



CalvertHealth[®]

Heart Failure Survival Guide

Helping You Take Charge
of Your Health



Heart Failure Survival Guide

Keep This Copy

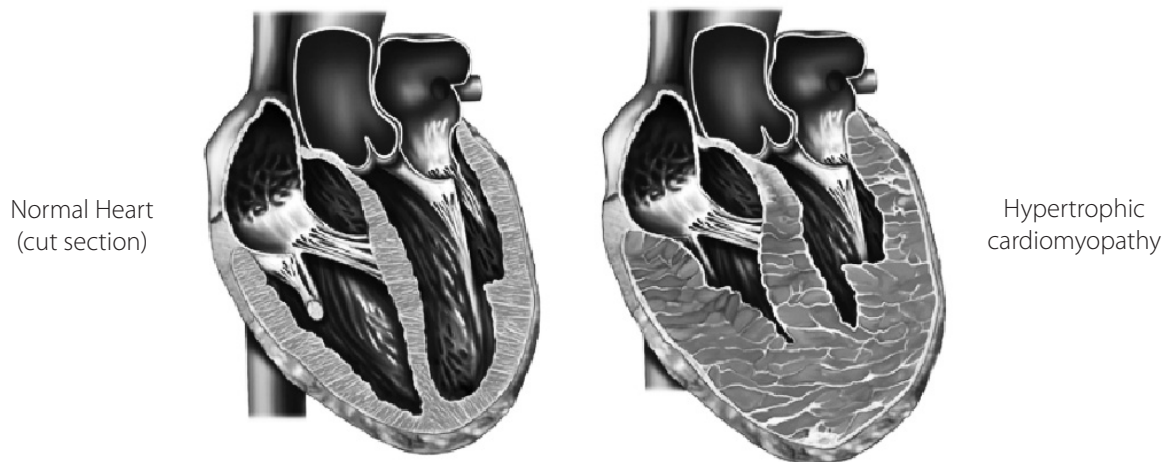
Bring this handbook with you to your doctor appointments.

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What is Heart Failure?

The heart is a muscle that pumps oxygen-rich blood to all parts of the body. When you have heart failure, the heart is not able to pump as well as it should. Blood and fluid may back up into the lungs (congestive heart failure). As a result, some parts of the body won't get enough oxygen-rich blood to work normally. These problems lead to the symptoms of heart failure.



KEY POINTS:

- The heart doesn't pump efficiently.
- The heart is not able to move as much fluid as it should with each beat.
- Congestion from fluid in the lungs causes coughing and shortness of breath.
- It's normal to feel frightened or discouraged by your diagnosis.
- There are many things you can do to take charge of your treatment.

This survival guide offers practical advice that can help you feel better, stay out of the hospital and live longer.

Taking Control is Key

Heart failure is a serious illness that can affect how long you live. Even so, it is possible to lead a normal, active life with heart failure. Taking control is key. Your care is not just the responsibility of your doctor or healthcare team. Success depends on your active involvement.

You will need to partner with your healthcare providers and work on the following:

- Weigh yourself every day and keep a record.
- Monitor your symptoms every day and report changes.
- Take your medication/s as directed.
- Follow a low-sodium diet.
- Work on weight reduction if overweight.
- Learn when to call your doctor or go to the emergency department.
- Get regular physical activity.
- Avoid alcohol and illegal drugs.
- Quit smoking.
- Get vaccinations, such as flu shots, routinely.



KEY POINTS

- Make following your plan of care a permanent part of your life.
- Keep all medical appointments, call if you need to reschedule.

Watch for these Warning Signs of Congestive Heart Failure



Green Light – Good Signs – All is Well

HOW YOU'RE DOING

- Doing well
- Managing normal activities
- No change in symptoms
- Taking medications as prescribed

WHAT TO DO

- Continue daily weigh-ins
- Continue low-sodium diet
- Continue taking medications as prescribed
- Keep all doctor's appointments
- Get daily exercise that is approved by your doctor



Yellow Light – Caution Signs – Time to Act!

HOW YOU'RE DOING

- Gain of 2-3 pounds in a day or 5 pounds in a week
- New or increased swelling in feet or ankles
- Bloating, full feeling in abdomen
- Cough or wheezing that will not go away
- Side effects from medications
- More tired than usual and/or less energy than usual
- The need to use additional pillows or sleep in a recliner to breathe easier
- More shortness of breath than usual with routine activity
- Just don't feel well – unusually restless or uneasy

WHAT TO DO

- Write down symptoms with changes from normal
- Call your cardiologist. If you don't have one, call your primary care provider and request an appointment that day or the next
- If you cannot get an appointment that day or the next, insist on talking to the doctor or nurse practitioner
- Emphasize that your goal is to stay out of the hospital



Red Light – DANGER Signs – STOP!

HOW YOU'RE DOING

- Severe shortness of breath, pink or white foamy mucus
- Chest pain that does not go away even after taking 3 nitroglycerin doses
- Heart racing, pounding or skipping
- Feeling like you are going to faint
- A feeling of impending doom – something is very wrong
- You pass out

WHAT TO DO

CALL 911 NOW!

Planning for Self-Care

Daily Weigh-ins

Daily weigh-ins are a very important way to keep track of your heart failure. Keep a daily log and take this with you to your primary care appointments. Weight gain is the earliest sign of heart failure. It is possible to gain a lot of weight in fluid, and not notice any symptoms yet.



KEY POINTS

- Weigh yourself when you wake up in the morning, after urinating.
- Wear few or no clothes.
- Place scale on a hard, flat surface.
- Record weight daily, watching and noting for changes.
- If you gain more than 2 pounds in a day or 5 pounds in a week, call your healthcare provider. They may be able to make medication changes to help decrease the fluid and keep you out of the hospital.

Monthly Weight Log

	SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
Week 1							
Week 2							
Week 3							
Week 4							

	SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
Week 1							
Week 2							
Week 3							
Week 4							

	SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
Week 1							
Week 2							
Week 3							
Week 4							

	SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
Week 1							
Week 2							
Week 3							
Week 4							

Monitoring Symptoms

Shortness of Breath

Many patients with heart failure have shortness of breath. It can occur at any time, during activity, rest and/or at night. This can vary from day to day. Some people have to sit upright to breathe better or to sleep. Your treatment will be based on the cause and the degree of your shortness of breath. You need to report to your healthcare provider any changes in your symptoms.

KEY POINTS:

- Call healthcare providers if you need additional pillows or have to sleep upright to breathe comfortably.
- Any increase in shortness of breath should be reported to your healthcare provider.

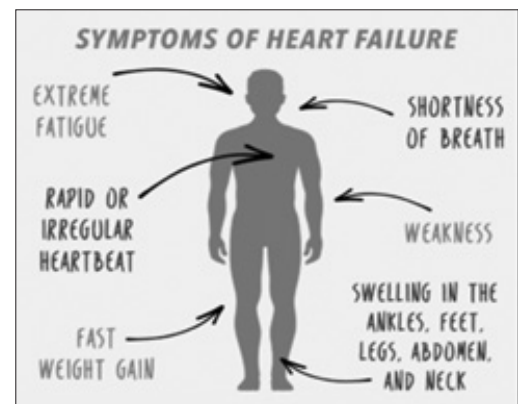
Preventing Edema

Many patients with heart failure can have edema or swelling in their feet, ankles or abdomen. This is a sign that fluid is building up in your body. Swelling occurs because there is too much sodium (salt) in your diet. Ask your doctor or dietitian what foods are best for you. The doctor may tell you to limit your salt and fat intake or how much fluid you drink. Since your heart doesn't pump well, it has a hard time moving this additional fluid.

Recognize a change in weight before developing swelling and other symptoms.

KEY POINTS:

- Extra fluid causes swelling in your ankles, legs or abdomen, shoes may be tight.
- Some people develop swelling in their hands, your ring may be tight.
- Some people may have swelling in their abdomen, clothes may feel tight.
- The average person may hold 8-15 extra pounds of fluid before developing swelling.
- The best way to watch for fluid buildup is to weigh yourself every day.



Taking Medications

Medicines can help your heart work better, so follow your doctor's directions exactly to make sure they work as they should. Often patients need to take more than one drug. Together they will help the heart work as well as it can. Do not take other prescription drugs, over-the-counter (OTC) drugs, herbals, or diet aids without asking your doctor.

Tips for taking your medicine:

- Take your medicines exactly as directed, following the directions on the label
- Take your medicines at the same time each day
- If you miss a dose, take it as soon as you remember – unless it's almost time for the next dose. If so, skip the missed dose. Do not take a double dose.
- Never change the dose or stop taking a medicine unless your doctor tells you to. Tell your doctor if you don't understand how to take your medicines. Also tell your doctor if you are having trouble getting your medicines.
- If you miss too many doses, you are at risk for being admitted to the hospital for shortness of breath and worsening heart failure symptoms.

KEY POINTS:

- Keep track of your medications, use a pillbox or keep a written schedule.
- Take your medication at the same time each day; develop a routine to help you remember.
- Do not skip or increase a dose unless your doctor tells you to do so.
- Carry an up-to-date list of your medications in your wallet or purse.
- Show your list to all of your doctors and pharmacist before you buy prescriptions or over-the-counter medications to make sure they do not conflict with what you already take.
- Medications should be stored somewhere that you will remember to take them at the correct times. Avoid areas that have excessive heat or cold, or where your medications would be exposed to humidity. **Remember: if you can't stand the temperatures then it's likely that your medications can't as well.**

There are several types of medications that have different actions to help patients with heart failure. We have included a table of these medications. This is for general information.

Type	How It Works	Important Information	Possible Side Effects																						
Beta - Blockers (Blood Pressure/Heart Pill)																									
<table border="0"> <tr> <td>Brand Name®</td> <td>Generic Name</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Tenormin</td> <td>Atenolol</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Zebata</td> <td>Bisoprolol</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Coreg</td> <td>Carvedilol (w/food)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Lopressor</td> <td>Metoprolol Tartrate</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Toprol XL</td> <td>Metoprolol Succinate</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Inderal</td> <td>Propranolol</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sectral</td> <td>Acebutolol</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Visken</td> <td>Pindolol</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Trandate</td> <td>Labetalol</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Corgard</td> <td>Nadalol</td> </tr> </table>	Brand Name®	Generic Name	Tenormin	Atenolol	Zebata	Bisoprolol	Coreg	Carvedilol (w/food)	Lopressor	Metoprolol Tartrate	Toprol XL	Metoprolol Succinate	Inderal	Propranolol	Sectral	Acebutolol	Visken	Pindolol	Trandate	Labetalol	Corgard	Nadalol	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Helps the heart muscle to not work as hard Helps heart muscle work better Can lower blood pressure and heart rate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Drowsiness, dizziness, light-headedness can occur while dosage is being adjusted Do not stop abruptly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Less tolerance for physical activity, low blood pressure, worsening of asthma symptoms
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Angiotensin II Receptor Antagonists																									
<table border="0"> <tr> <td>Brand Name®</td> <td>Generic Name</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Atacand</td> <td>Candesartan</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Avapro</td> <td>Irbesartan</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cozaar</td> <td>Losartan</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Diovan</td> <td>Valsartan</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Benicar</td> <td>Olmesartan</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Micardis</td> <td>Telmisartan</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Edarbi</td> <td>Azilsartan</td> </tr> </table>	Brand Name®	Generic Name	Atacand	Candesartan	Avapro	Irbesartan	Cozaar	Losartan	Diovan	Valsartan	Benicar	Olmesartan	Micardis	Telmisartan	Edarbi	Azilsartan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opens up vessels of the heart Makes it easier for heart to pump Helps heart muscle work better Can lower blood pressure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dizziness, light-headedness can occur while dose is being adjusted Do not take other medicines until discussed with your doctor Have blood pressure checked Do not consume salt substitutes which contain potassium 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May cause stomach upset, dizziness, diarrhea, kidney problems, high potassium 						
Brand Name®	Generic Name																								
Atacand	Candesartan																								
Avapro	Irbesartan																								
Cozaar	Losartan																								
Diovan	Valsartan																								
Benicar	Olmesartan																								
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Aldosterone Receptor Antagonists																									
<table border="0"> <tr> <td>Brand Name®</td> <td>Generic Name</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Aldactone</td> <td>Spironolactone</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Inspra</td> <td>Eplerenone</td> </tr> </table>	Brand Name®	Generic Name	Aldactone	Spironolactone	Inspra	Eplerenone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Helps prevent further damage to the heart Helps rid body of excess water in legs, feet, ankles and lungs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do not consume salt substitutes which contain potassium 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lethargy, drowsiness, fatigue, diarrhea, cramps, high potassium, low sodium 																
Brand Name®	Generic Name																								
Aldactone	Spironolactone																								
Inspra	Eplerenone																								

Type	How It Works	Important Information	Possible Side Effects
Cardioglycoside (Heart Pill)			
Brand Name® Generic Name Lanoxin Digoxin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Helps your heart pump Increases your heart's strength 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do not skip doses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Loss of appetite, a bad taste in the mouth, nausea or vomiting, impaired kidney function, headaches, skipped heartbeats, rapid breathing
Diuretics (Water Pill)			
Brand Name® Generic Name Bumex Bumetanide Lasix Furosemide HCT Z Hydrochlorothiazide Dyrenium Triamterene Zaroxolyn Metolazone Demadex Torsemide Midamor Amiloride (w/food) Chlorthalidone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> "Water Pill" Helps rid body of excess water in legs, feet, ankles and lungs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Take early in the day Stand up slowly to avoid dizziness Do not consume salt substitute with Amiloride 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fatigue, low blood pressure, poor kidney function, low potassium levels
Supplements			
Brand Name® Generic Name K-Dur, MicroK Potassium Chloride Slow-Mag Magnesium Chloride Mag-Ox Magnesium Oxide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Replaces low levels of nutrients associated with water pill use 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Take with meals to lessen stomach distress 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High potassium, high magnesium, nausea, vomiting, abdominal pain, diarrhea
ACE Inhibitors (Blood Pressure/ Heart Pill)			
Brand Name® Generic Name Lotensin Benazepril Capoten Captopril Vasotec Enalapril Monopril Fosinopril Prinivil Lisinopril Accupril Quinapril Altace Ramipril Univasc Moexipril Mavik Trandolapril Acron Perindolpril	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relaxes blood vessels Makes it easier for heart to pump Helps heart muscle work better Can lower blood pressure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dizziness, light-headedness can occur while dose is being adjusted Do not take other medicines until discussed with your doctor Have blood pressure checked regularly Do not consume salt substitutes which contain potassium 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Persistent cough, kidney problems, weakness or dizziness, skin rashes, an altered sense of taste, high potassium levels

Type		How It Works	Important Information	Possible Side Effects
<i>Vasodilators</i>				
Brand Name® Apresoline	Generic Name Hydralazine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opens up vessels of the heart • Makes it easier for the heart to pump • Helps heart muscle work better • Can lower blood pressure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drowsiness, dizziness, light-headedness can occur while dose is being adjusted • Do not stop abruptly • Take with food 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drowsiness, dizziness, headaches, flushing, heart palpitations, nasal congestion
<i>Nitrates</i>				
Brand Name® Isordil	Generic Name Isosorbide Dinitrate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opens up vessels of the heart • Makes it easier for the heart to pump • Helps heart muscle work better • Can lower blood pressure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drowsiness, dizziness, light-headedness can occur while dose is being adjusted 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fainting or dizziness, headaches, flushing, heart palpitations, nasal congestion
Imdur, Monoket, Ismo	Isosorbide Mononitrate			
Nitro-dur, Minitran	Nitroglycerin Patch			
<i>Calcium Channel Blockers</i>				
Brand Name® Norvasc Cardizem Plendil Calan/Isoptin DynaCir CR Cardene Adalat Sular	Generic Name Amlodipine Diltiazem Felodipine Verapamil Isradipine Nifedipine Nisoldipine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helps heart muscle work better • Can lower blood pressure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check with pharmacist before taking additional calcium supplements • May interact with grapefruit juice or other dietary products 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Headaches, facial flushing, dizziness, ankle swelling

Type	How It Works	Important Information	Possible Side Effects	
Blood Thinners / Anti-platelet				
Brand Name® Aspirin Plavix Ticlid Coumadin Effient Pradaxa Xarelto Brilinta Eliquis Savaysa	Generic Name Aspirin Clopidogrel Ticlopidine Warfarin Prasugrel Dabigatran Rivaroxaban Ticagrelor Apixaban Edoxaban	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thins out blood • Decreases your chances of having a heart attack or stroke 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your blood will need to be monitored monthly • May interact with grapefruit juice (Rivaroxaban, Apixaban) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased risk of bleeding, easy bruising, worse with CHF exacerbation
Anti-Arrhythmics				
Brand Name® Tikosyn Cordarone Betapace Multaq Tambacor Rythmol	Generic Name Dofetilide Amiodarone Sotalol Dronedaron Flecainide Propafenone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helps your heart pump better • Helps keep heart in a regular rhythm 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some agents require special monitoring 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dizziness, numbness, tingling in arms, facial flushing, headache, nausea, shortness of breath
Cardiovascular Agent				
Brand Name® Corlanor	Generic Name Ivabradine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slows heart rate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take with meals 	
Neprilysin Inhibitor (always in combination with other agents)				
Brand Name® Entresto	Generic Name Sacubitril & Valsartan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relaxes blood vessels, increase blood flow and decrease stress on the heart 		
Diabetes and Heart Pill				
Brand Name® Farxiga Jardiance	Generic Name Dapagliflozin Empagliflozin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decreases how hard the heart has to work • Decreases blood sugar 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take in the morning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check for low blood sugar • Problems urinating • Muscle pain and weakness

Watching Your Diet

Eating less sodium is one of the most important things people with heart failure can do.

A diet high in sodium (salt) can cause your body to retain water. This increases your heart's workload. Your heart has to work much harder to pump the extra water. People with heart failure need to pay attention to sodium in their diet, so they do not add to their heart's workload. Too much sodium in your diet can also cause swelling, weight gain and shortness of breath.

GOAL: To eat foods that have less than 140 mg sodium per serving. If serving is an entire meal (frozen dinner), sodium content less than 500mg is recommended. The American Heart Association recommends no more than 2,300 milligrams (mgs) a day and an ideal limit of no more than 1,500 (mg) per day for most adults.

KEY POINTS

- Look for labels that say "low sodium," "sodium free," "no salt added" or "unsalted."
- Use caution or avoid canned, package and frozen meals as they often are high in sodium.
- Keep track of each food item's sodium content to stay within your daily recommended total.

HELPFUL HINTS:

- When you go to the grocery store, have a list or a meal plan. Do not shop when you are hungry to avoid cravings for foods.
- You need to know about the sodium and fat content of the food that you eat. Read food labels with care. The labels will show you how much of each nutrient is in each serving of your food. This amount is listed as a percentage of the total amount you need each day. Reading the labels will help you make healthy food choices.

- 1 Start here →
- 2 Check calories →
- 3 Limit these nutrients →
- 4 Get enough of these nutrients →

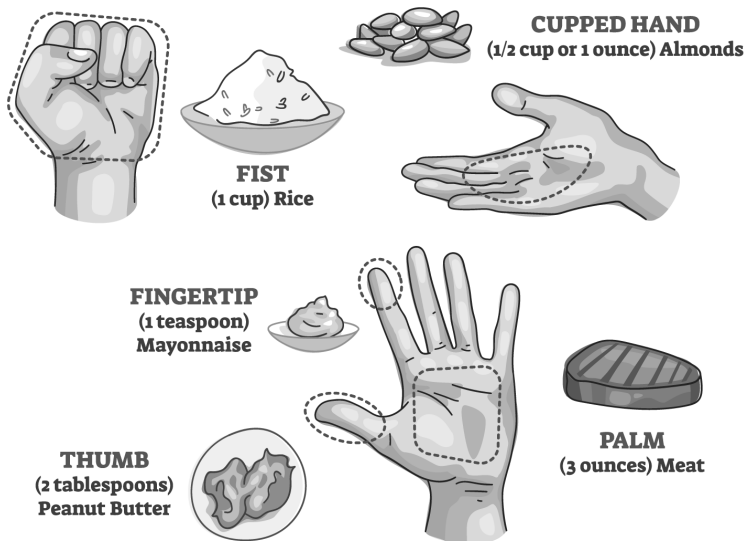
Nutrition Facts	
6 servings per container	
Serving size	1 cup (230g)
Amount per serving	
Calories	245
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 12g	14%
Saturated Fat 2g	10%
<i>Trans Fat</i> 0g	
Cholesterol 8mg	3%
Sodium 210mg	9%
Total Carbohydrate 34g	12%
Dietary Fiber 7g	25%
Total Sugars 5g	
Includes 4g Added Sugars	8%
Protein 11g	
Vitamin D 4mcg	20%
Calcium 210mg	16%
Iron 3mg	15%
Potassium 380mg	8%

*The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.

Salt to Sodium Conversion:

- 1/4 tsp. salt = 575 mg sodium
- 1/2 tsp. salt = 1,150 mg sodium
- 3/4 tsp. salt = 1,725 mg sodium
- 1 tsp. salt = 2,300 mg sodium

PORTION SIZE



Tips for Eating Less Salt:

- **Do not put the salt shaker on the table.**
- **Avoid fast foods and watch your portions when eating out.** Split an order and bring the other half home for another meal.
- **Do not add salt to food when cooking.**
See salt-free seasoning list below.
- **Ask your healthcare provider or dietitian about the use of salt substitutes.**
They may contain extra potassium, which may or may not be appropriate.
- **Use fresh or frozen vegetables** whenever possible. If you must use canned vegetables, drain and rinse canned foods before preparing them to remove some of the salt.
- **Read labels for sodium content.** See “Label Reading” section.
- **Avoid foods labeled Salt Free and choose Low Sodium options instead.**
- **Low sodium condiments (ketchup, mustard, etc.)** can be found in your local grocery store.
- **AVOID** these salty seasonings:
 - Seasoned salt, garlic and onion salt
 - Barbecue, chili and steak sauce
 - Mustard and ketchup
 - Soy sauce and Worcestershire sauce
 - Meat tenderizer
 - Cooking sherry or cooking wine
 - Bouillon cubes
 - Monosodium glutamate (MSG)
 - Old Bay® Seasoning

Try These Salt-Free Seasonings

- Pepper, garlic powder, herbs such as oregano, basil, rosemary, thyme, dill, sage, cumin, red pepper flakes, onions, chives and scallions.
- Sodium-free seasoning blends, citrus juice and vinegars.
- Use caution with lemon pepper and other spice blends - they can be high in sodium.
- Dash™ sodium free seasoning blends

Lowering the amount of salt in your diet can be challenging, because many foods you are used to eating are high in salt. The following foods are usually high in sodium (but read the labels, because some may be available in a low-salt form):

- Salted, cured and processed meats such as ham, bacon, sausage, salami, salt pork, bologna, and hotdogs
- Canned soups and dry soup mixes
- Instant meals such as flavored rice or pasta mixes and potato side dishes
- Pre-seasoned mixes (taco, chili, sauces, gravies, etc.)
- Pre-packaged frozen dinners (unless one serving has less than 500 mg of sodium)
- Fast food
- Cheeses
- Snack foods such as crackers, pretzels, potato chips, tortilla chips, microwave popcorn, salted nuts and pickles
- Canned meats and fish. Water-packed tuna or salmon tends to be lower in salt
- Instant cooked cereals such as grits, cream of wheat, and oatmeal
- Canned vegetables and tomato juice
- Salted butter and margarine
- Prepared mixes for pancakes, muffins and cornbread
- Salad dressings
- Buttermilk
- Softened water

Fluid Restriction:

Your doctor may ask you to follow a fluid restriction in addition to taking medication to control fluid. Ask your doctor how much fluid you can have. Foods that are liquid at room temperature are considered a fluid, such as popsicles, soup, ice cream and Jell-O®. Here are some common conversions that will help you measure your fluid intake every day:

1 fluid ounce = 30 milliliters

1,000 milliliters = 1 liter = 4 cups = 32 ounces

2,000 milliliters = 2 liters = 8 cups = 64 ounces

1 cup = 240 milliliters

1,500 milliliters = 1½ liters = 6 cups = 40 ounces

Knowing When to Call Your Doctor or Health Care Provider

You may be able to prevent hospitalization or further deterioration if you alert your caregiver of early changes and warning signs. Knowing when to act is vital.

KEY POINTS

- Weight gain of 2-3 pounds in one day or 5 pounds in a week.
- Development of a cough or wheezing that doesn't go away, or coughing up pink or white foamy mucus.
- New or increased swelling of ankles, feet, legs and/or abdomen.
- More shortness of breath than usual with routine activity.
- Dizzy or lightheadedness.
- Chest discomfort.
- Need to use additional pillows or sleeps in a recliner to breathe comfortably.
- Decreased energy, difficulty sleeping or loss of appetite.
- Fainting.
- A pounding heart that is racing or skipping beats and does not feel normal.

Preparing To Call Your Doctor or Healthcare Provider

1. Write down what your concerns are and why you think something is wrong. Be specific.
 - Exact symptoms and how they are different. (Ex: I gained __ pounds in __ days. I am more short of breath than usual, have a persistent cough, feel fatigued).
 - Anything that has changed since your last visit. (Ex: My family doctor discontinued my _____ at the last visit six weeks ago).
2. Call your cardiologist. If you don't have one, call your primary care provider.
Tell them:
 - Your name and date of birth
 - Your provider's name
 - Your history (ex: I have a history of heart failure)
 - Any measurements you may have taken (weight, blood pressure, pulse).
 - What your symptoms are and how they have changed (ex: For 2 days now, I have been tired and it's hard to get out of bed).
 - Anything that you have written down about your concerns.

If you can't get an appointment today or tomorrow, insist on talking to the nurse practitioner or doctor. Emphasize that your goal is to stay out of the hospital. If you still can't get an appointment, call the case manager at CalvertHealth Medical Center at 410.414.2725.

Call 911 For:

- Severe shortness of breath – symptoms are different than usual.
- Chest pain.
- Racing heart.
- Feeling like you will faint.
- Feelings of impending doom – something is very wrong.

Staying Physically Active

Staying active can help your heart. Your heart muscle needs exercise to help it work. Aerobic activities, such as walking, help to exercise the heart. When you stay active, you may feel less tired and have fewer symptoms. Stay as active as feels comfortable.



KEY POINTS

- Continue day-to-day activities as long as you are not tired, short of breath or have chest discomfort.
- Walk around the block. If weather is bad, try walking in an indoor mall.
- Find an activity you enjoy. Try biking, swimming or light gardening as an alternative.
- Stop and rest if tired, short of breath, or have chest discomfort.
- Pace yourself, if you cannot hold a conversation while walking, you may be pushing yourself too hard. Try to work up to 30 minutes of activity a day.
- In most cases sexual activity is safe. Don't be afraid to talk with your provider about your concerns.
- A cardiac rehab program may help you feel more confident about how much you can do. Talk to your provider to see if it could benefit you.

Avoid Alcohol and Illegal Drugs

Alcohol, cocaine and other drugs can damage the cells of the heart and make it harder for your heart to pump blood. If you have heart failure, your heart is already pumping less effectively. So it makes sense not to drink alcohol at all or to drink sparingly.

KEY POINTS

- Alcohol and illegal drugs damage the heart.
- Alcohol and illegal drugs can interfere with medications.
- Sparingly means less than 2 standard drinks/week (Ex: 1 can of beer, 1 4oz. glass of wine or 1 shot glass of spirits equals 1 drink).
- Talk with your doctor before you drink alcohol.

Quit Smoking

Quitting now can help you live longer and more comfortably. Smoking damages blood vessels and reduces the oxygen in your blood. This makes your heart beat faster, thus increasing the work your heart has to do.

KEY POINTS

- Smoking damages blood vessels.
- Your weakened heart has to work harder, as a result of smoking.

Vaccinations

Caring for yourself is about balance. One way to stay healthy and prevent additional problems is to get the flu vaccine each year. Talk to your doctor and ask if you should get the pneumonia vaccine too.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: How does my primary care provider know that I have heart failure?

A: There are many non-invasive tests used by medical staff to diagnose heart failure including: chest X-ray, echocardiogram, EKG and blood test. These tests may be done while you are an inpatient or at your physician's office.

Q: What is an echocardiogram?

A: It is an ultrasound that shows the chambers of the heart. It is important because it provides an accurate measurement of your ejection fraction (EF). The procedure itself is painless and similar to the test women have during pregnancy to evaluate their fetus.

Q. What is an ejection fraction (EF)?

A: It is the percentage of blood ejected from the main pumping chamber (the left ventricle) with each heartbeat.

Q. What is a normal ejection fraction (EF)?

A: A normal ejection fraction (EF) is 50-70 percent.

Q: Why is it important that I know my ejection fraction (EF)?

A: When your EF falls below 50 to 70 percent, it means that your heart muscle is too weak to force out blood with each heartbeat, and the total amount of blood pumped may not be enough to meet your body's needs. If this happens, your physician will help to establish a treatment plan to get you back on track.

By using your Survival Guide – you too – can help prevent a decrease in your ejection fraction and future hospitalizations.

Your Heart Matters to Us: *CalvertHeart Services Available to You*

Case Management

All patients admitted to CalvertHealth Medical Center will receive a visit from a case manager. Working with your primary care provider, case managers can provide information about healthcare agencies and other services available to you. They will help arrange for your discharge and make sure you have the support you need to care for yourself after you leave the hospital. If you would like to talk with a case manager, please ask your physician or nurse or call **410.535.4858** or **301.855.1012, ext. 4858**. Prior to discharge, if you know your case manager's name, you can call **X 8235** by using your hospital room phone.

Transition to Home

CalvertHealth staff knows that when you leave the hospital there are new medications, changes in dosages and dietary restrictions to keep up with. All patients discharged from CalvertHealth Medical Center are eligible to receive Transition to Home services from our Transition to Home Team. This team includes a primary care provider, nurse, pharmacist, and a social worker that can help ensure that you are prepared to manage your disease. The Transition to Home Program is a FREE service and can help you recover, understand and manage medications better, help prevent being readmitted to the hospital, make a plan for any and all follow-up appointments with your primary care provider and specialist, and help you maintain the good care that has been received here at the hospital once you are home. This can be accomplished through home visits with you in your home, telephone support and the CalvertHealth CARES Discharge Clinic. This service is different from other services such as home health or physical therapy as this team does not provide skilled services, but rather helps support you and your family with management skills and education to help you be better prepared to take care of your health conditions and needs. You may receive a call after your discharge from a member of this team to see if you have any questions about your care. You can call **410.414.2725** to reach the Transition to Home Team.

Cardiac Rehabilitation

CHMC offers comprehensive cardiac rehabilitation. Monitored exercise training teaches you how to exercise safely, improve cardiovascular endurance and stamina, increase muscle strength, and improve joint flexibility after a cardiac event. We also provide education and counseling about your heart condition and how to modify your risk factors to decrease your chances of another cardiac event.

Our team approach includes:

- Telemetry monitored exercise training
- Blood pressure monitoring during before, during and after exercise
- Individualized exercise programs
- Nutrition counseling
- Tobacco cessation
- Weight reduction
- Medication consultation
- Stress management
- Risk factor education

Most insurance plans are accepted. Call **410.414.4527** or **301.855.1012 ext. 4527** for more information. A referral from your primary care provider is required.

Blood Pressure Screening

This screening can identify adults with an increased risk of cardiovascular disease due to high blood pressure. Please call **410.535.8233 or 301.855.1012, ext. 8233** for more information.

Calvert County Health Department Substance Abuse Services

The health department is committed to providing access to effective substance abuse treatment services to residents of all ages in Calvert County. We also want to build a system that supports research-based prevention strategies and activities at the community level.

Treatment Services

- Comprehensive substance abuse evaluations and assessments
- Referrals to residential treatment and other community services
- Individual, group and family therapy
- Drug testing urinalysis and breathalyzers for clients in treatment
- Crisis walk-in services to provide immediate intervention
- Intensive outpatient treatment program
- Detention Center treatment services
- Drug abuse education

Please call **410.535.3079** or email SubstanceAbuseCCHD@dhmh.state.md.us for further information.

Diabetic Education

Certified diabetic educators teach the CH Diabetes Self-Management Program, which includes nutrition education, medication management, glucose monitoring and help setting and achieving personal goals. This program requires a physician referral and is certified by the American Diabetes Association. Classes are held in the Community Wellness Department at CH (basement level). Call **410.414.4809 or 301.855.1012, ext. 4809** for more information or to register for a class.

Patient and Diabetes Education Support Group

The Diabetes Support Group meets the 2nd Thursday of each month from 7-8 p.m. at CalvertHealth Medical Center. For topics and speakers, call **410.414.4783**.

Additionally, CalvertHealth Medical Center staff is available to address concerns related to managing your illness or condition and to assist you and your family in preparation for discharge. Social workers can provide counseling for the personal, social, emotional and financial stresses you may have as a result of your illness or injury. Notify your primary care provider or nurse if you are interested in speaking with a social worker.

Quit Tobacco Options

Virtual Quit Tobacco Classes (regularly scheduled throughout the year) CCHD FREE

Calvert County Health Department conducts eight-week classes via google meet. One hour a week for eight weeks. Free medication aids; Varenicline, Bupropion XL, and all nicotine replacement therapies. Group support. Learn about your smoking habit so you are more able to have success with quitting.

Individual Quit Tobacco Sessions: virtual, telephone, or in person: FREE

Individual classes with program nurse for 30-45 minutes via virtual, telephone, or in person at Calvert County Health Department. Four to six classes. Free medication aids as above.

For more information or to register for group or individual classes, please visit: www.CalvertHealth.org or contact Jane E. Dodds, Community Health Nurse, Calvert County Health Department

Jane.dodds@maryland.gov 410.535.5400 ext. 359.

Paid for by the Cigarette Restitution Fund of Maryland

Maryland Quitline (1-800-Quit-Now or 1-800-784-8669) FREE

FREE 24/7 phone support to assist people in Maryland in the quitting process. Telephone counseling typically consists of four sessions by a trained Quit Coach®. The program offers nicotine replacement therapy- Nicotine patches and/or gum. The Quitline offers specialized services for the deaf or hard of hearing: 1.877.777.6534.

Along with the telephone program the Quitline also has a free website: www.smokingstopshere.com. Once enrolled, Quitline callers may sign up for access to the FREE Web Coach® which includes: web account access, Coaching Emails, and discussion forums with other callers.

NEW THIS YEAR: Text "READY" to 200-400 for text support while quitting.

Freedom From Smoking Plus Program (Freedomfromsmoking.org) \$99.95

Nine interactive sessions to be completed over a six-week period to prepare you for your Quit Day and help you stay smoke free for good. Plus, 12 Months of unlimited access to the Freedom from Smoking® online program, available 24/7 on your computer, tablet and smartphone.

Live telephone and chat support from the quit-smoking specialists at the Lung Helpline: 1.800.LUNGUSA or 1.800.586.4872. The Freedom from Smoking Plus program has an online community: <https://www.inspire.com/groups/freedom-from-smoking/>

Making Life Decisions: *Palliative Care, Hospice and 5 Wishes*

Palliative Care

Palliative care is a relatively new field in healthcare that is different from Hospice. The patient and their family can receive supportive services at any time in the disease process, not just for support at the end of life. In fact, patients are often continuing to seek treatment for their illness. The palliative care team works in conjunction with the healthcare provider and can offer assistance with treatment of pain and other symptoms, assistance with communication, support for patients and families in medical decision-making and in navigating the complex medical system, and emotional and spiritual support.

Hospice

Calvert Hospice cares for those in our community who are living with a serious, life-limiting illness. We provide expert medical care, pain and symptom management, emotional and spiritual support. Care is personalized to the individual needs and wishes of the patient. Calvert Hospice is focused on caring, compassion, dignity and the patient's quality of life. Patients are supported in living their final months, weeks and days amid familiar surroundings, pain-free, with dignity surrounded by their loved ones and friends. Additionally, Calvert Hospice provides bereavement support for all members of our community who are anticipating or grieving the loss of a loved one.

Five Wishes

Five Wishes is the first living will that talks about your personal, emotional, and spiritual needs as well as your medical wishes. It lets you choose the person you want to make healthcare decisions for you if you are not able to make them for yourself. Five wishes lets you say exactly how you wish to be treated if you get seriously ill. It was written with the help of the American Bar Association's Commission on Law and Aging, and the nation's leading experts in end-of-life care. These are available through Transition to Home.

My Personal Medication Record

Keep It Handy!

List all prescription, over-the-counter drugs, vitamins and herbs. Bring this to every primary care provider's appointment and if you go to the emergency room or hospital. Date _____

Name and Dose of Medication	This Medicine is for my	How Much and How Often?			Notes / Questions
		Morning	Noon	Evening Bedtime	
Example: Simvastatin 40 mg	Example: High cholesterol	Ex: 1 pill			Example: Ordered by Dr. Brown / After I brush my teeth

Prescription, over-the-counter drugs, vitamins and herbs continued...

Name and Dose of Medication	This Medicine is for my	How Much and How Often?			Notes / Questions
		Morning	Noon	Evening Bedtime	
Example: Simvastatin 40 mg	Example: High cholesterol	Ex: 1 pill			Example: Ordered by Dr. Brown / After I brush my teeth

Important Phone Numbers

Healthcare Provider

Name _____ Phone Number _____

Name _____ Phone Number _____

Home Health Agency

Name _____ Phone Number _____

Local Support Groups

Name _____ Phone Number _____

Name _____ Phone Number _____

For more information, contact:

American Heart Association:

1.800.AHA.USA1 (1.800.242.8721)

www.aha.org

National Library of Medicine MedlinePlus:

<http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/heartfailure.html>

If you have any problems with your medicine – **DO NOT WAIT**. Talk to your primary care provider right away.

Patient Name: _____

Allergies: _____

Primary Care Provider Phone Number: _____

Pharmacy Name & Phone Number: _____

DRIVING DIRECTIONS

From Anne Arundel County

Rt. 2 south to Rt. 4 at Sunderland. Rt. 4 south to Prince Frederick. Left on Hospital Road at traffic light.

From Charles County

MD-231 toward Prince Frederick/Hughesville.

At traffic circle, take 3rd exit onto Prince Frederick Blvd.

At second traffic circle, take the 1st exit onto MD-231

E/Prince Frederick Rd. Turn left at Rt. 4 north. Right on Hospital Road at traffic light.

From St. Mary's County

Rt. 2/4 north across the Thomas Johnson Bridge. Continue north to Prince Frederick.

Right on Hospital Road at traffic light.



This facility is accredited by The Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations. If you would like to report a concern about the quality of care you received here, you can contact The Joint Commission at **1.800.994.6610**.

CalvertHealth Medical Center does not discriminate with regard to patient admissions, room assignment, patient services or employment on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, gender identification, religion, disability or sexual orientation.

El Centro Médico de CalvertHealth no discrimina con respecto a admisiones de pacientes, asignaciones de habitaciones, servicios al paciente o empleo sobre la base de raza, color, origen nacional, religión, discapacidad, edad, sexo, incapacidad, identificación de género o sexual orientación.

Trung tâm Y tế CalvertHealth không phân biệt đối xử về việc nhập viện của bệnh nhân, phân công tại phòng, dịch vụ bệnh nhân hoặc việc làm dựa trên chủng tộc, màu da, nguồn gốc quốc gia, tôn giáo, khuyết tật, tuổi, giới tính, khuyết tật, nhận dạng giới tính hay khuynh hướng tình dục.



CalvertHealth®

100 Hospital Road, Prince Frederick, MD 20678

410.535.4000 301.855.1012

Maryland Relay Service 1.800.735.2258

www.CalvertHealthMedicine.org