

Understanding Heart Failure and Connected Conditions



WHAT IS HEART FAILURE?

- **Simple Definition:** Heart failure means your heart isn't pumping blood as well as it should.
- **Commonly Linked Conditions:** Diabetes, kidney disease, high blood pressure, and obesity.
- These conditions often interact and can make each other—and your heart health—worse.



WHAT IS HEART FAILURE?

LIST OF CONNECTED CONDITIONS:

- **Heart Conditions:** Coronary artery disease, arrhythmias, valvular heart disease
- **Cardiovascular Complications:** Stroke, cardiac amyloidosis
- **Metabolic Conditions:** High cholesterol, Diabetes and Dyslipidemia
- **Kidney Health:** Chronic kidney disease
- **Other Factors:** Obesity, high blood pressure
- **Additional Health Concerns:** Thyroid disorders, anemia, sleep disorders, depression, frailty, gout, arthritis, erectile dysfunction, cancer, malnutrition, infections, and lung disease

QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR HEALTHCARE PROVIDER:

What other conditions might I be at risk for because of heart failure?

What lifestyle changes can help lower my risk?

How often should I check on my health?

What symptoms should I watch for that mean my condition is getting worse?

What are the target numbers I should aim for with my test results?



TAKING CHARGE OF YOUR HEALTH:

- **Join Support Networks:** Connect with patient groups or online communities like HeartLife for advice and encouragement.
- **Stay Active:** Ask what types of physical activity are safe for you and how often to do them.
- **Look After Your Mental Health:** If you feel overwhelmed, don't hesitate to reach out to a mental health professional.

Remember: You play a key role in your own care. Stay informed, stay proactive, and don't hesitate to ask for help.



TRACK YOUR HEALTH - IMPORTANT NUMBERS

- **Heart Function:** Ejection fraction, heart rate, BP, weight, symptoms of fatigue or shortness of breath
- **Kidney Health:** Creatinine level, glomerular filtration rate (GFR), urine albumin
- **Diabetes Status:** Blood sugar levels, HbA1c, fasting glucose
- **Cholesterol Levels:** LDL, HDL, total cholesterol
- **Blood Pressure:** Systolic and diastolic pressure, consistency of readings, any fluctuations

Note: Ask your doctor for your target levels for each.

Track Your Health - Important Numbers

Heart Failure

Heart Rate

An abnormal or fast heart rate can mean your heart is trying to “make up for” a loss in pumping capacity. This could be a sign of new or worsening heart failure.



My normal range is between _____ and _____

Weight

Sudden gains (2–3 lbs/1–2 kg in a day or 5 lbs/2 kg in a week) can signal fluid retention



My normal range is between _____ and _____

BNP or NT-proBNP Levels

Blood tests that rise when the heart is under extra stress and help guide treatment.



My normal range is between _____ and _____

Kidney Disease

eGFR

Indicates how well your kidneys are filtering waste.



My normal range is between _____ and _____

Urine Albumin-to-Creatinine Ratio (UACR)

Detects tiny amounts of protein in urine, an early sign of damage.



My normal range is between _____ and _____

Serum Creatinine

Tracks waste buildup in your blood as kidney function changes.



My normal range is between _____ and _____

Diabetes

HbA1c

Reflects your average blood sugar over the past 2–3 months; key for long-term control.



My normal range is between _____ and _____

Daily Blood Glucose

Fasting and post-meal readings help you spot trends and adjust diet/medication.



My normal range is between _____ and _____

Blood Pressure

High blood pressure adds extra strain and raises risk of complications.



My normal range is between _____ and _____

Cholesterol

LDL

Often referred to as “bad” cholesterol, LDL carries cholesterol to your arteries, where it can build up and increase the risk of heart disease.



My normal range is between _____ and _____

HDL -High-Density Lipoprotein

Known as “good” cholesterol, HDL helps remove excess cholesterol from the bloodstream and transports it to the liver for disposal.



My normal range is between _____ and _____

Lp(a) (Lipoprotein(a))

Genetic variation of LDL that includes a specific protein called apolipoprotein(a); elevated levels are associated with an increased risk of heart attack and stroke, independent of other cholesterol levels.



My normal range is between _____ and _____