

5 Steps to a Successful Heart Failure Treatment Plan



1. **Take an active role in your care.** Learn about your heart failure and how lifestyle changes and medicines work together to help you feel better, stay out of the hospital and live longer. Ask questions and speak up if something doesn't feel right.



2. **Know what signs to watch for and when to tell your care team about them.** These can be an early warning that your heart failure may be getting worse. For example:
 - Rapid weight gain
 - Swelling (in the legs, ankles or abdomen)
 - Noticing that you feel more short of breath or tired
 - Coughing
 - Difficulty lying flat



3. **Be sure your primary care provider, cardiologist and other specialists involved in your care work together.** One in two people with heart failure live with 5+ additional health conditions. For example, high blood pressure, diabetes, being overweight, blockages in the arteries, and heart rhythm problems. Many people with heart failure also have chronic kidney disease, depression or a history of having received certain cancer treatments.

All of your doctors' offices should have a complete history of your medical conditions and treatments. Together, these teams can coordinate your care. Making sure your conditions are well managed can go a long way to easing the added workload on your heart and help you feel better.



4. **Understand your heart medications.** You'll need to take many medications over your lifetime. Many patients take over 6 medicines for heart failure and other heart conditions. These medications work together to help you feel better, be able to do more and live longer.
 - Learn what each medicine does so you know how they help your heart.
 - Remember that the medicines you take and the doses may change over time. That's normal.
 - Use a pillbox to stay organized and take the right medicines at the right time.



5. **Pace yourself and talk about what it's like to live with heart failure.** Many people feel scared. You're not alone, and the good news is that heart failure can be treated. There are more treatments now than ever before!

10 Questions to ask

It can be hard to know what questions to ask. Make sure to share your goals for your care. If you have concerns, your care team will want to know.



1. What type of heart failure do I have?
2. How severe is my heart failure?
3. What treatment/medications would you recommend and how does each one work?
4. How will we follow my heart failure to know if it's getting worse?
5. What signs do I need to watch for and when should I check in in between visits?
What if my symptoms get worse suddenly?
6. How should I change my diet?
7. What about best ways to stay physically active and fit?
8. Are there any activities I should avoid?
9. I've heard cardiac rehabilitation can help. Am I eligible to take part?
10. In addition to lifestyle changes, should I be getting routine vaccines and which are recommended for me?

For more information

Visit CardioSmart.org/HeartFailure or scan the QR code for more information and to access these tools.



[Your Action Plan for Heart Failure With Reduced Ejection Fraction](#)



[Your Heart Failure Daily Tracker](#)

Use this calendar each day to record how you feel, and any symptoms you might have or your blood pressure.



[Your Action Plan for Heart Failure With Preserved Ejection Fraction](#)



[Making the Most of Your Follow-Up Visits](#)

A worksheet to track how you feel and heart failure symptoms in-between health visits.



[Your Heart Failure Checklist](#)

Steps you can take to manage your heart failure.