

## Congestive Heart Failure



Heart Failure, also known as heart failure or congestive heart failure, means that the heart cannot pump enough blood to meet the body's needs. This does not mean that the heart has stopped or is about to stop beating. However, without enough blood flow, other organs in the body may not function well, which can cause serious health problems.

### Types of Congestive Heart Failure

- **Right-sided heart failure** - fluid may accumulate in the abdomen, legs and feet, causing swelling.
- **Left-sided heart failure** - fluid may accumulate in the lungs, causing shortness of breath.
- **Systolic heart failure** - this is a pumping problem. The left ventricle cannot actively contract.
- **Heart failure with preserved ejection fraction** is a filling problem. The left ventricle cannot relax or fill completely.

### Causes

Congestive heart failure can occur after a medical condition or injury has damaged or weakened the heart. Some of these conditions include the following:

- Cardiomyopathy
- Endocarditis
- Arrhythmias
- Heart attack
- High blood pressure
- Diabetes
- Obesity
- Irregular heartbeat
- Sleep apnea
- Alcohol consumption



### Symptoms

Shortness of breath and cough

Nausea and loss of appetite

Fatigue or weakness

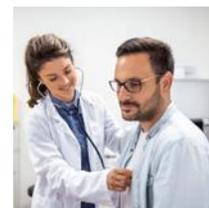
Swelling and weight gain from fluid retained in the lower legs and abdomen.

Difficulty to sleep

Swelling in the neck veins

### Diagnosis

The health care provider will look at the person's symptoms, family history, and medical history. Some of the following tests may be needed to establish a diagnosis:



- **Physical exam** to auscultate the heart
- **Blood tests** to look for signs of diseases that may affect the heart.
- **Chest x-ray** can show the condition of the lungs and heart.
- **Electrocardiogram**, a quick and painless test, records the heart's electrical signals.

- **Echocardiogram.** This test shows the size and structure of the heart, heart valves, and blood flow through the heart.
 
- **Stress test** measures heart health during an activity, such as walking.
- **Coronary angiography** helps the doctor detect blockages.
- **Myocardial biopsy** may be done to diagnose certain types of diseases.

### Treatment

At this time, there is no cure. Treatment will depend on the severity of the disease and will focus on helping to improve symptoms and strengthen the heart. Most treatments include:

- Medication
- Consuming less sodium and drinking less fluids to control fluid buildup.
- Smoking cessation
- Managing Stress
- Physical activity

### Prevention

- Consult with your doctor to manage any conditions that increase your risk of Congestive Heart Failure.
- Make healthy changes, such as diet and physical activity, that help prevent heart disease.



### Complications

Some possible complications may include the following:

- Respiratory problems
- Kidney damage or failure
- Unhealthy diet
- Pulmonary hypertension
- Liver damage
- Heart valve or heart rhythm problems



### Social and Emotional Aspect

For recommendations, tools, and resources on how you and your family can cope with emotional and physical concerns during and after treatment, please visit your primary doctor or contact the following hotlines:

#### Medical Advice Line

1-844-347-7801

TTY/TDD 1-844-347-7804

#### APS Health

787-641-9133

### References:

<https://www.mayoclinic.org/es-es/diseases-conditions/heart-failure/symptoms-causes/syc-20373142>

<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/heartfailure.html>

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