

Questions to Ask Your Doctor About Heart Failure

Heart failure is a serious diagnosis, but it doesn't mean life is over. There are treatments and lifestyle changes that can significantly improve your heart failure symptoms and quality of life. This printable discussion guide can help you navigate a conversation about heart failure with your doctor. Download the guide and bring it to your next doctor appointment to get the information you need to take care of your health.

Treatment

- Q** How frequently should I have a checkup?
- Q** What kind of treatment do I need for my heart failure? Do I need medications or surgery?
- Q** How does the recommended treatment work? What side effects can I expect? If I need surgery, how long will it take to recover?
- Q** What will happen if I don't take the medications or undergo the surgery right now?
- Q** Can any of my medications for other conditions cause dangerous interactions with the recommended heart failure medications?

Diet and Nutrition^{AHA 4}

- Q** Is there a special diet plan I should be following?
- Q** Do I need to limit the amount of water and other beverages I drink?
- Q** Am I able to drink alcohol or caffeine?
- Q** Are there menu planners or recipes available to help me follow the recommended nutrition plan?
- Q** Can I continue taking my current vitamins and dietary supplements?
- Q** Are there any nutritional supplements I should add to support my heart health?

- Q** Are there medications or programs that can help me quit smoking?
- Q** What types of exercise are safe for me? What symptoms should I look out for when I'm exercising?
- Q** Am I a good candidate for cardiac rehabilitation?
- Q** Do I need to take steps to reduce stress and anxiety in my life?
- Q** Do I need to monitor my blood pressure at home?
- Q** How much rest do I need? What resources are available to help me with sleep apnea?
- Q** Is it safe to be sexually active?

Other Conditions

- Q** Does heart failure increase my risk for other health problems such as kidney or liver damage?^{Mayo 1}
- Q** What lifestyle steps can I take to manage the risk of other health issues?
- Q** Are there medications I should consider to minimize the risk of other health conditions?

