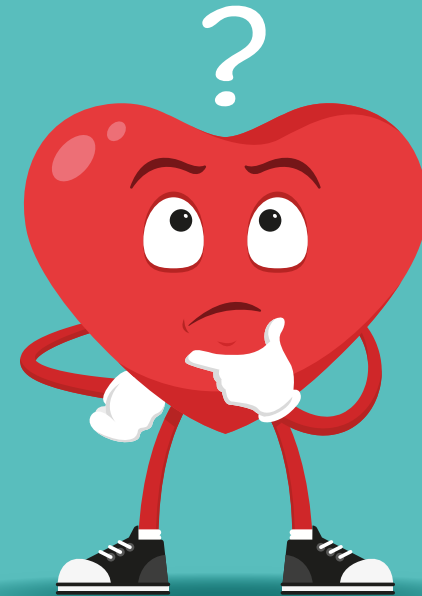


Could I have Heart Failure?



This leaflet is designed to aid you in spotting the early signs of heart failure.



What is heart failure?

The term 'heart failure' can sound very frightening but it simply means that your heart cannot efficiently pump all the blood your body needs. With heart failure the heart isn't pumping properly and it can't fill or empty as it should. This causes fluid to build-up in your body; mainly in your feet, ankles, legs, tummy and also in your lungs which causes you to become breathless.

Heart failure can take years to develop or can happen quickly at times. It can affect both men and women in the same way. As many as 1 in 5 people over 40 will develop heart failure in their lifetime and at least 15 million adults in Europe live with this condition.

Early diagnosis and early treatment helps to keep you well and out of hospital. Many people with heart failure lead active lives by taking good care of themselves and by being aware of changes in how they feel.

At least

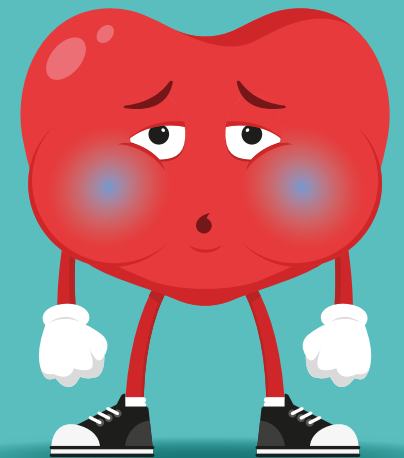
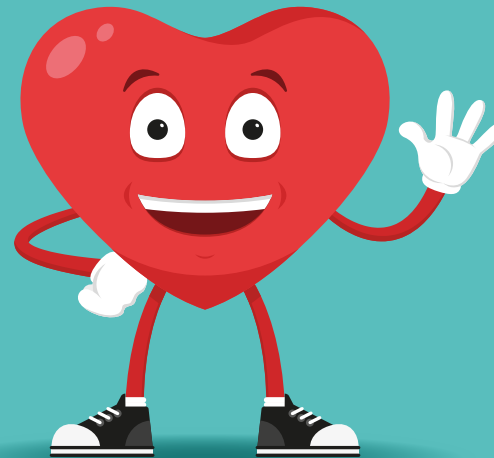
15 million



adults in Europe live with this condition.

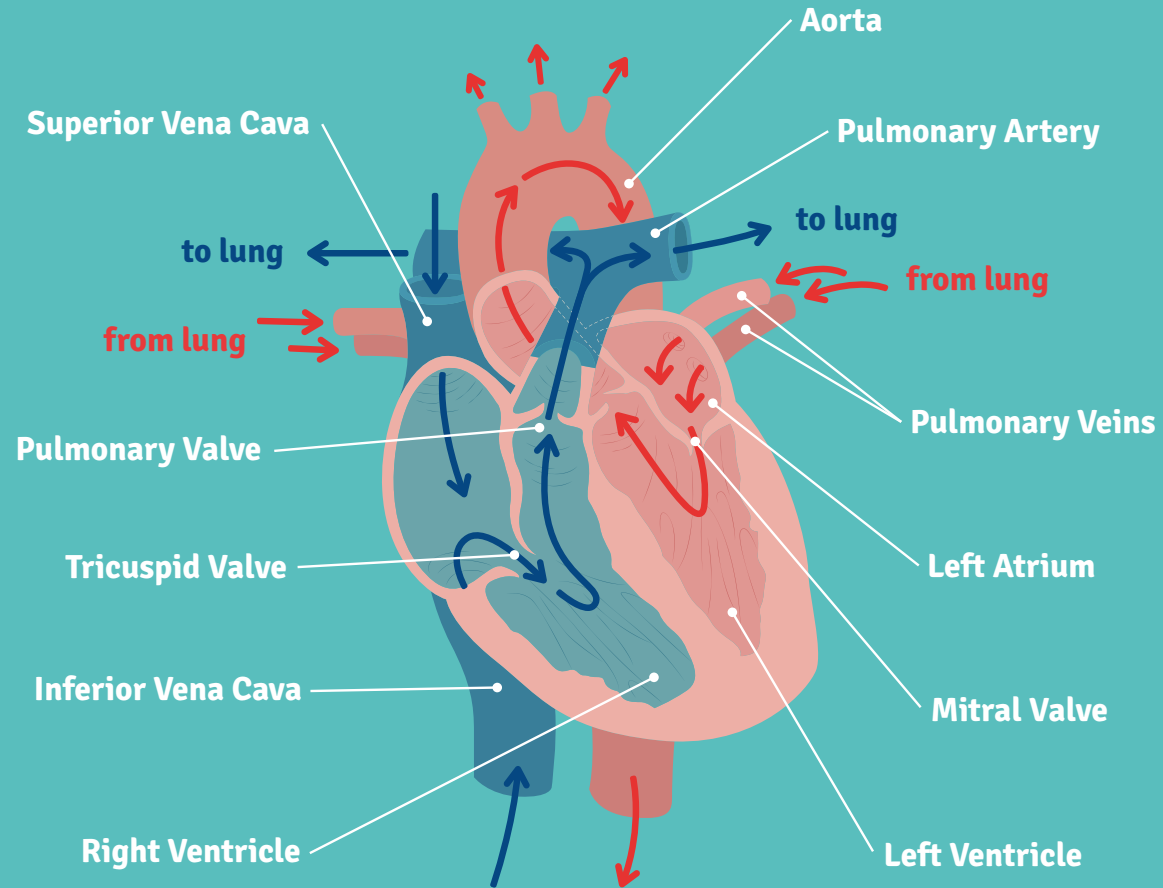
A healthy heart is like a pump, pumping blood throughout your body.

In 'heart failure' the heart's pumping power is weaker than normal.



How does my heart work?

As your heart beats, it pumps blood to every part of the body. A healthy heart beats approximately 100,000 times a day. Anything that affects the pumping action of the heart will have an effect on our body and how we feel.



What are the causes of heart failure?

There are many causes of heart failure. Your heart can lose function and become inefficient due to:

- ♥ Diabetes
- ♥ High blood pressure
- ♥ Heart attack
- ♥ Irregular heart rhythm
- ♥ Coronary Heart disease
- ♥ Certain infections of the heart
- ♥ Drug/alcohol abuse
- ♥ Heart problems you are born with
- ♥ Heart valve disease

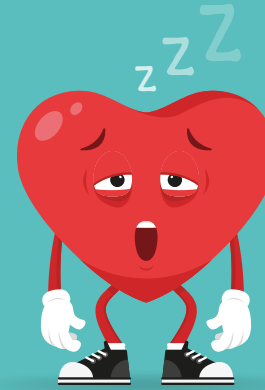
As many as

1 in 5

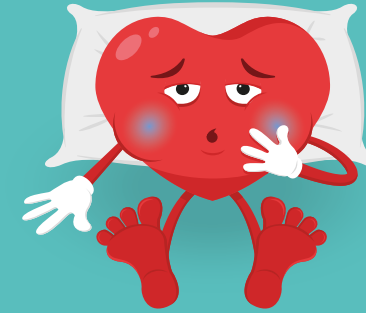
people over 40 will develop heart failure in their lifetime.

Symptoms of heart failure

Not everyone will have the same symptoms. Many of the common symptoms of heart failure may be caused by other conditions, so they are not unique to heart failure. If you are experiencing or have experienced any of these symptoms in the past three months you should speak to your GP.



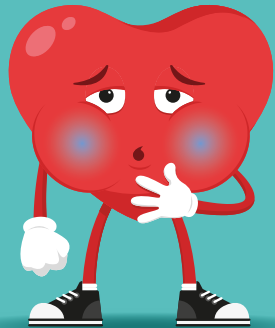
Extreme tiredness or no energy



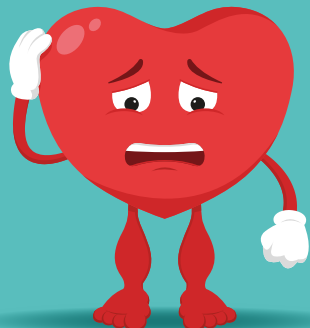
Shortness of breath, even when lying down



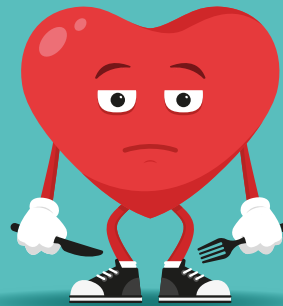
Rapid heart beat or palpitations



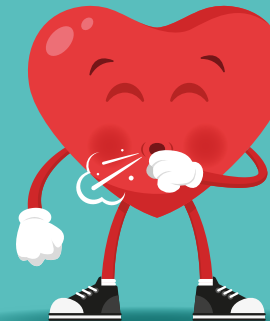
Shortness of breath



Swelling in the ankles/feet/stomach



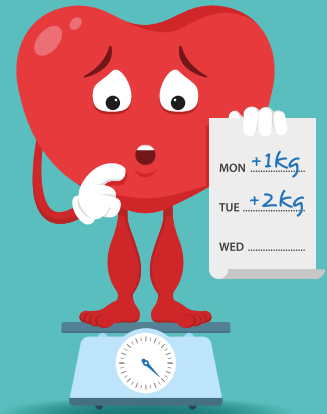
Loss of appetite



Coughing/ wheezing



More frequent urination, especially at night



Weight gain over a short period of time (>2kg over 2 days)

How do I know if I have heart failure?

Tell your doctor if you are experiencing symptoms of heart failure. Your doctor will examine you and will most likely check your pulse, blood pressure and weight. To diagnose heart failure you may need a variety of blood tests and you may have to go to hospital for other tests, such as:



A BNP Blood Test

A blood test that indicates the likelihood of heart failure.



An ECG (electrocardiogram)

This is a trace of the electrical activity of your heart.



A Cardiac Echo (echocardiogram)

This takes pictures of your heart using ultrasound.

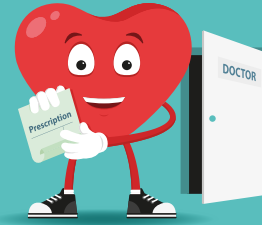


A Chest X-ray

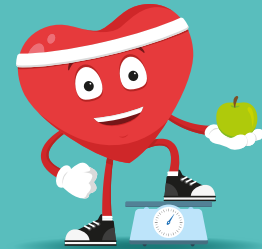
This will take pictures of the inside of your chest and show your heart and lungs.

How is heart failure treated?

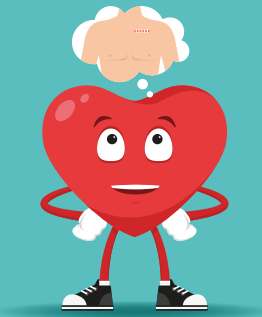
The early diagnosis and treatment of heart failure can significantly improve how you feel and your quality of life. Many people can live well with heart failure if it is properly managed and treated. This includes:



- ♥ Continuing care from your doctor or heart failure nurse specialist.
- ♥ Taking your medicines exactly as prescribed by your doctor.



- ♥ Making changes to your diet, exercise and lifestyle.
- ♥ Carefully monitoring your weight and other symptoms.




- ♥ Maybe having a cardiac device fitted such as an ICD, pacemaker or CRT (these are devices placed under the skin in your chest which monitor and control your heart rhythm).

This publication is endorsed by the following organisations who are each committed to raising awareness of heart failure.



 **NOVARTIS**

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The Global Voice for Heart Failure Patients