

Destination Healthy Heart:

A ROADMAP TO MANAGING HEART FAILURE



Heart Failure

COMPLICATED BY ATRIAL FIBRILLATION

Heart Failure

Heart failure is a syndrome in which the heart is not able to pump enough blood to meet the needs of the body. There are many causes and types of heart failure.

What is unique about HF due to Atrial Fibrillation?

Atrial fibrillation (AF) is the most common heart rhythm problem in the US, affecting 2.7 million people. People over 65 years of age and men more than women have AF. With AF, fast electrical signals in the upper chambers of the heart cause these chambers, called atria, to quiver instead of fully contracting. As a result, the heart fails to pump strongly, and blood tends to back up and even pool in the heart, which may increase the risk for blood clots. Symptoms can include feeling tired and short of breath, as well as swelling in the abdomen, feet, and ankles. Your heart rate may be fast or irregular and you may feel a fluttering in your chest.

FOR ALL PERSONS WITH HF, REMEMBER THE FOLLOWING:

- Weigh yourself daily.
- Limit your salt and alcohol.
- Review all medicines with your health care provider (including over-the-counter, vitamins, or herbs). Some medicines can make your heart failure worse, so avoid:
 - › Nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs);
 - › Calcium channel blockers (unless prescribed by your HF physician).
- Try and exercise each day.
- Take your medicines as prescribed.
- Keep all of your visits with your health care providers.
- Report all new or worse symptoms of heart failure right away to _____

FOR HF DUE TO AF, THE FOLLOWING TIPS MAY BE IMPORTANT:

- Get regular checks ups.
- Check your pulse daily. Call your provider if your pulse seems irregular and if your pulse is over 100 beats a minute at rest.
- Take your medications every day as prescribed to help control how fast the heart beats.
- If you have been prescribed blood thinners, it is important to take them as ordered to prevent a stroke.
- Quit smoking. Nicotine in tobacco can increase your heart rate and risk of AF.
- Avoid excess alcohol and stimulants (decongestants).
- Reduce stress.
- Eat a healthy diet; you may have dietary restrictions due to your medications. Talk to your provider.