

A Patient's Journey Through *Heart Failure*

NAVIGATING YOUR DIAGNOSIS WITH CONFIDENCE

A heart failure diagnosis does not mean your heart has stopped—it means it is not pumping effectively. This roadmap will help you **understand** and **adjust** to your condition with **confidence**.

SYMPTOMS

1

Your symptoms may change over time, and some people may have few or no symptoms at all. If you are experiencing any of the following, or other unusual symptoms, it is important to inform your healthcare provider:



SHORTNESS OF BREATH
especially with physical activity
or while lying down or reclining



**BEING UNABLE TO DO
EVERYDAY ACTIVITIES**
like climbing up the stairs



SWELLING in your
legs, ankles or feet



**PERSISTENT
COUGHING**



**FEELING VERY
TIRED OR WEAK**



**SUDDEN
WEIGHT GAIN**



**INCREASED
HEART RATE**



**LACK OF
APPETITE
OR NAUSEA**



WHEEZING

Some symptoms need urgent care. Call the emergency number if you have severe shortness of breath, chest pain, fainting, extreme weakness, pink or white foamy mucus, sudden swelling, or a fast, irregular heartbeat.

DIAGNOSIS

2

Your healthcare provider may already have reviewed your **medical history** and conducted a **physical exam** to assess your health. You may also undergo several diagnostic tests, including:

♥ **BLOOD TESTS, INCLUDING A BNP TEST**
(a marker for heart failure)

♥ **CHEST X-RAY**

♥ **ECHOCARDIOGRAM (ECHO)**

♥ **ELECTROCARDIOGRAM (EKG OR ECG)**

♥ **EJECTION FRACTION MEASUREMENT**

Depending on the results of your tests, your doctor may also ask for further imaging tests or for an exercise stress test.

EDUCATION

3

To gain a better understanding of heart failure and make informed decisions about your treatment, learn more about:



**TYPES OF
HEART FAILURE**



CAUSES



**STAGES AND FUNCTIONAL
CLASSES OF HEART FAILURE**



**PROGRESSION
OVER TIME**

TREATMENT

4

Heart failure cannot be cured, but its underlying cause can be treated and managed in different ways, including:



**MANAGEMENT OF
CVD RISK FACTORS**



**LIFESTYLE
CHANGES**



MEDICATION



DEVICES



**SURGERY AND
OTHER PROCEDURES**



**CARDIAC
REHABILITATION**

LIVING WITH HEART FAILURE

5

Although heart failure is a chronic condition, you can take steps to manage it, improve your quality of life, and lower your risk of complications:



**MAKE ADDITIONAL
LIFESTYLE
CHANGES**



**FOLLOW YOUR
TREATMENT
PLAN**



**ADJUST YOUR
PHYSICAL
ACTIVITY LEVEL**



**ADAPT
YOUR DIET**



**TRACK YOUR
SYMPTOMS**

IN A MEDICAL EMERGENCY: CALL 999



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