



Heart Failure



Overview

This condition, also called "congestive heart failure," is when your heart becomes so weak it can't pump enough blood to meet your body's needs. It doesn't mean that your heart has stopped beating. But it's a serious condition, and it needs medical care.

Causes

Heart failure can be caused by many conditions. Heart disease, high blood pressure and diabetes can all lead to heart failure. So can heart issues such as valve defects or problems with your heart's rhythm. Heart failure can be caused by drug or alcohol abuse and by cancer treatments. And it can be caused by other health problems and disorders.

Symptoms

Heart failure leads to symptoms such as coughing and shortness of breath. You may get tired easily. You may notice swelling in your abdomen and in your legs. You may gain weight, and you may need to urinate frequently.

Treatment

Treatment depends on the cause of your heart failure and how strong your symptoms are. You may benefit from a healthier lifestyle. Eating a proper diet, stopping smoking and losing excess weight may all help. Medications may also help your heart. And, you may benefit from treatment for an underlying health problem. Your healthcare provider can create a care plan that is right for you.

