

HEART FAILURE AND WHAT TO KNOW



MIDLAND HEALTH

ABOUT 5.1 MILLION PEOPLE IN THE UNITED STATES HAVE HEART FAILURE. (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)

WHAT IS HEART FAILURE?

Heart Failure means that the heart is not pumping as well as it should be. The body depends on the heart's pumping action to deliver oxygen and nutrient-rich blood to the body's cells. When the cells are nourished properly, the body can function normally. With heart failure, the weakened heart is unable to supply the body's demand for oxygen rich blood. This results in shortness of breath, fatigue and inability to do normal daily activities. Others have swelling on their feet and legs and the feeling of being bloated.

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF HEART FAILURE?

Shortness of breath: breathlessness during activity (most common), at rest or while sleeping, which might come on suddenly and wake you up.

Tiredness, fatigue: a tired feeling all the time and difficulty with everyday activities.

Edema, buildup of excess fluid in body/tissues: swelling in the feet, ankles, legs or abdomen or weight gain.

Lack of appetite: a feeling of being full or sick to your stomach.

Increased Heart Rate: heart palpitation, which feels like your heart is racing or throbbing.

LET YOUR PHYSICIAN KNOW IF YOU HAVE ANY OF THESE SYMPTOMS!

KEY POINTS TO REMEMBER IF YOU HAVE HEART FAILURE

SALT / SODIUM - 2GM sodium intake is what is recommended for cardiac diet.

THROW AWAY YOUR SALT SHAKER.

Avoid canned or preserved food.

Buy low salt/sodium products.

WEIGHT - 2 pounds is equivalent to 1 liter of fluid.

Weigh daily, first thing in the morning wearing almost the same clothes. If you gain 2 lbs in one day, call your physician.

EXERCISE - 30 mins of exercise every day is good for your heart. Walking is the best exercise.

MEDICATIONS - Take your medicines as prescribed. Do not miss a dose. Let your physician know of any side effects.

DOCTOR APPOINTMENTS - Keep your doctor appointments. Your physician knows what's going on with you and he/she is the only one who can adjust your medications.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION REGARDING HEART FAILURE, CALL LERINA ESPINOSA, RN, HEART CARE COORDINATOR AT (432) 221-4204.