

# Heart Failure

## What is Heart Failure?

- A chronic condition where the heart can't pump blood well enough to meet the body's demands
- Can be due to a weak or stiff heart

## Causes and Risk Factors

- Common causes: heart attack, coronary artery disease, uncontrolled hypertension
- Less common causes: heart valve problems, congenital heart disease, arrhythmias
- Risk factors: diabetes, high cholesterol, excessive alcohol, smoking, recreational drug use, unhealthy diet, limited exercise

## Symptoms

- Shortness of breath (especially when lying flat)
- Sudden weight gain
- Bloating or feeling full
- Extreme tiredness or loss of energy
- Loss of appetite or change in appetite
- Swelling in lower limbs or stomach area
- Increased urination at night
- Cool hands and feet
- New cognitive impairment
- Chest pain or heart palpitations

**Management**

- Medications
- Lifestyle modifications:
  - Frequent weight monitoring
  - Limit fluid intake (<2L/day)
  - Limit sodium intake (<2000mg/day)
  - Healthy diet (fruits, veggies, whole grains, lean meats)
  - Increase physical activity (150mins/week)
  - Get plenty of sleep and rest
  - Smoke free
  - Limit caffeine and alcohol consumption

**Medications**

- Typically, 5 medications are prescribed: ACE inhibitor, beta-blocker, diuretic, spironolactone, and dapagliflozin
- The combination of these 5 medications have been demonstrated to prolong survival, reduce hospitalizations, and improve outcomes

**When to Book an Appointment**

- Swelling in legs or belly
- Sudden weight gain
- Shortness of breath, especially when resting
- Chest pain