

Congestive heart failure

Test yourself

True or false?

Weight gain from fluid is the most reliable way to detect worsening heart failure.

If you said “true,” you are correct. For people with heart failure, tracking your weight daily is one way you and your doctor make treatment adjustments that may prevent more serious problems from developing.

Heart failure means that your heart is not working as well as it should. Since heart failure usually occurs gradually, there are steps you can take to prevent a worsening condition.

Treatment

While heart failure can't be cured, by working with your health care professionals, you can learn to manage heart failure and lead a full and active life.

In addition to maintaining a weight chart, adhering to medication schedules and diet recommendations are also important management tools. You may need to make medication adjustments to find what works best for your condition. And, as with all medications, there are side effects and risks, so adherence to medication schedules and routine monitoring are important.

Should I exercise?

The short answer is yes. The well-known benefits of exercise apply to everyone, but since you have heart failure, be sure to see your health care provider before starting any exercise program. Some exercises will need to be avoided, such as weight lifting, because they can raise your blood pressure and strain your heart. The benefits of exercise — such as improved blood flow, toned muscles, strengthened heart and body, and increased energy — can be achieved by participating in a basic exercise plan such as walking.

Take action

If you or someone in your family has heart failure, the ConnectionsSM Health Management Programs have some simple guidelines you can follow to manage your health and make informed, confident decisions.

Making important medical decisions is a responsibility you share with your doctor. This program can help you get the support and encouragement you need to manage your care and be a more active participant in your health. Call 1-800-ASK-BLUE for more information and support. Health Coaches are available 24/7.

About the Connections Health Management Programs

The Connections Health Management Programs are designed to help you become a more informed health care consumer. Available 24/7, Connections offers both disease management and decision support services.

Disease management services are for you if you have a chronic condition, such as diabetes, lung or breathing problems, or heart conditions. You can receive information and support to learn how to improve your health and overall quality of life. Decision support services can assist you if you are facing a significant medical decision or have an everyday health concern.

We're here for you every step of the way.

