



In heart failure every pill matters.

Your **key questions answered**
for better treatment adherence



What is heart failure?

Heat failure happens when the heart isn't pumping as well as it should. This can cause symptoms like feeling tired, shortness of breath, and persistent cough.¹

What is the purpose of heart failure treatment?

♥ Heart failure is a chronic disease that requires a lifelong treatment. Medicines can **improve** your **symptoms**, enhance your **quality of life**, help you **live longer**, and **avoid hospital visits**.²

What is heart failure guideline-directed medical therapy?

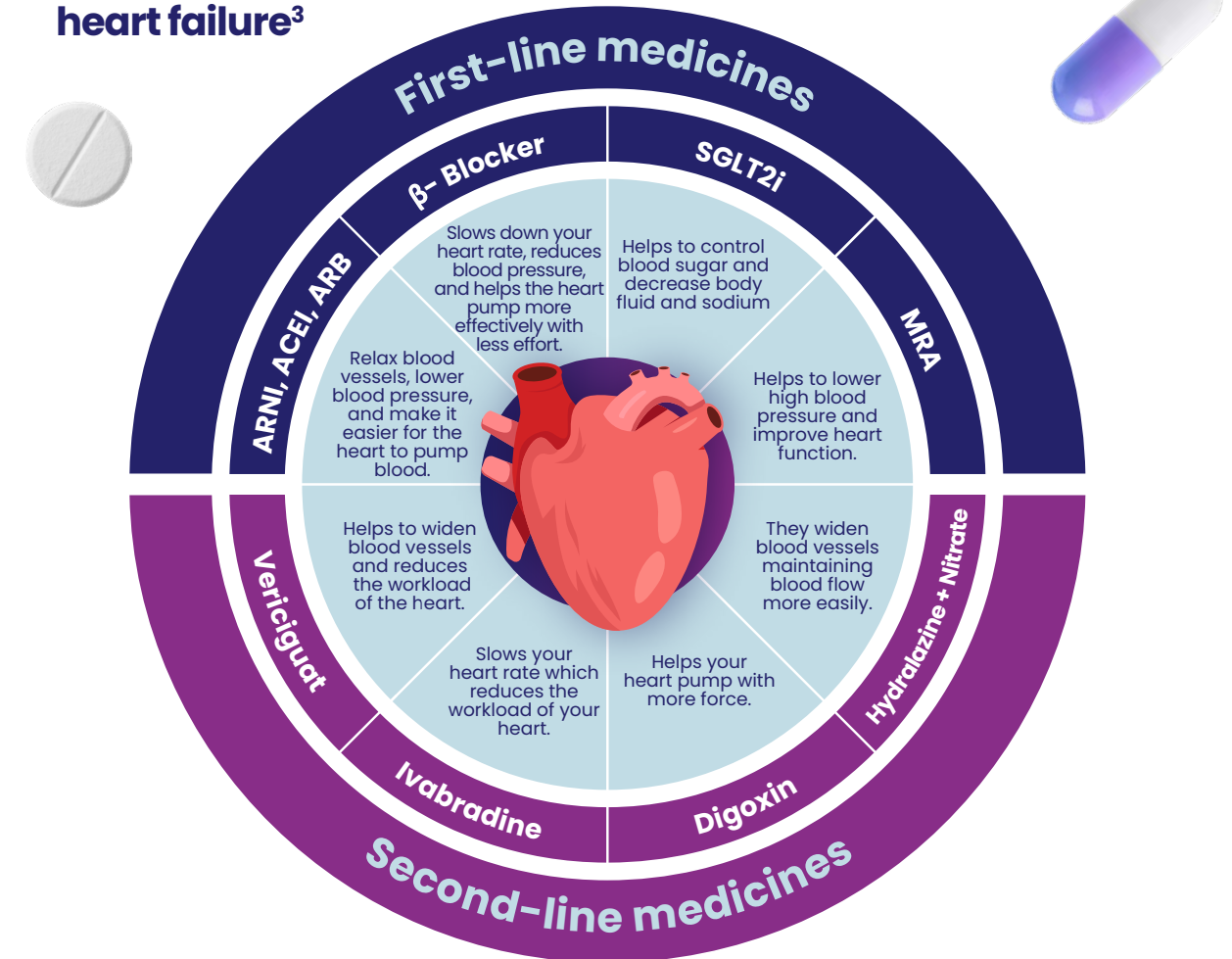
♥ There are **4 main classes of medicines** to treat heart failure (first line treatment according to a patient's clinical profile). Your doctor may also prescribe **additional personalized medicines** tailored to your needs (second line treatment), so you can manage your condition more effectively³ (see **Figure 1** for more information about the medicines).

1. American Heart Association. What is heart failure? Last reviewed March 22, 2023. Accessed January 16, 2025. <https://www.heart.org/en/health-topics/heart-failure/what-is-heart-failure>

2. American Heart Association. Medications used to treat heart failure. Last reviewed January 8, 2025. Accessed January 16, 2025. https://www.heart.org/en/health-topics/heart-failure/treatment-options-for-heart-failure/medications-used-to-treat-heart-failure?utm_source=chatgpt.com

3. Newman E et al. *Curr Cardiol Rep*. 2024;26(9):995-1003

Figure 1. Guideline-directed medical therapy used to treat heart failure³



There are other medicines for additional health conditions that may occur with heart failure such as potassium and magnesium supplementation, anticoagulants, lipids lowering drugs, and others. Your doctor will prescribe the best treatments for your conditions. Ask your doctor any questions you may have.

ACEI, angiotensin converting enzyme inhibitor; ARB, angiotensin receptor blocker; ARNI, angiotensin receptor-neprilysin inhibitor; MRA, mineralocorticoid receptor antagonist; SGLT2i, sodium/glucose cotransporter-2 inhibitor.

Can I stop taking my medicines?



Myths and misconceptions about heart failure treatment

1

Myth: I can stop taking my medicines if I feel better.

✗ **Not True:** Feeling better is a positive sign — it shows that your medicines are working. However, it doesn't mean the problem has gone away. Heart failure is a chronic condition that requires ongoing treatment to prevent it from worsening.

MYTHS

VS

FACTS



2

Myth: Not taking my medicines consistently isn't a big deal. I can miss a few pills or skip some days.



Not True: Adherence and persistence in your medicines as prescribed helps to:

- Prevent your condition from getting worse.
- Keep you feeling better and out of the hospital — patients who take their medicines as prescribed are 56%-64% less likely to be hospitalized.
- Help you live longer and enjoy a better quality of life — taking your medicines reduces the risk of death by 56%-61%.

3

Myth: I can stop or change my medicines if I experience side effects.



Not True: Never stop or adjust your medicines on your own. Always talk to your doctor first — he or she can help to manage side effects.



Remember: Always follow your doctor's advice about your medicines, diet, and exercise.²



¹. Tromp J. JACC Heart Fail. 2022;10(2):73-84;

². American Heart Association. Discharge packet for patients diagnosed with heart failure. American Heart Association: Get with the Guidelines. Published 2022.

https://www.heart.org/-/media/Files/Professional/Quality-Improvement/Get-With-the-Guidelines/Get-With-The-Guidelines-HF/Educational-Materials/DS18660_ENG_Patient-Discharge-Packet_2022.pdf

How can I remember to take my medicines?

Follow these tips:^{1,2}

• Use tools to track your medicines:

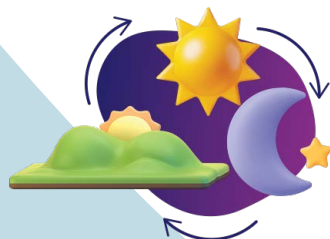


Use a whiteboard with magnets to list your medicines. Mark it when you take them, then erase at the end of the day.



You can also use a **Medicine List**, like the one at the end of this brochure. Keep it with you.

• Create a routine:



Take your medicine at the **same time each day**, for example when brushing your teeth.

• Keep it visible:



Leave your medicine in a place you can **easily see**.

• Organize your medicines:¹

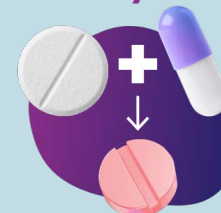


Use a pillbox by day and time. This helps you remember and avoid taking a double dose.



Some **pharmacists** can also prepare blister packs for daily or weekly doses.

• Ask your doctor about single-pill combinations:²



Single-pill combinations can make **treatment easier** by combining different medicines into one. They may help you **stick to your treatment** plan.

• Use digital tools:



Use of **mobile apps** and **text message reminders** can prompt you to take your medicines on **time**.³



Some **digital tools** even allow your **health care team** to monitor your **progress remotely**, offering **support** when needed.³



Digital tools **improve treatment adherence by 26%** and **reduce hospital readmissions and deaths by 37%**.⁴

1. American Heart Association. Taking control of your medications. Last reviewed April 26, 2024. Accessed January 18, 2025. <https://www.heart.org/en/health-topics/cardiac-rehab/managing-your-medicines/taking-control-of-your-medicines>
2. Ministry of Health of Singapore. How to remember to take your meds. Last reviewed April 2023. Accessed February 7, 2025. <https://isomer-user-content.by.gov.sg/3/4df941c3-09c7-4063-8b9d-03dbf0f55d07/know-how-to-remember-to-take-your-meds.pdf>

1. American Heart Association. Taking control of your medications. Last reviewed April 26, 2024. Accessed January 18, 2025. <https://www.heart.org/en/health-topics/cardiac-rehab/managing-your-medicines/taking-control-of-your-medicines>
2. Pinto FJ et al. *Int J Cardiol.* 2023;384:10-17.
3. Cheng C et al. *J Pharm Policy Pract.* 2023;16(1):81.
4. Zhang J et al. *J Cardiovasc Med.* 2024;25(8):587-600.

What should I do if I forget to take my medicines?



- ✓ If you miss a dose, take it **as soon as you remember**, but do not take two doses at one time.¹
- ✓ In general, the **European Medicines Agency** advises: if you miss a dose and it's been less than 6 hours, take it as soon as possible after a meal.²
- ✓ Take your **next scheduled dose** at the **regular time**.²
- ✓ Always talk to your **doctor** or **pharmacist** about your medicines. He or she can provide tips on what to do if you **miss a dose** and **help manage** your treatment.¹



DO NOT
FORGET
ME!



D~~x~~n't Do

- ✗ **Don't take two doses at the same time** to make up for a missed dose.¹
- ✗ **Diuretics** make you urinate more often. Try **not to take** them at **night** before you go to bed. Take them at the same time every day.³
- ✗ **Don't adjust** your treatment **schedule** without consulting your **doctor** or **pharmacist**.⁴



¹. Ministry of Health Singapore. Heart failure –medication. Health Hub. Last reviewed August 26, 2021. Accessed January 18, 2025. <https://www.healthhub.sg/a-z/diseases-and-conditions/heart-failure-medication>;

². SmPC Advisory Group. Section 4.2.: Posology and method of administration. SmPC training presentation. European Medicines Agency. Accessed January 18, 2025. https://www.ema.europa.eu/en/documents/presentation/presentation-section-42-posology-method-administration_en.pdf

³. National Library of Medicine. Heart failure – fluids and diuretics. MedlinePlus Medical Encyclopedia_2024.

Reviewed July 14, 2024. Accessed January 18, 2025.. <https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000112.htm>

⁴. American Heart Association. Medications used to treat heart failure. Last reviewed January 8, 2025. Accessed January 18, 2025. https://www.heart.org/en/health-topics/heart-failure/treatment-options-for-heart-failure/medications-used-to-treat-heart-failure?utm_source=chatgpt.com

What about self-medication?

- ♥ When you're sick, it's important to **stay hydrated**, especially if you have **vomiting, diarrhea, or a fever**.¹
- ♥ Stick to your usual **treatment schedule**.
- ♥ Don't use **nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs)**, like **ibuprofen**, or **effervescent** drugs **without consulting your doctor**.

- ♥ **Be cautious with cold and flu medicines:** Cold medicines, including **nasal sprays**, may contain decongestants. These can raise blood pressure and interfere with your heart failure medicines.



- ♥ **Laxatives and antacids:** Some contain **high sodium** or may **interfere with your heart failure medicines**. Avoid taking them at the same time.

Keep a **list** of your medicines and check with your **doctor** or **pharmacist before taking any over-the-counter medicine** to make sure it's **safe** for you.

Advice:

When you're sick, it's important to **stay hydrated**, especially if you have **vomiting, diarrhea, or a fever**. Try to keep **drinking fluids** and stick to your usual **treatment schedule**.



¹. Armas GC, American Heart Association News. Feeling sick? The do's and don'ts to help you get better and protect others when you have a virus. Published December 19, 2023. Accessed January 23, 2025. https://www.heart.org/en/news/2023/12/19/the-dos-and-donts-to-help-you-get-better-and-protect-others-when-you-have-a-virus?utm_source=chatgpt.com

What about possible disruptions to therapy (eg, travel, jet lag, meetings)?

Traveling?

Here are some travel tips:^{1,2}

- ♥ **Bring extra medicines:** Pack enough medicines for your trip and a little extra in case of delays. Keep it in your **hand luggage**.
- ♥ **Keep medicines in original containers:** Make sure the label shows your name, dosage, and doctor's name.
- ♥ **Carry medical documents:** Take a copy of your prescriptions and medical history, and keep another copy at home with your relatives or friend in case you lose your copy and need an emergency refill.



- ♥ Ask your doctor for advice if you travel to a new time zone, he or she will help you adjust your treatment intake if needed.
- ♥ **Plan for emergencies:** Know where the nearest hospital is and check that your insurance covers travel emergencies.



¹. Lainscak M et al. *Eur J Heart Fail*. 2011;13(2):115–126.
². American Heart Association. Travel and heart disease. Last reviewed January 16, 2024. Accessed January 18, 2025.
<https://www.heart.org/en/health-topics/consumer-healthcare/what-is-cardiovascular-disease/travel-and-heart-disease>

What drinks or supplements interact with the treatment?

Some drinks and supplements **can interfere** with your medicines, making them **less effective** or **increasing heart failure symptoms**.¹

- 1 Alcohol:**
More than **10 drinks per week** can **harm your heart** and **increase the risk** of irregular heartbeat.
- 2 Grapefruit:**
Don't eat or drink **grapefruit juice within 4 hours** of your **medicine**, as it can cause **side effects**.
- 3 Gossypol:**
It's a plant compound used as a **male oral contraceptive**. It can **lower potassium** levels and cause side effects for people taking some heart medicines or diuretics.
- 4 Coffee:**
About 3–4 cups of coffee a day is **generally safe** and not linked to negative health or heart effects for most people.



5 Hawthorn:
Found in berries, it is generally safe with ACE inhibitors and β -blockers. However, it **may interact with digoxin** and **should be avoided**.

6 Lily of the Valley, Oleander, Strophanthus, and Ouabain:
Can cause **nausea, palpitations, or vision problems**. Avoid taking them with **loop diuretics** or **corticosteroids**.

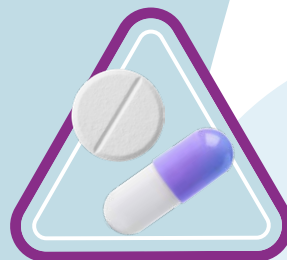
7 Vitamin E:
Found in plant-based oils, nuts, seeds, fruits, and vegetables. High doses (approximately **268 mg**) may increase the **risk of developing heart failure** or **needing hospitalization** for it.

Always talk to your doctor before taking any supplements to avoid unwanted side effects.



What about side effects and how to manage them?

- ♥ **Most medicines**, including those for heart failure, can cause **unwanted effects**. Please refer to your doctor if you feel unusual effects.¹
- ♥ When starting heart failure treatment, you might **feel tired at first**, but this **usually improves after a few weeks**.²
- ♥ To avoid disruptions to your daily routine, try taking **diuretics** in the **morning** or **before lunchtime**.²
- ♥ If you're **having side effects**, **talk** to your **doctor**. He or she may **adjust** your **dose** or **switch** to a different medicine to **help manage** the issue.²



Common side effects you might experience with heart failure treatment:¹

**IF YOU ARE
HAVING SIDE
EFFECTS TALK TO
YOUR DOCTOR**

Cough
Dizziness
Fatigue
Low blood pressure
Wheezing
Shortness of breath

¹. Butzner M et al. *Am J Manag Care*. 2022;28(3):e113–e120.
². Jaarsma T et al. *Eur J Heart Fail*. 2021;23(1):157–174.

My medicines list



Instructions:





- ♥ Keep a list of all your heart failure medicines, including over-the-counter medicines and supplements.
- ♥ Write down the name, dosage, when you take it, and any special instructions. If you've had side effects, note them too.

Name of medicine	Dosage	Prescribed schedule	Special instructions

Side effects:

This brochure has been created specifically for individuals with heart failure to assist them in adhering to their medical treatment. It was co-developed by people living with heart failure who are members of the Servier Patient Council.

For further information and support please follow these links to useful websites and resources.

-  **My Health Partner :**
myhealth-partner.com/
-  **World Heart Federation resources:**
world-heart-federation.org/resources/
-  **Global Heart Hub:**
globalhearthub.org/resources/
-  **European Society of Cardiology:**
heartfailurematters.org/

For **heart failure patients**, missing your treatment too often can put you at higher risk of cardiovascular complications.¹ Because, **EVERY PILL MATTERS**, follow your prescription.



DO NOT
FORGET
ME!



¹. Ruppap TM et al. *J Am Heart Assoc.* 2016;5(6):e002606.