Facts

You’re not alone.

- Almost 6 million Americans have heart failure
- 500,000+ new cases each year
  - Aging population
  - Advances in treating heart disease, better survival from heart attack, etc.
- Heart failure is the leading cause of hospitalization among people 65+
- 1 in 3 people with heart failure return to the hospital within a month of leaving
- Roughly half of people who develop heart failure die within 5 years of diagnosis
What is Heart Failure

- Your heart is still working, BUT it isn’t pumping the way it should
- The heart either:
  - can’t fill with enough blood (diastolic) and/or
  - it can’t pump blood to the rest of the body with enough force (systolic)

What is Heart Failure

- It is a serious, lifelong condition
  - It can’t be cured, but like diabetes, it can be managed
  - Occurs in episodes—someone is said to be “in heart failure”
  - Often results in frequent hospital visits
Your heart pumps oxygen and nutrient-rich blood to your body with every heartbeat.

When your heart relaxes, it fills with blood. When it contracts, it pushes the blood forward in one direction to nourish and fuel the body.

With heart failure:
• the heart doesn’t relax enough to fill with the amount of blood that’s ideally needed and/or
• it can’t squeeze sufficient blood out

People can either have heart failure with preserved or “normal” ejection fraction (EF) or lowered EF.
How Your Heart Pumps

Measuring the ejection fraction – the total amount of blood that is squeezed out with each heartbeat – helps gauge how well your heart is pumping.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>An ejection fraction of:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>55-70%</td>
<td>the heart is pumping normally</td>
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<tr>
<td>36-49%</td>
<td>pumping ability is below normal</td>
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<tr>
<td>≤35%</td>
<td>squeezing capacity is low, setting the stage for dangerous heart rhythms and sudden cardiac death</td>
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How it Develops

Heart failure develops mainly as we age or because of other health issues or behaviors that force the heart to work harder.

The heart’s ability to squeeze and pump grows weaker over time.

Diseases that can damage or strain the heart

- Heart disease
- High blood pressure (hypertension)
- Diabetes
- Stress-induced cardiomyopathy (broken heart syndrome)
- Problem with the heart muscle (cardiomyopathy) or heart valves
- Congenital heart problems (present at birth)
- Kidney problems
- Infections

Some treatments for cancer (chemotherapy), certain thyroid conditions, heavy alcohol or drug use have also been linked to damage to the heart muscle.
It’s not always obvious, and symptoms can vary. Speak up if you think something is wrong.

“I had been having trouble catching my breath and assumed I was coming down with bronchitis or pneumonia.”

—Brenda, Heart Failure Patient
Signs and Symptoms

Some of the most common signs and symptoms include:

- Shortness of breath (even when doing simple tasks like dressing or walking a flight of stairs)
- Extreme tiredness (fatigue)
- Feeling weak
- Swelling in the ankles, feet, legs, abdomen, and veins in the neck
- Rapid or irregular heartbeat
- Fast weight gain

**NOTE:** Gaining weight quickly (over a period of days), swelling or developing a cough, especially one that worsens at night, could be a red flag that fluid is building up in the body – emergency medical attention is needed.

Some people may also report:

- Feeling full more quickly, lack of appetite, wasting (cardiac cachexia)
- Nausea and vomiting
- Pressure or heaviness in the chest when lying flat
- A noticeable drop in how often they urinate

Other things to keep in mind:

- Symptoms tend to get worse as your heart grows weaker.
- They can be different in women
- Talk with your doctor about any changes in how you feel. Keep a notepad handy to track symptoms.

"Knowing the symptoms is the most critical part to staying alive."

– Lori, Heart Failure Patient
How it’s Diagnosed and Tracked

• Detailed medical history and physical exam
• The doctor will listen to your heart and lungs, weigh you, ask how you are feeling and note any personal/family medical history, etc.

• Order blood and/or imaging tests to assess any damage to your heart and check how well your heart pumps blood
  – B-type natriuretic peptide (BNP) and/or thyroid blood test; when heart failure develops or worsens, BNP is released
  – EKG, chest X-ray, echocardiogram, ultrasound or cardiac MRI
  – Possible referral to an interventional cardiologist for a cardiac catheterization
What to Expect Long-Term

To manage heart failure, you must make your health your #1 priority.

That means:

✓ Going to all of your doctor appointments (to track your heart function, adjust treatments if needed, talk about how you feel)
✓ Learning to pace yourself and rest when needed
✓ Making important lifestyle changes, especially related to diet and exercise
✓ Accepting a new normal – your heart is compromised and you will feel it

“Heart failure is a chronic disease ... but you can live a long and rewarding life. I am living proof of that.”
– Lori, Heart Failure Patient

Treatment Options
There is no cure for heart failure, but there are treatments to help you live a longer, more active life.

These include:
- Lifestyle changes
- Ongoing medical care
- Medications
- Procedures in certain cases
- Heart pumps (left ventricular assist devices) or a heart transplant for more severe cases or as a last resort

Treatment will depend on your:
- Age
- Overall health
- Other medical conditions
- Personal preferences

Make Lifestyle Changes

Adopt a healthier way of life.
- Eating a heart-healthy, low sodium diet
- Watching your fluid intake
- Getting regular exercise
  - Find a safe and reasonable level of physical activity
  - Don't overexert yourself
- Losing weight if needed
  - Excess body weight makes your heart work harder
- Avoiding alcohol, tobacco and stimulants like cocaine, methamphetamines, anabolic steroids, etc.
Managing Heart Failure

Ongoing Medical Care

• Expect frequent follow-up visits and tests to assess how your heart is working
• Keep other cardiovascular risk factors and other conditions such as diabetes or sleep apnea in check
• Take steps to prevent other illnesses
  – Ask about vaccinations for the flu and pneumococcal disease
• Report any changes in your health (quick weight gain, noticeable swelling, etc.)
• Ask for a referral to a cardiac rehabilitation program
• Tools such as telemedicine and CardioMEMS to reduce hospital readmissions

Managing Heart Failure

Medications

• Medications are an essential part of treating heart failure.
• Some people take an average of 11+ medications – that’s a lot to keep track of!
• Medications are mainly used to
  – help your body get rid of extra fluid and/or
  – reduce the strain on the heart so it doesn’t have to work as hard to pump blood

The CardioSmart Med Reminder App, is a free and easy-to-use app to help you take your medications as prescribed.

Available in the Apple App Store!
Medications

- When taking medications, always:
  - take them as directed by your doctor and read the labels
  - report side effects
  - keep follow-up appointments – sometimes medications, dosages and/or how often you take each need to be adjusted
  - tell your doctor if you have a hard time taking or paying for your medications (ask about pill boxes, Rx assistance programs, etc.)

You may be prescribed one or more of the following:

- **Diuretics (water or fluid pills)** help keep fluid from building up in your body or lungs – they will also make you urinate more frequently
- **ACE inhibitors/ARB** relax your blood vessels to lower blood pressure and reduce strain on your heart and improve blood flow
- **Beta blockers** can slow a rapid heart rate and lower your blood pressure
- **Aldosterone antagonists** help the body to get rid of salt and water through urine. This lowers the volume of blood that the heart must pump.
- **Digoxin** makes the heart pump better and pump more blood
- **Nitrates and Hydralazine** often used in AA patients and those who can’t take ACEI or ARB

Source: NHLBI
Some common procedures include implantable devices:

Cardiac resynchronization therapy (CRT) helps coordinate both sides of the heart to pump at the same time.

Implantable cardioverter defibrillator (ICD) is a battery-powered device placed under the skin that keeps track of your heart rate and if a problem is detected it will send electrical impulses or a shock to restore a normal heart beat.
Procedures

For end-stage heart failure:

- **Home inotropes** for those waiting on transplants, and even for those who may not be transplant candidates
- **Left ventricular assist devices** to help the heart pump better
- **Heart transplant**, if eligible

There are also a lot of therapies being investigated in clinical trials. For example, stem cells, gene therapies and novel drugs.

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Cardiac Rehab

- **People of all ages and walks of life are living longer and stronger because of cardiac rehabilitation**

- **Cardiac Rehab** is a proven way for individuals dealing with heart disease or a heart-related condition to regain strength and improve overall health

- A cardiac rehab program typically consists of 5 components

- **HF** is now approved for Cardiac Rehab
Cardiac Rehab

Managing Heart Failure

Your Health Care Team and Doctor Visits
Your Primary Care Doctor

For heart failure, a comprehensive, multidisciplinary approach is needed. Your primary care doctor can help:

- Monitor your overall and heart health
- Coordinate with or refer you to a cardiologist — a doctor who specializes in diseases of the heart and blood vessels

Your Cardiologist

A cardiologist is a doctor who specializes in finding, treating and preventing diseases of the heart and blood vessels

- Your cardiologist may work with your family doctor to help track and manage your heart failure
- Many people with heart failure also have problems with the way their heart beats; you may be referred to an electrophysiologist, a cardiologist who specializes in the diagnosis and treatment of abnormal heart rhythms
Your cardiology nurse or PA:

- Works closely with your cardiologist
- Can educate you and your caregivers about your specific condition and the treatments or procedures you might need
- Helps you understand the side effects of medications
- Can offer advice on integrating lifestyle changes

Your pharmacist can:

- Answer questions about your medications
- Review all of the medications you have been prescribed or take over the counter
- Help you understand your insurance coverage of medications
- Educate you about appropriate use of medications
- Assist with ways to adhere to/take medications properly
Your Nutritionist

A dietitian or nutritionist is an expert who will:

- Assess your eating habits by interview or by having you keep a food diary
- Offer strategies and tips to adopt and stick to a heart-healthy diet
- Explain why certain foods raise cholesterol and other heart disease risk factors
- Work with you to come up with creative recipes/menus and meals that you will still enjoy

If your insurance doesn’t cover this, there are other resources.

Preparing for Appointments

Be ready to report:

- When you feel your best and worst
  - Are there certain activities or times of day that make you feel less well?
- How heart failure is affecting your life
  - Have you cut back on activities or work?
  - Is it affecting your family?
  - Your emotional wellbeing?
- Other concerns (side effects of treatment, diet and exercise, etc.)
Questions to Ask
For a full list of “Questions to Ask Your Doctor,” visit: CardioSmart.org/HFQuestions

Tips for Managing Heart Failure
Tips for Managing Heart Failure

Learn about your specific type of heart failure

- Know how to recognize the signs that things might be getting worse
  - worsening shortness of breath
  - swelling
  - gaining weight very quickly (for example, more than 5lbs in 36-72 hours)
  - coughing at night
  - heaviness in your chest, not being able to lie flat

Your doctor may want you to keep a log of your:

- Blood pressure
- Heart rate
- Daily weight
- ICD therapies

It’s also important to carry:

- Information about your devices, stents, etc.
- Keep a list of current medications, dosage and who prescribed each
- Ask about a health alert bracelet
Tips for Managing Heart Failure

• Try to do something good for your heart every day
  – Exercise
  – Breathe deep
  – Eat lots of fresh fruits and vegetables
  – Watch your fluid intake
• Stick with your treatment plan
• Stay positive
  – Advances in treatment; patients living better and longer
• Pay close attention to your symptoms and don’t delay getting care
• Join a support group

Tips for Managing Heart Failure

• Involve caregivers and get support
  – Managing heart failure can feel overwhelming
• Caregivers can help:
  – Manage your medications
  – Go with you to doctor visits and ask questions
  – Monitor your progress
  – Support you in making healthy changes in your life
  – Weigh different treatment options
  – Lift your spirits when you feel down
  – Keep you connected to the things you love
Tips for Managing Heart Failure

Plan ahead

• Be sure you have a current living will and health care proxy in place
• This assures your loved ones know your wishes for end-of-life care when the time comes

“You have to be your own advocate. I looked at my beautiful daughter’s face and was determined to make sure she had her mother growing up. She needed me, and I needed to be there for her.” – Kimberly, Heart Failure Patient

Tips for the Caregiver

You, the caregiver, are a very important part of the care team.

Here are some tips to help you manage the details and stay organized:

• Educate yourself about your loved one’s condition
• Go to medical appointments when you can and take notes
• Keep track of test results
• Make sure you know what medications are being taken and why
Tips for the Caregiver

Although it might sound selfish, the best thing you can do for your loved one is to take care of YOU.

- Put yourself first
- Find ways to recharge
- Welcome distractions every now and again
- Don’t forget to eat a balanced diet
- Get enough sleep
- Set limits. It’s OK to say “no” sometimes.
- Widen your circle of support.
- Assign tasks to others and accept help
- Cut yourself some slack

Resources for Support and Information
CardioSmart is an ongoing patient education and empowerment initiative offered by the American College of Cardiology. Our mission is to help individuals prevent, treat and manage cardiovascular disease.

www.CardioSmart.org

For more information, you can also visit:

Mended Hearts
www.mendedhearts.org

American Heart Association
www.heart.org

National Heart Blood and Lung Institute
www.nhlbi.nih.gov

WomenHeart: The National Coalition for Women with Heart Disease
www.womenheart.org
Q&A Session