

BETTER HEALTH 4 YOU

SMART LOCAL 36 BENEFIT FUND

BP, CHOLESTEROL & HEART

Congestive Heart Failure (CHF)

Overview

Heart failure, sometimes known as **congestive heart failure**, occurs when your heart muscle doesn't pump blood as well as it should. Certain conditions, such as narrowed arteries in your heart (coronary artery disease) or high blood pressure, gradually leave your heart too weak or stiff to fill and pump efficiently. One way to prevent heart failure is to prevent and control conditions that cause heart failure, such as coronary artery disease, high blood pressure, diabetes or obesity.

Symptoms

Heart failure can be ongoing (chronic), or your condition may start suddenly (acute).

- Shortness of breath (dyspnea) when you exert yourself or when you lie down
- Fatigue and weakness
- Swelling (edema) in your legs, ankles and feet
- Rapid or irregular heartbeat
- Reduced ability to exercise
- Persistent cough or wheezing with white or pink blood-tinged phlegm
- Increased need to urinate at night
- Swelling of your abdomen (ascites)
- Very rapid weight gain from fluid retention

- Lack of appetite and nausea
- Difficulty concentrating or decreased alertness
- Sudden, severe shortness of breath and coughing up pink, foamy mucus
- Chest pain if your heart failure is caused by a heart attack

When to see a doctor

See your doctor if you think you might be experiencing signs or symptoms of heart failure. Seek emergency treatment if you experience any of the following:

- Chest pain
- Fainting or severe weakness
- Rapid or irregular heartbeat associated with shortness of breath, chest pain or fainting
- Sudden, severe shortness of breath and coughing up pink, foamy mucus

Although these signs and symptoms may be due to heart failure, there are many other possible causes, including other life-threatening heart and lung conditions. Don't try to diagnose yourself. Call 911 or your local emergency number for immediate help. Emergency room doctors will try to stabilize your condition and determine if your symptoms are due to heart failure or something else.

If you have a diagnosis of heart failure and if any of the symptoms suddenly become worse or you develop a new sign or symptom, it

HEART HEALTHY

Whole Wheat Cranberry Muffins

- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup oatmeal
- $\frac{1}{2}$ whole wheat flour
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup flour
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup brown sugar (light)
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup dried cranberries
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup toasted wheat germ
- 2 tsp. baking powder
- $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp. baking soda
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup pineapple juice
- 1 egg (or substitute egg)
- 1 TBS. canola oil

Preheat oven to 400°.

Spray muffin pan or use papers. Mix ingredients, but do not overmix. Spoon into muffin cups. Bake 11-12 minutes

Nutrition Information Per serving: 134 calories, 2.5g fat, 0mg chol, 28g carbs, 3g protein, 108mg sodium. 2fiber

SERVINGS: 4



may mean that existing heart failure is getting worse or not responding to treatment. This may be also the case if you gain 5 pounds (2.3 kg) or more within a few days. Contact your doctor promptly.

Risk factors

A single risk factor may be enough to cause heart failure, but a combination of factors also increases your risk.

Risk factors include:

- **High blood pressure.** Your heart works harder than it has to if your blood pressure is high.
- **Coronary artery disease.** Narrowed arteries may limit your heart's supply of oxygen-rich blood, resulting in weakened heart muscle.
- **Heart attack.** A heart attack is a form of coronary disease that occurs suddenly. Damage to your heart muscle from a heart attack may mean your heart can no longer pump as well as it should.
- **Diabetes.** Having diabetes increases your risk of high blood pressure and coronary artery disease.
- **Some diabetes medications.** The diabetes drugs rosiglitazone (Avandia) and pioglitazone (Actos) have been found to increase the risk

of heart failure in some people. Don't stop taking these medications on your own, though. If you're taking them, discuss with your doctor whether you need to make any changes.

- **Certain medications.** Some medications may lead to heart failure or heart problems. Medications that may increase the risk of heart problems include nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs); certain anesthesia medications; some anti-arrhythmic medications; certain medications used to treat high blood pressure, cancer, blood conditions, neurological conditions, psychiatric conditions, lung conditions, urological conditions, inflammatory conditions and infections; and other prescription and over-the-counter medications. Don't stop taking any medications on your own. If you have questions about medications you're taking, discuss with your doctor whether he or she recommends any changes.

- **Sleep apnea.** The inability to breathe properly while you sleep at night results in low blood oxygen levels and increased risk of abnormal heart rhythms. Both of these problems can weaken the heart.
- **Congenital heart defects.** Some people who develop heart failure were born with structural heart defects.
- **Valvular heart disease.** People with valvular heart disease have a higher risk of heart failure.
- **Viruses.** A viral infection may have damaged your heart muscle.
- **Alcohol use.** Drinking too much alcohol can weaken heart muscle and lead to heart failure.
- **Tobacco use.** Using tobacco can increase your risk of heart failure.
- **Obesity.** People who are obese have a higher risk of developing heart failure.
- **Irregular heartbeats.** These abnormal rhythms, especially if they are very frequent and fast, can weaken the heart muscle and cause heart failure.

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Call me anytime for questions

All information contained within this newsletter is intended for educational purposes only. Members should never disregard medical advice or delay in seeking it because of something they may have read in this newsletter. Information obtained from Mayo Clinic and AHA.

SUICIDE PREVENTION/CRISIS LIFELINE 1-800-273-8255 24/7