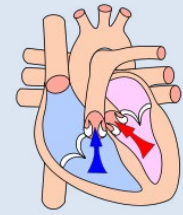


# HEART FAILURE



## What is heart failure?

Your heart does not pump enough blood. Your body will respond by holding onto salt and water, by making the heart beat faster or even get bigger.

## How does heart failure make you feel?

- You may get tired easily
- You may be short of breath
- You may have swelling in your legs, ankles & feet
- You might gain weight rapidly
- You may have coughing & wheezing
- You may feel bloating & nausea

## What lifestyle changes should you make?

- Eat **LESS SALT** → this reduces the amount of water your body retains. Use less than 1 tsp/day
- You may be asked to **REDUCE** the amount of **FLUID** you drink (usually less than 4 to 6 cups)
- **EXERCISE** regularly (ask your doctor for advice)
- **LOSE WEIGHT** (if you are overweight)
- **LIMIT ALCOHOL**
- **STOP SMOKING**



## Where can you learn more?

- B.C. Heart Failure Network  
<https://tinyurl.com/y3q6xh6n>
- Heart Failure Matters: Practical information for patients, families and caregivers  
<https://www.heartfailurematters.org>  
(includes several 3–6 minute videos)
- University of Ottawa home-based exercise program <https://tinyurl.com/yybkul2s>



## How is your heart failure treated?

Heart failure typically gets worse & there is no cure. But treatment and some lifestyle habits can help to slow the disease & make you feel better.

### TREATMENT includes:

- **MEDICATIONS** – some will help keep your heart failure from getting worse. Some will reduce your symptoms
- Treatment of **UNDERLYING CAUSES** (e.g., high blood pressure, diabetes, alcohol)
- **LIFESTYLE CHANGES**

## What else can you do?

- **Check daily** for symptoms
- **Weigh** yourself daily & compare it to yesterday's weight – keeping a log sheet
- Check for **swelling** in your feet, ankles, legs and stomach
- Use the **Heart Failure Zones handout** to help you decide whether you need to call your health provider
- **Take your medications** prescribed by your health provider.
- Use the **log sheets** & bring them to every visit—available at <https://tinyurl.com/quftsac>