



Heart Failure Fact Sheet

Heart failure is a chronic, progressive condition in which the heart is unable to pump blood efficiently enough to meet the body's needs. It is estimated that one in five Americans will develop heart failure, making it one of the most common, costly and deadly heart diseases in America. While the term "heart failure" can be scary, it doesn't mean that the heart has stopped beating – it means that the heart is weakened and can't pump enough blood around the body. The heart keeps working, but the body's need for blood and oxygen isn't being met. There are two types of heart failure:

- Right-side heart failure occurs if the heart can't pump enough blood to the lungs to pick up oxygen.
- Left-side heart failure occurs if the heart can't pump enough oxygen-rich blood to the rest of the body.

Prevalence and Impact

- Nearly 6 million Americans suffer from heart failure. That figure is expected to increase as the population ages, to more than 8 million people by 2030.
- There are more than 870,000 new heart failure cases in the U.S. each year, which means that at least one person is diagnosed with heart failure every minute.

While heart failure can affect anyone, certain factors place people at greater risk.

- The risk of developing heart failure increases with age.
- In general, women survive longer than men with heart failure.
- Studies have shown that African Americans are at the highest risk of developing heart failure, followed by Hispanics, Whites and Chinese Americans.
- Heart failure patients with depression have an increased risk of death. In fact, moderate-to-severe depression quadruples the death rate among heart failure patients.
- One in nine deaths in America includes heart failure as a contributing cause; up to 50 percent of people with heart failure will die within five years of being diagnosed. Heart failure is deadlier than many cancers, including breast cancer, leukemia and colon cancer.
- Heart failure is one of the most common reasons people age 65 and older go into the hospital. In fact, there are more than 1 million hospitalizations for heart failure annually – that's nearly 2 hospitalizations every minute
- Total medical costs to treat heart failure are projected to increase from \$14.3 billion in 2015 to \$29.2 billion in 2030.
- Additionally, indirect costs of HF, including work loss, household productivity losses, and premature mortality losses, are projected to increase from \$8.2 billion in 2015 to \$12.3 billion in 2030.

Causes and Symptoms

- Heart failure results from the added stress of health conditions that either damage the heart muscle or make it work too hard, causing a loss of function. This can happen following a heart attack or other illness affecting the heart, or by damage sustained more gradually due to conditions such as high blood pressure.
 - The most common cause of heart failure is coronary artery disease, which occurs when arteries that supply blood to the heart muscle become narrowed by buildups of fatty deposits called plaque.
- All of the lifestyle factors that increase a person's risk of heart attack and stroke – smoking, being overweight, eating foods high in fat, sodium and cholesterol and physical inactivity – can also contribute to heart failure.
- Heart failure symptoms may include difficulty breathing, persistent coughing or wheezing, fatigue, nausea, confusion, increased heart rate and swelling of the feet, ankles and legs.
- People experiencing more than one of these symptoms should talk with their doctor and ask for an evaluation of their heart.
- Knowing the signs and symptoms of heart failure is critical - the earlier someone seeks care for heart failure, the better their chances are of living a longer, more active life.

Living with Heart Failure

- There is usually no cure for heart failure, but it can be managed with strategies to help improve symptoms. A patient's treatment plan may include:
 - **Lifestyle Changes:** Certain lifestyle changes can help alleviate symptoms, slow disease progression and improve everyday life. These changes could include quitting smoking, losing or maintaining weight, eating a heart healthy diet, being physically active, managing stress and getting adequate rest.
 - **Regular Monitoring:** It is very important for patients with heart failure to monitor their symptoms and report any changes to their healthcare team. This may involve daily weigh-ins to track water retention, closely watching swelling and monitoring changes in ability to exercise.
 - **Medications:** Heart failure patients often need multiple medications to treat different symptoms and contributing factors. It's important that patients and caregivers work with their healthcare team to understand the medications and how they should be taken; when and in what amounts.
 - **Surgery:** Surgery isn't frequently used to treat heart failure, but it is sometimes recommended when a doctor can identify a correctable problem that's causing heart failure, such as a congenital defect, valve abnormality or blocked coronary artery.
- The most important thing for patients to do is to work closely with a physician and follow their advice.

To learn more about heart failure, visit www.RiseAboveHF.org