A portrait of a middle-aged woman with short, grey hair, looking directly at the camera with a slight smile. She is wearing a dark grey top and a black beaded necklace. The background is a soft, out-of-focus grey.

QUALITY OF LIFE
FATIGUE
BREATHLESS
WEAK WEIGHT
PATIENT
HEART PUMP
SWELLING
HOSPITAL

TAKE CONTROL

Myths and facts about heart failure

Developed by the Heart Failure Association of the European Society of Cardiology



Myths and facts about heart failure

Heart failure means your heart has stopped beating

MYTH: Heart failure doesn't mean that your heart has stopped beating. Heart failure occurs when your heart muscle or valves have been damaged and so your heart isn't able to pump blood around your body as well as it should.

FACT **MYTH**

Heart failure is serious

FACT: Heart failure is a very serious condition and can shorten your life. However, by working with your doctor and nurse, you can get effective treatments and make changes to your lifestyle that will ease your symptoms, improve your quality of life, and prolong your life.

FACT **MYTH**

Heart failure is common

FACT: Currently, we estimate that approximately 1% to 2% of the adult population in developed countries have heart failure, rising to $\geq 10\%$ among people over 70 years of age.

FACT **MYTH**

Heart failure can't be treated

MYTH: There are many treatments available for heart failure that are very effective at reducing symptoms and delaying the progression of the condition. You should discuss treatment options with your doctor.

FACT **MYTH**

If you have heart failure you shouldn't exercise

MYTH: It's very important for people with heart failure to exercise. However, it's also important that you don't overdo it. The right amount of exercise can help to improve blood flow and alleviate some of your symptoms.

FACT **MYTH**

Heart failure is a normal consequence of getting old

MYTH: Heart failure affects all ages. Most people with heart failure are elderly; however, heart failure isn't necessarily a consequence of age. It's a serious cardiovascular condition that can often be prevented and greatly helped with available treatments.

FACT **MYTH**

Tips - diet and exercise

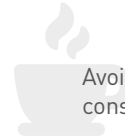
An appropriate diet may help you reduce your symptoms:



Limit fluid intake



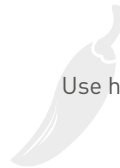
Reduce salt intake and processed food



Avoid caffeine or alcohol consumption



Eat fruit, vegetables, low-fat dairy products, cereals, and fish



Use herbs and spices rather than salt

Exercising may help you improve the functioning of your heart and muscles:



Maintain everyday activities at home, with family and friends



Get regular exercise, such as walking or swimming

STOP EXERCISING IF YOU FEEL VERY BREATHLESS OR DIZZY, OR HAVE CHEST PAIN, NAUSEA, OR COLD SWEATS. ASK YOUR DOCTOR OR NURSE FOR ADVICE.



Don't forget to do your part

Monitor your blood pressure and heart rate frequently

HOW DO I MEASURE MY BLOOD PRESSURE AT HOME?

Use a modern blood pressure monitor and a cuff of the appropriate size (see the instruction manual with your monitor, or ask your doctor or nurse).

- Sit down and rest for 3 to 5 minutes before measurement.
- To achieve an accurate measurement, it is better to avoid smoking, eating, or drinking anything except for water at least 30 minutes prior to measurement.
- When you measure your blood pressure, sit in a comfortable chair with your feet flat on the floor, back and arms supported, and your arm at heart level. Don't talk.
- It is better to measure your blood pressure in the nondominant arm (eg, the left arm if you are right-handed).
- Ideally, take 2 measurements 1-2 minutes apart, and record only the second reading, once in the morning and once in the evening.

HOW DO I MEASURE MY HEART RATE AT HOME?

Most blood pressure monitors will also measure your heart rate (pulse), or you can measure your heart rate yourself by "taking your pulse."

- Sit quietly for at least 5 minutes.
- Take off your watch and hold your left or right palm facing up, with your elbow slightly bent. With your other hand, gently place your index and middle fingers on the other wrist.
- Press your fingers into the groove between the middle tendons and the outside bone. You should feel a throbbing – this is your pulse.
- Count your pulse for 30 seconds and multiply by 2 to get your heart rate.

Find out more information today on heart failure at Heartfailurematters.org



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#Heartfailure #Servier
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