

Signs of HF That You May Notice:

- ↪ Shortness of breath
- ↪ Difficulty breathing
- ↪ Cough
- ↪ Tiredness
- ↪ Chest pain
- ↪ Weight gain
- ↪ Edema
- ↪ Fast heart beat

Signs of HF That Your Doctor May Find:

- ↪ Enlargement of your heart
- ↪ Edema
- ↪ Enlargement of your liver
- ↪ A third sound in your heartbeat
- ↪ Enlarged jugular vein in your neck
- ↪ Sound of fluids in your lungs
- ↪ Fast heart beat
- ↪ Blood pressure too high or too low

For More Information Please Contact:

American Heart Association
National Center
7272 Greenville Avenue
Dallas, TX 75231
Telephone: 1-800-AHA-USA-1 or 1-800-242-8721

National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute
Health Information Center
P.O. Box 30105
Bethesda, MD 20824-0105
Telephone: 301-592-8573

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P.O. Box 91024
Baton Rouge, LA 70821

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COMPLETE WELLNESS

A Guide to Managing Your Health

HEART FAILURE

Knowing Your Medications

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Heart Failure (HF) occurs when your heart cannot pump enough blood and oxygen to your body. The American Heart Association reports that about 5 million Americans have HF, with around 400,000 new cases each year. If you have been diagnosed with HF, then your doctor has probably given you prescriptions for more than one type of medicine. This brochure will tell you about some of the medications used to treat HF.

Common HF Medications

ACE Inhibitors

ACE Inhibitors are drugs that prevent your body from making a chemical that causes blood vessels to become smaller. These drugs help keep your blood vessels larger so that your heart doesn't have to work as hard to pump blood and oxygen through your body.

Some ACE Inhibitors Include:

- benazepril (Lotensin®)
- captopril (Capoten®)
- enalapril (Vasotec®)
- fosinopril (Monopril®)
- lisinopril (Zestril®, Prinivil®)
- ramipril (Altace®)

Possible Side Effects:

- ◆ Cough
- ◆ Dizziness
- ◆ Skin rashes
- ◆ GI Distress
- ◆ Hypotension
- ◆ Too-high potassium levels
- ◆ Taste may be altered

Digitalis

Digitalis helps your heart pump stronger. These medications increase the force of your heart's contractions and help control the rhythm of your heartbeat.

Digitalis Include:

- digitoxin (Crystodigin®)
- digoxin (Lanoxin®)

Possible Side Effects:

- ◆ Loss of appetite
- ◆ Nausea or vomiting
- ◆ Headaches
- ◆ Bad taste in mouth
- ◆ Abnormal heart rhythms
- ◆ Confusion
- ◆ Extreme tiredness
- ◆ Diarrhea

Diuretics

Diuretics increase the amount of urine and help your kidneys get rid of the extra water and salt in your body. These drugs help decrease the fluid build-up and swelling in your body.

Some Diuretics Include:

- bumetanide (Bumex®)
- chlorothiazide (Diuril®)
- furosemide (Lasix®)
- hydrochlorothiazide (Hydrodiuril®)
- methyclothiazide (Aquatensen®)
- metolazone (Zaroxolyn®)
- polythiazide (Renese®)
- spironolactone (Aldactone®)
- triamterene (Dyrenium®)

Possible Side Effects:

- ◆ Low potassium levels
- ◆ Loss of too much water
- ◆ Fatigue or weakness
- ◆ Low sodium levels
- ◆ Too-low blood pressure
- ◆ Poor kidney function

Beta Blockers

Beta Blockers reduce your heart rate and decrease the strength of your heartbeat. These must be used carefully because sometimes decreasing your heart rate and the strength of your heartbeat can make your HF worse.

Some Beta Blockers Include:

- atenolol (Tenormin®)
- bisoprolol (Zebeta®)
- carvedilol (Coreg®)
- metoprolol (Lopressor®, Toprol-XL®)

Possible Side Effects:

- ◆ Dizziness or lightheadedness
- ◆ Breathing difficulty (Most people with asthma should not take beta blockers.)
- ◆ Decreased heart rate (If your heart rate is less than 50 beats/minute, contact your doctor immediately.)

Tips to Remember.....

See your doctor on a regular basis:



- * Follow your doctor's instructions carefully.
- * Keep a notebook of questions for your next doctor's visit.

- * Discuss any side effects from your medications, or any changes, with your doctor or pharmacist.
- * Take your medications as directed.
- * Let your doctor or pharmacist know of any change in your condition such as shortness of breath or swollen feet.

Do your part to keep your heart healthy:

- * Exercise regularly
- * Watch what you eat. Try to eat a healthy, low salt diet.
- * Weigh yourself daily.
- * Don't smoke or use any other type of tobacco products.
- * Don't drink alcoholic beverages.
- * Rest, especially after eating.
- * Try to put your feet up when sitting down.

Educational material provided to Louisiana Medicaid recipients and providers by the Louisiana Medicaid Pharmacy Benefits Management Program (PBM) in the Department of Health and Hospitals and developed by the University of Louisiana at Monroe College of Pharmacy.

Ask your doctor, pharmacist, or nurse about the information contained in this brochure.