

THE IMPORTANCE OF MONITORING YOUR HEART FAILURE

A diagnosis of heart failure means the heart is unable to pump enough blood to meet the body's needs for blood and oxygen. This is a long-lasting condition that often worsens over time. Your doctor can help you manage your heart failure with a treatment plan that may keep it from getting worse and reduce the likelihood of being hospitalized.

How do doctors measure heart failure?

To diagnose heart failure, doctors measure **ejection fraction**, which is the amount of blood pumped with each heartbeat. They may take pictures of your heart with an **echocardiogram** to see how well your heart is pumping.



What does an ejection fraction measurement mean?

LOW

Under
40%

May be a sign of heart failure or other diseases that weaken the heart muscle (cardiomyopathy).

NORMAL

Between
50-70%

This is a normal ejection fraction measurement, but it is still possible to have heart failure under these circumstances.

HIGH

Above
75%

May be a sign of a heart condition such as the heart muscle becoming too thick (hypertrophic cardiomyopathy).

There are 2 main types of ejection fraction

Preserved Ejection Fraction (HFpEF or diastolic heart failure):

The heart's chambers that pump blood out of your heart (ventricles) become stiff and cannot fill up fully so less oxygen-rich blood is pumped out to your body.

Reduced Ejection Fraction (HFrEF or systolic heart failure):

The heart muscle does not work well, and less oxygen-rich blood is pumped out to your body.

Working with your healthcare team to find a treatment plan

Understanding your ejection fraction measurement can help your healthcare team recommend a treatment plan that is right for you. It will also help them track your condition over time to see how your condition changes.

Following your treatment plan as recommended by your doctor may help relieve symptoms and make daily activities easier. It can also help lower the chance that you will have to go to the hospital. This may include:

- Taking your medicines as prescribed
- Telling your doctor and pharmacist about all the medicines you are taking, even the ones that are not for heart failure
 - Taking different medicines together can raise the chance of side effects and certain medicines may make your heart failure symptoms worse
- Telling your doctors about side effects experienced from any medicines
- Making heart-healthy lifestyle changes as recommended by your doctor, which may include limiting the amount of salt and liquids to reduce fluid buildup



FINDING RESOURCES AND SUPPORT

At the Heart of the Matter: Moving forward after your heart failure hospitalization is a program that supports people with chronic heart failure and their loved ones by offering educational information. The program, sponsored by Merck in collaboration with Mended Hearts®, was created to help people living with heart failure to better understand their condition and play a more proactive role in their care.