

CHF

Congestive Heart Failure



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H O M E C A R E

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The Human Heart

The human heart is merely a collective of muscles that pumps a river of blood through miles of pipes. This pump runs 24 hours a day for upwards of 100 years. Sometimes, however, due to damage or disease these muscles become less effective at moving the fluids that keep our body working at peak efficiency.

Congestive Heart Failure

Congestive Heart Failure (CHF) is a chronic condition where body fluids are not cycled through the bloodstream due to failure of the heart muscles. Home health care can frequently be used to monitor and manage the disease, with the goal of preventing or shortening hospital stays associated with symptoms.

Causes of Congestive Heart Failure

Congestive Heart Failure is the leading cause of hospitalizations for people 65 years of age and older. Congestive Heart Failure occurs when the heart muscle is unable to pump blood effectively resulting in fluid build up or back up in other parts of body such as lungs and legs. This buildup can be debilitating, and additionally, makes the already damaged heart work even harder.

Heart damage leading to CHF can be caused by several conditions. Congestive Heart Failure can occur as a result of having high blood pressure over a period of time. The heart has to work harder as a result of the high blood pressure and over time it becomes weaker or heart wall becomes thicker and the heart is no longer able to pump blood efficiently. Another cause of Congestive Heart failure is when the heart has been damaged as a result of heart attack. Congestive Heart Failure can be also be caused by heart valve disorders.

Symptoms associated with Congestive Heart Failure:

- Swelling in ankles, feet and legs.
- Shortness of Breath
- Frothy cough that produces white or pink tinged mucus.
- Sudden unexplained weight gain
- Fatigue, Weakness
- Lack of appetite

Recognizing the subtle changes in your body and implementing appropriate interventions is the best way of managing this chronic disease and avoiding the frequent hospitalizations that occur with this disease.



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