

Heart Failure and Depression

Depression is common in people with heart failure.

- It will affect about 70% of patients in the hospital.
- It will affect 24-42% of people with heart failure.
- It affects more women than men.

Depression can lead to more symptoms of heart failure and more time in the hospital. This can decrease your quality of life and make heart failure harder to treat.

Heart failure and depression have some of the same signs and symptoms. Treating depression can improve your health status.

Once you have heart failure, people react in different ways. Many people will have **anxiety, denial, depression, and fear**. It is ok to have these feelings, but it is important to be aware of them and talk to your health care provider. Then, you can make a plan to cope with these feelings.

Signs of Depression

- Feeling sad, lonely, and gloomy
- **Having less energy or no energy to do things that you used to do**
- **Need more or less sleep**
- **No desire for food or eating more food than usual**
- Weight changes
- Having thoughts of guilt, worthlessness, hopelessness or suicide
- Feel like you have nothing to live for

Signs of Heart Failure

- **You have no energy**
- **Tire easily**
- **Feeling crabby and on edge**
- **Don't want to eat**
- Hard to breathe when at rest or lying flat
- Gain weight despite loss of appetite
- Swollen abdomen, legs, arms, and face
- Out of breath or cough
- Chest congestion

What can you do?

Health habits and choices can help you feel better and improve your heart failure and depression.

- Avoid tobacco and alcohol.
- Eat a heart-healthy diet.
- Exercise-it can reduce your depressive symptoms and improve cardiac fitness.
- Get enough sleep.
- Take your medicines.

Talk to your health care provider if you notice any signs and symptoms of depression. Learn about your illness and how it affects you. Think about how you cope with stress and write down what helps you cope and what does not help. Some skills to cope are:

- Talk to your family and friends.
- Stay active with your hobbies/activities that you like to do.
- Learn to relax.
- Learn to avoid blaming yourself.
- Write a "to do list" and rest in between the tasks.

- Allow yourself grieving time- everyone needs time to come to term with changes in your life.
- Join a support group- you are not alone.
- Seek extra help to deal with grief, anxiety, depression, and other problems.

Resources for You

American Heart Association

www.heart.org

Heart Failure Society of America

www.hfsa.org

www.mentalhealthamerica.net

mendedhearts.org

www.namiwisconsin.org

UW Health Heart Failure Program

(608) 263-1690

National Alliance on Mental Health-Dane
County

www.namidanecounty.org

(608) 249-7188

contact@namidanecounty.org

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Your health care team may have given you this information as part of your care. If so, please use it and call if you have any questions. If this information was not given to you as part of your care, please check with your doctor. This is not medical advice. This is not to be used for diagnosis or treatment of any medical condition. Because each person's health needs are different, you should talk with your doctor or others on your health care team when using this information. If you have an emergency, please call 911. Copyright © 5/2019 University of Wisconsin Hospitals and Clinics Authority. All rights reserved. Produced by the Department of Nursing. HF#6885