



# CONGESTIVE HEART FAILURE

The weakening of the heart such that it can no longer pump blood effectively

Congestive Heart Failure (CHF) is a condition where fluid builds up in the lungs, liver and legs. This condition, in which the victim experiences shortness of breath, may be caused by a number of conditions: coronary heart disease, prior heart attack that has damaged the heart muscle, high blood pressure, heart valve abnormalities, abnormal heart rhythm (*arrhythmia*), damaged heart muscle caused by disease or infection and congenital heart disease.

## Symptoms:

- Swelling or edema in the legs, feet or ankles, especially in the morning
- Fluid in the lungs
- Fatigue and weakness
- Shortness of breath when active or lying down
- Wheezing or coughing up pinkish sputum
- Swollen neck veins
- Sudden weight gain
- Dizziness
- Irregular heartbeats

## DO:

- Reduce sodium intake, cholesterol, and fatty food.
- Eat lots of fruit, green and leafy vegetables, and fiber.
- Maintain a healthy weight.
- Exercise regularly (mild exercises work best).
- Consult a physician and consider taking immunizations recommended by the doctor.
- Place a foam wedge or an extra pillow to elevate the head to make sleeping easier.
- Join support groups to know available resources to help cope with the disease.

## DON'T:

- Don't drink alcohol.
- Don't smoke.
- Don't eat right before going to bed.
- Don't nap too close to bedtime.

# CORONARY HEART DISEASE

The narrowing and hardening of arteries

Coronary Heart Disease (CHD) is a condition where the arteries narrow and stiffen due to *atherosclerosis* (the accumulation of plaque such as fat, cholesterol, or calcium deposits) which impairs the efficient flow of blood. Pain in the chest is also sometimes felt when the heart muscle is deprived of oxygen through reduced blood supply (ischemia). Surgery is sometimes necessary although maintenance medication helps greatly.

## Symptoms:

- Pain in the chest—pressure, tightness or burning sensation (*angina*)
- Pain or pressure in the arms, neck and jaw
- Shortness of breath
- Heart palpitations
- Fatigue
- Swelling of the legs or ankles (more commonly found in women)
- Extreme pain in the heart lasting two minutes or longer
- Dizziness, fainting or nausea
- Stomach pain
- Clammy skin

## DO:

- Get regular check-ups.
- Eat a low fat, low cholesterol diet.
- Be conscious when purchasing food. Read labels carefully.
- Maintain a healthy weight.
- Exercise regularly.
- Follow prescription medication religiously.

## DON'T:

- Don't smoke.
- Don't eat salty food.