

Your Medications: Tips for Dealing with More than One Provider

Patients with heart failure often need to work with multiple health care professionals. To begin with, it's important to keep a complete list of all your current medications and share that list with each physician you are seeing. Otherwise, you might receive duplicate prescriptions from several physicians if they are not fully informed. It's possible you would not realize you have several prescriptions for the same drug because of different brand and generic names for the drug.

Doctors, nurses, and pharmacists can all help you avoid problems associated with taking too little or too much of your medication. They can also help you avoid dangerous interactions or side effects between other medications or foods in your diet.

If you find that your medications are generating serious side effects,

your healthcare professionals will keep working with you to adjust your medications accordingly. Here are some questions to ask your healthcare team so that you continue to be actively involved in your treatment plan.

- What is the name of the medicine?
- Is that the brand or generic name?
- Are there other names for the medication?
- What is the medicine supposed to do?
- What foods, drinks, other medicines or activities should I avoid while taking this medicine?
- What are the possible side effects?
- What do I do if they occur?
- What are the risks of not taking this medication?
- Are there less expensive medications for my condition?

Health Information Audio Library
Available 24 hours a day,
7 days a week at: 877-217-7946

Health and Wellness web site:
www.humana-military.com



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Heart Failure Disease Management Newsletter

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Eating for Your Heart Health



Most people do not receive the recommended amount of nutrients needed to maintain optimum health. Proper nutrition should be an important part of staying healthy. However, today's fast paced environment often affects our food choices and patients with heart disease need to avoid foods high in fat, cholesterol, and salt. Trying to eat

nutritiously may seem like an overwhelming task, but maintaining a healthier diet is easier than you think.

A "healthy diet" is a diet that:

- Emphasizes fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and fat-free or low-fat milk and milk products;
- Includes lean meats, poultry, fish, beans, eggs, and nuts; and
- Is low in saturated fats, trans fats, cholesterol, salt (sodium), and added sugars.

Below are a few simple guidelines that can help you make better decisions when doing your weekly shopping:

1. Check the sodium content on labels, especially canned and pre-packaged foods.
2. Select low-fat desserts such as fresh or canned fruit without added sugars, gelatin containing fruit, and dried fruit.
3. Stock up on raw vegetables for snacks.
4. Look for the American Heart Association heart check mark on AHA certified products at the grocery.
5. Look for lean cuts of meats.
6. Choose whole grain breads and cereals; avoid those high in sugar content
7. Don't skip whole categories of food.

If you enjoy eating out, consider these meal selections:

1. Order steamed, broiled, baked, grilled, poached, or roasted foods.
2. Request that the meat be grilled instead of fried. Many restaurants will grill the meat, poultry, or fish if you ask.
3. Avoid dishes with heavy creams and cheeses.
4. Avoid foods high in salt (pickled, cocktail sauces, smoked, in broth or au jus, in a tomato base, or in soy or teriyaki sauce).
5. Choose a baked potato with vegetable or yogurt topping instead of French fries.

continued on inside

Hot Weather can be Hard on the Heart

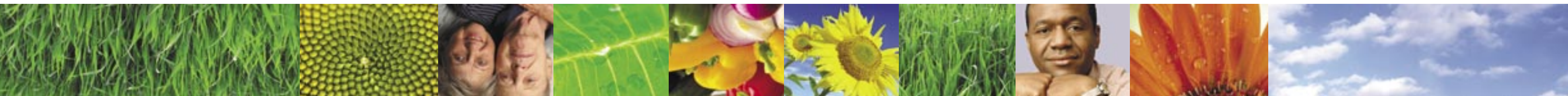
Extremely hot weather can lead to dehydration, heat exhaustion, and heat stroke. The risks increase dramatically when the humidity is above 70% and the temperature is above 70° F. Patients with a weakened heart are especially at risk. The problem is made worse because the heart is trying to deliver blood and oxygen to your working muscles while your body is trying to cool itself off by sweating. If you sweat too much, you become dehydrated. When you lose too

much fluid, your body temperature rises. If the fluid loss becomes extreme, it can lead to brain and heart damage.

If you do plan to work or exercise outside in hot and humid weather, wear very light clothing (both in terms of fabric weight and color) and work or exercise in the early morning or late evening. If any of the symptoms following do appear, stop what you are doing and

continued on inside

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The Heart Healthy Recipe Corner

Mediterranean Baked Fish



1 lb. fish fillets (sole, flounder, or sea perch)
2 tsp. olive oil
1 large onion
1 can (16 oz.) whole tomatoes, drained (reserve juice), coarsely chopped
1/2 cup tomato juice (reserved from canned tomatoes)

1 bay leaf
1 clove garlic, minced
1 cup dry white wine
1/4 cup lemon juice
1/4 cup orange juice
1 Tbsp. fresh orange peel, grated
1 tsp. fennel seeds, crushed
1/2 tsp. dried oregano, crushed
1/2 tsp. dried thyme, crushed
1/2 tsp. dried basil, crushed
to taste black pepper

1. Heat the olive oil in large nonstick skillet. Add onion and sauté over moderate heat for 5 minutes or until the onion is soft and translucent.
2. Add all remaining ingredients except the fish. Stir well and simmer uncovered for 30 minutes.
3. Arrange the fish in 10 by 6-inch baking dish. Cover with the sauce. Bake uncovered at 375 ° F. for about 15 minutes or until the fish flakes easily.

You can taste the Mediterranean influence in this dish's tomato, onion, and garlic sauce.

Yield: 4 servings
Serving Size: 4-oz. fillet with sauce

Each serving provides:

Calories: 178
Total fat: 4 grams
Saturated fat: 1 gram
Cholesterol: 56 mg.
Sodium: 260 mg.
Total fiber: 3 grams
Protein: 22 grams
Carbohydrates: 12 grams
Potassium: 678 mg

Source: **National Heart/Lung/Blood Institute**

Flu Vaccination Protects Self



With fears of a potential avian influenza pandemic looming, flu season is getting some extra attention according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Patients with a chronic illness such as heart disease are

at increased risk for influenza-related complications and should consider vaccination each year. You may not know it, but flu viruses change from year to year, which means two things. First, you can get the flu more than once during your lifetime. Second, a vaccine made against flu viruses circulating last year may not protect against the newer viruses showing up this year. That is why the influenza vaccine is updated to include current viruses every year.

Beginning each September, flu shots should be offered to people at high risk when they are seen by their health care providers. The Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Health Affairs) recommends vaccination every year between October and November. If your regular health care provider doesn't make a point of offering – you need to make it a point to ask!

As a TRICARE beneficiary in a high risk category, you will not be denied the flu shot at a military treatment facility (MTF), although you may be asked to return at a later date when sufficient supplies are available. You can also obtain a flu shot at the following locations:

- Your PCM's office
- Your specialist's office, if you have an existing referral to the specialist
- Local health department – you may need to pay out of pocket
- Local community resource – you may also need to pay out of pocket
- From any TRICARE authorized provider – no referral is needed unless the provider plans to bill other office codes along with the flu shot.

Eating for Your Heart Health

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There are many resources available to help you achieve a healthier diet. The American Heart Association's web site www.americanheart.org is excellent. It offers several cookbooks with healthy recipes for favorite foods. These are available at book and retail stores nationwide. The U.S. Department of Agriculture's web site at

www.usda.gov has a great deal of food and nutrition information. They publish the Dietary Guidelines for Americans that can be downloaded. HMHS' web site www.humana-military.com has information in the health and wellness section that covers eating for good health.

Foods to REALLY be Avoided

Foods with High Salt Content

- Processed meats such as sausage, salami, bologna, hot dogs and frozen prepared meals
- Cured meats such as ham and bacon
- "Traditional" snack foods – such as pretzels, chips (potato and corn), olives, cheeses
- Fast foods
- Many canned soups (check the label)
- Canned vegetables (unless there is a salt free label)
- Pre-seasoned mixes (taco, chili, gravies, etc.)
- Canned meat and fish
- Salted nuts and peanut butter
- Pickles, relishes

- Soy, teriyaki, steak, Worcestershire sauces
- French fries
- Bouillon cubes

Foods with High Fat Content

- Processed meats such as hot dogs, bologna, sausage, salami
- Fast foods
- Fried foods
- Cream
- Whole milk
- Cheese
- Ice cream
- Butter, margarine, shortening
- Donuts
- Fatty beef, veal, lamb, pork, lard, poultry fat
- Coconut oil

Foods with High Cholesterol Content

- Organ meats
- Processed meats such as bologna, sausage, salami, hot dogs
- Fatty cuts of meat
- Lard
- Eggs
- Whole milk
- Many cheeses
- Butter, cream, ice cream
- Shrimp and crawfish
- Store baked goods are often made with egg yolks and saturated fats

Hot Weather can be Hard on the Heart

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cool down by dousing yourself with cold water. Seek medical attention if your symptoms persist. Heat exhaustion can progress quickly to heat stroke, which can be lethal.

Symptoms of heat exhaustion

- Heavy sweating
- Cold, clammy skin
- Dizziness or fainting
- Weak and rapid pulse
- Muscle cramps
- Shallow, fast breathing
- Nausea, vomiting or both

Symptoms of heat stroke

- Warm, dry skin with no sweating
- Strong, rapid pulse
- Confusion and/or unconsciousness
- High fever
- Throbbing headache
- Nausea, vomiting or both