



Heart Failure and Exercise

Eating and Exercise

Heart failure occurs when your heart is not able to pump enough blood to meet the needs of your body. There are many causes and types of heart failure. You can exercise when you have heart failure. Many studies show that exercise helps you feel better and live longer. This tip sheet and the other tip sheets will help you through starting and maintaining an exercise program that suits your abilities and lifestyle.

As a general rule, try to eat at least one hour before exercise.

- Large meals. Eat these at least three to four hours before exercising.
- Small meals. Eat these two to three hours before exercising.
- Small snacks. Eat these an hour before exercising.

Symptoms of Overexertion

Stop exercising and seek medical attention if:

- Tightness in the chest or pain anywhere else in your body.
- Lightheadedness
- Dizziness or confusion
- Sick to your stomach (nausea)
- Shortness of breath that is worse than usual
- Extreme tiredness or weakness
- A racing heart beat

When you feel bad, increased shortness of breath or have fluid in the body- do not exercise. Call your provider.

If your exercise program gets interrupted for a few days due to a vacation or bad weather then start over with a reduced level of activity. Gradually increase your exercise until you are back to where you started.