



HEART FAILURE

Bromley

Well

HEALTH FACT SHEET

Updated July 2024

What is Heart Failure?

Heart failure is a condition in which the heart does not pump efficiently enough to meet all the needs of the body. This usually occurs because the heart has become weak or your heart muscle is damaged.

What are the symptoms?

- Shortness of breath after activity or at rest.
- Rapid or irregular heart beat.
- Swelling of feet, ankles and abdomen, due to fluid retention.
- Feeling tired most of the time and finding exercise exhausting.
- A persistent cough, a fast heart rate and dizziness in some people.

What are the causes?

The most common cause of heart failure in the UK is coronary heart disease. Heart failure is also common in patients with high blood pressure and in those who have had a heart attack in the past.

Heart failure can also be caused by:

- Alcohol or drug abuse
- Congenital heart conditions
- A viral infection affecting the heart muscle
- An uncontrolled irregular heart rhythm (arrhythmia)

What about treatment?

Treatment aims to control symptoms and slow the progression of the condition

Common treatments include:

- Making lifestyle changes such as eating a healthy diet, regular physical activity and stopping smoking
- Medication – a range of medication can help
- Devices implanted in your chest can help control your heart rhythm
- Surgery – bypass operation or a heart transplant

SELF CARE TIPS

EAT A LOW SALT DIET

Sodium is an electrolyte in your body. If we have too much sodium the body can retain too much water which puts even more pressure on the heart.

MONITOR AND CONTROL FLUID INTAKE

Ideally those with heart failure should aim to drink between 1–1.5L of fluid to reduce risk of fluid overload.

CHECK WEIGHT REGULARLY

Checking weights means you can notice signs of fluid retention early before symptoms begin.

GET VACCINATED

Keep up to date with vaccinations like your yearly flu vaccination

ADHERE TO YOUR MEDICATION

By taking your medication you can better control your symptoms and reduce the risk of fluid overload etc.

DID YOU KNOW?

There is around 900,000 people in the UK living with heart failure.

To register with Bromley Well:
Freephone 0808 278 7898
Or register online:
www.bromleywell.org.uk/refer

Contact Lifestyle Support direct
07985 431484 / 07985 444210
or email
enquiry@bromleywell.org.uk



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FURTHER RESOURCES

British Heart Foundation

**Help Line : 0808 802 1234 and
0300 330 3311**

Email: heretohelp@bhf.org.uk

A national charity providing information and advice for the public and for health professionals. A really useful site containing lifestyle advice, the latest research and information about tests and treatments. There are also British Heart Foundation support groups that are listed on the website.

Heart UK

National cholesterol charity providing support and advice for people concerned about cholesterol. A great website packed with advice on healthy eating and maintaining a healthy weight, including recipe ideas and diet plans.

NHS Conditions Heart Attack

NHS conditions pages contain information about the causes, symptoms and prevention and treatment of heart attacks.

NHS Wellbeing Apps

Links to NHS Wellbeing Apps designed to support you in making healthy lifestyle changes

References: NHS conditions <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/heart-failure/> British Heart Foundation <https://www.bhf.org.uk/informationsupport/conditions/heart-failure>

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