

What is Congestive Heart Failure (CHF) ?

Heart failure occurs when the heart cannot pump enough oxygen-rich blood through your body, causing important organs to receive less blood. Because the heart is not pumping well, fluid backs up into your lungs and other parts of your body. This can cause you to feel short of breath and tired and have swelling in your feet, ankles, hands, and stomach.

How I Can Live Better with Heart Failure:

- Weigh myself daily (first thing in the morning before dressing)
 - Keep weight monitoring log
 - Call my doctor if I gain 3 lbs. in one day or 5 lbs. in one week
- Monitor how I feel. Notify my doctor if I have:
 - Increased cough
 - Short of breath, especially when lying flat
 - Increased swelling
- Eat low-salt foods
 - Read food labels and select food with 140 mg or less of Sodium (salt) per serving
 - When choosing packaged foods, look for the words “low-sodium” or “sodium-free” on label
 - Limit fluid intake to less than 1.5-2 ounces/day
- Take my medications
 - Take as prescribed by your doctor
 - Bring medications to your doctor’s visit
- Exercise: Focus on activities that can make my heart pump stronger
 - Walking
 - Biking

NHRMC Programs and Support Services:

- **NHRMC Physician Group - Cape Fear Heart Associates Heart Strong Clinic** offers CHF patients medical support, including
 - Four dedicated providers seeing patients five days per week
 - A dedicated CHF pharmacist and a CHF nurse
 - Virtual CHF classes are available online anytime by visiting nhrmc.org/locations/cape-fear-heart-associates and clicking on the patient education tab.
- **NHRMC’s Nationally Certified Cardiac Rehabilitation Program** is available to improve heart health. Enroll by calling 910.662.9500.
- **Transitional Disease Management Support:** Patients discharging from NHRMC with CHF who are at high risk for readmission may receive follow-up phone calls from an NHRMC nurse and potentially a home visit from a Community Paramedic to help make a smooth transition back to living in your home. Call 910.667.7275 to reach the Transitional Disease Management team.
- **NHRMC Home Care** can provide follow-up care in the comfort of your home. The telehealth program provides equipment in your home to allow you to monitor and record your blood pressure, oxygen levels, weight and more. That information is transmitted back and monitored by cardiac care coordinators to help assist your physician with medical changes. Contact your provider for a referral to NHRMC Home Care.
- **NHRMC Expresscare** is available for any urgent medical needs. Learn more at nhrmc.org/services/expresscare.
- **VitaLine** provides free, confidential access to nonurgent health information from experienced registered nurses and other professionally trained staff who can help connect you to the care you need. Call 888-815-5188 to reach the VitaLine team, who will follow up with you at their earliest convenience.

Additional References and Resources:

- **NHRMC’s Heart Center:** Check out the “HEART STRONG: Living Better with Heart Failure” booklet under “Other Education Materials” at www.nhrmc.org/heart
- **American Association of Heart Failure Nurses’ patient education site:** www.aahfnpatienteducation.com
 - To access the AAHFN Patient Education Heartline, dial **856.539.9006**