



# Your guide to home healthcare for heart failure



## How home health can help you

If you have heart failure, your heart does not pump as well as it should. This can lead to unwanted symptoms and unplanned hospital visits. Heart failure is a chronic condition. But you can manage your symptoms and live a happy, fulfilled life by eating well, being active and taking medicine as prescribed by your doctor.

Some home health agencies offer specialized care for conditions, including heart failure. The goal of home health is to help you reach your personal health goals, regain your independence and get back to doing the things you love. Read this guide to learn how to get started with home health—for yourself or a loved one.

### This guide answers:

- What is heart failure?
- What are the symptoms of heart failure?
- How do I know if I can benefit from heart failure care in the home?
- How can I live my fullest life with heart failure?
- How do I choose a home health agency?
- Do I have choices when it comes to home healthcare?



# What is heart failure?

You depend on your heart to pump blood to all parts of your body. Your cells need oxygen and nutrients from the blood to function. If you have heart failure, your heart is not pumping as well as it should and cannot supply your cells with what they need. This can make you tired and short of breath, making it more difficult to do everyday activities like walking and climbing stairs.

In the early stages of heart failure, your body tries to make up for your heart’s weakened pumping ability. Your heart may stretch and enlarge or become more stiff, causing it to work harder to pump blood to your body. While this may disguise symptoms temporarily, eventually heart failure will worsen to the point that your body can’t keep up.

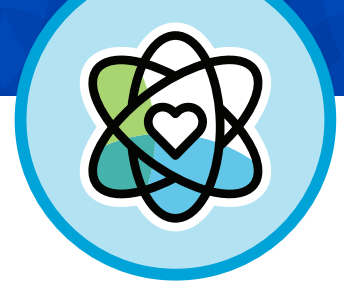
While heart failure can be serious, you can live a full, happy life with the condition. You can help reduce symptoms and be your healthiest by making good lifestyle choices and taking medicines as prescribed by your doctor.

## Am I at risk for heart failure?

Many things can raise your risk of heart failure. Some things, like age, you can’t control. But other risk factors you can control.

### Risk factors for heart failure include:<sup>1</sup>

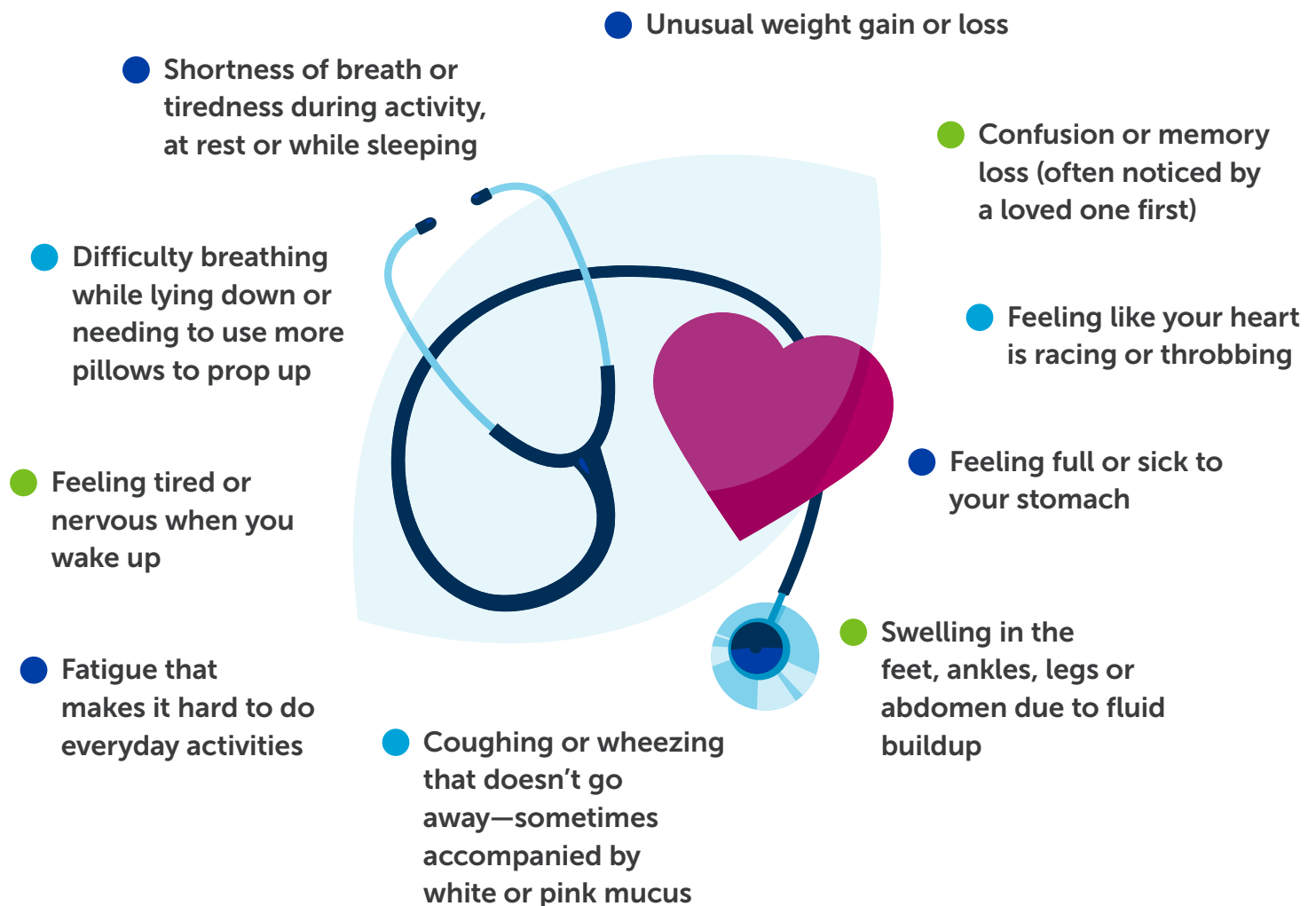
Age of 65 years or older	Smoking
Family history of heart failure	Being overweight or obese
High blood pressure	Unhealthy lifestyle habits
Type 2 diabetes	African or black ancestry



# What are the symptoms of heart failure?

In early-stage heart failure, your body tries to compensate for your weakened heart, which may disguise any issues. But eventually, heart failure will get worse and you may start noticing something is not right. One sign of heart failure may not be cause for concern. But if you notice more than one of these symptoms, be sure to call your doctor or healthcare provider and ask to be tested.

## Common signs of heart failure include:<sup>2</sup>



Call **866-831-3021** to speak with a nurse 24/7 or visit [CenterWellHomeHealth.com](https://www.CenterWellHomeHealth.com)



## How do I know if I can benefit from heart failure care in the home?

Whether you're having difficulty managing a chronic heart condition, you've been hospitalized or have had recent heart surgery, home may be the best place for your rehabilitation and recovery.

But how do you know if home health is right for you? If you answer "yes" to any of the questions below, talk with your doctor to find out if you may be eligible to benefit from home health.

1.	Have you been told you have heart failure or hypertension (high blood pressure)?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
2.	Have you had a heart attack or heart surgery?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
3.	Are you experiencing any complications or flare-ups from your condition?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
4.	Have you been to the hospital or emergency room more than once recently?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
5.	Do you have unusual swelling in your feet?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
6.	Do you have shortness of breath, even while not active?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
7.	Have you gained or lost an unusual amount of weight in a short time?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
8.	Are you currently taking multiple medicines to manage your condition?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
9.	Are you unsure of how to take your medicines?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
10.	Do you have trouble leaving home or walking?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
11.	Have you fallen in the past year?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
12.	Do you experience trouble with bathing or getting around?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No



# How can I live my fullest life with heart failure?

You play a key role in your health. But feeling confident with your self-care can take practice. We are here to help. Our clinicians will make sure you have the tools you need to manage your condition—including any challenges that come your way. We use the seven self-care behaviors\* to help you better understand your health and identify risks that can lead to unplanned hospital visits. These self-care behaviors include:



**Healthy coping:** Healthy coping is learning ways to deal with difficulty or challenges. Healthy coping skills can help keep you on track to reaching your best health.



**Healthy eating:** Healthy foods will give you the fuel you need to recover and manage your condition. By finding the right nutritional balance, we can help you achieve your weight and wellness goals.



**Being active:** The right amount and type of activity can help prevent additional health problems. Depending on your condition, your clinician can create an activity and exercise program customized to your needs.



**Taking medication:** It's important to know how to store and take your medicines correctly. Our clinicians take the time to discuss your concerns and share tips so you can be confident you're taking your medicine exactly as prescribed.



**Monitoring:** Knowing how to track your blood pressure, weight and other vital signs helps you stay on top of changes that could affect your health. Our clinicians will show you how to use this information to prevent complications.



**Reducing risks:** Preventing complications such as infections, falls and other issues is an important part of being your healthiest.



**Problem solving:** When you're recovering from a surgery or managing a chronic health condition like heart failure, it's important to be ready with a plan for how to handle unexpected issues and complications.

Heart failure is a serious condition. But the right plan of care, support and encouragement can help you understand your disease and reach your health goals.

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# How do I choose a home health agency?

Choosing a home health provider can be difficult. You want someone you can trust to be in your home and care for you like family, so it's important to know the right questions to ask.

**Use this checklist when you are interviewing each provider.**

Question	Answer	Comments
1. Medicare certified	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
2. Medicaid certified (If you have both Medicare and Medicaid)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
3. Offers the specific healthcare services I need, like nursing services or physical therapy	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
4. Meets my special needs, like language or cultural preferences	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
5. Offers the support services I need, or can help me arrange for additional services, like a meal delivery service	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
6. Has clinical staff that can give the type and hours of care my healthcare provider ordered and start when I need them	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
7. Is recommended by my hospital discharge planner, healthcare provider or social worker	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
8. Has clinical staff available at night and on weekends for emergencies	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
9. Explains what my insurance will cover and what I must pay out of pocket	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
10. Has letters and testimonials from satisfied patients, family members and healthcare providers	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	



## Do I have choices when it comes to home healthcare?

You may need home healthcare for many reasons, such as recovering after a hospital stay, regaining strength and mobility after surgery, or managing a chronic health condition like heart failure. Your doctor may refer you to a home health agency—but as a patient, it's your right to choose the agency that's best for you.

### What to expect when you choose CenterWell Home Health

If you choose CenterWell Home Health as your provider, you'll receive a welcome call to schedule your first visit once we receive your doctor's referral. We'll work with your doctor to create a personalized plan of care and provide updates along the way.

Our nurses and therapists get to know all about you to ensure you receive the personalized care, education and resources you need to manage your condition. You'll always have time to ask your questions so you feel understood and confident that you'll receive the care you deserve.

With more than **50 years of experience** helping seniors like you stay healthy and independent, we're an industry leader in senior care. We dedicate our time to helping you make the most of yours.

At CenterWell Home Health, we will do our best to make sure that every moment of your life is time well spent.



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## What you can expect from our heart failure program

The CenterWell Keeping Hearts at Home™ program is designed to provide comprehensive, personalized care, along with education and support to help you self-manage your condition. Here's what you can expect:

- **Initial assessment:** On your first visit, a nurse or therapist will verify your health status, check your home environment and gain a complete understanding of your condition.
- **Customized plan of care:** Our clinicians have advanced cardiac training and will work with you to create a care plan to address your unique health goals and fit your lifestyle.
- **Medication management:** We will confirm your medicines, help you navigate medication changes and explain the role each medicine plays in managing your condition.
- **Symptom monitoring:** We will help you understand your condition and how to recognize changes that may impact your health.
- **Lifestyle modifications:** We provide motivation and guidance to help you make manageable lifestyle changes—like choosing the right foods and being more active.

## How much do home health visits cost?

If you qualify, your home health services can be covered at 100% by Original Medicare—costing you \$0. Medicaid, Medicare Advantage plans and private insurance also pay for home health. Plan benefits, costs and restrictions vary per policy and verification of benefits is required.

To understand what's covered by Medicare or another insurance provider, check with your home health agency. They can tell you what's covered by your plan. You can also call the number on the back of your medical insurance ID card to find out about your home health benefits.

### Our commitments to care

- We will make patients and their families our first priority.
- We will initiate care of qualified patients within 24 hours, 7 days a week, 365 days a year.
- Our patients will know when to expect us for visits.
- We will understand our patients' needs and goals and engage in a holistic approach to supporting their recovery and rehabilitation.
- We will communicate with patients, families and healthcare partners based on their expectations.



# To learn more about CenterWell Home Health in your area:



Call **866-831-3021** to speak with a nurse 24/7



Visit **CenterWellHomeHealth.com**

## Sources

1. "Heart Failure Causes and Risk Factors," National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute, last accessed June 17, 2024, [www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/heart-failure/causes](http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/heart-failure/causes).
2. Heart Failure Signs and Symptoms," American Heart Association, last accessed June 17, 2024, [www.heart.org/en/health-topics/heart-failure/warning-signs-of-heart-failure](http://www.heart.org/en/health-topics/heart-failure/warning-signs-of-heart-failure).

<https://www.heart.org/en/professional/quality-improvement/healthcare-certification/certified-care/home-health-heart-failure>

Home health services are available for all eligible patients with a healthcare provider referral.

CenterWell does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability or sex.

ATENCIÓN: Si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística.

Llame al 1-877-320-2188 (TTY: 711).

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