

HEART FAILURE & WOMEN

A 3-PRONGED APPROACH

While a heart failure diagnosis can be overwhelming, effective management is possible. A three-pronged approach of educational, medical, and social/emotional support can help women live well and thrive with heart failure.



EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT

Know the facts, stats, risks, and warnings

RISK FACTORS INCLUDE:

- heart disease
- diabetes
- high blood pressure¹

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS MAY INCLUDE:

- swollen ankles, legs, and feet
- swelling of abdomen
- persistent cough or wheezing
- fatigue³

> Women tend to experience a greater number of symptoms than men, including:

- shortness of breath
- swelling around the ankles
- difficulty exercising²

6.5 MILLION AMERICANS ARE LIVING WITH HEART FAILURE

MORE THAN HALF (3.6 MILLION) OF THEM ARE WOMEN¹



MEDICAL SUPPORT

Know your options for treating heart failure

The American Heart Association, Heart Failure Society of America, and American College of Cardiology have revised clinical treatment guidelines to include new treatments that were approved by the FDA in 2015 as safe and effective treatments for heart failure.⁵

- The new medications are designed to relax blood vessels and improve the function of the heart.⁵
- Each patient should discuss their medication regimen with their medical professional to ensure they have the most appropriate therapies for their needs.



TIPS FOR WORKING WITH YOUR DOCTOR:

- Take your medicines as prescribed.
- Make the lifestyle changes your doctor recommends.
- Ask your doctor how active you can be.
- Keep your medical appointments.
- Record your weight and blood pressure daily.^{3,4}



SOCIAL/EMOTIONAL SUPPORT

Know that support is available

- Living with heart failure can be an isolating experience for many women.
- Women who regularly attend WomenHeart peer-led support network meetings report **lower levels of stress, anxiety, and depression, and better engagement in their health care.**⁶

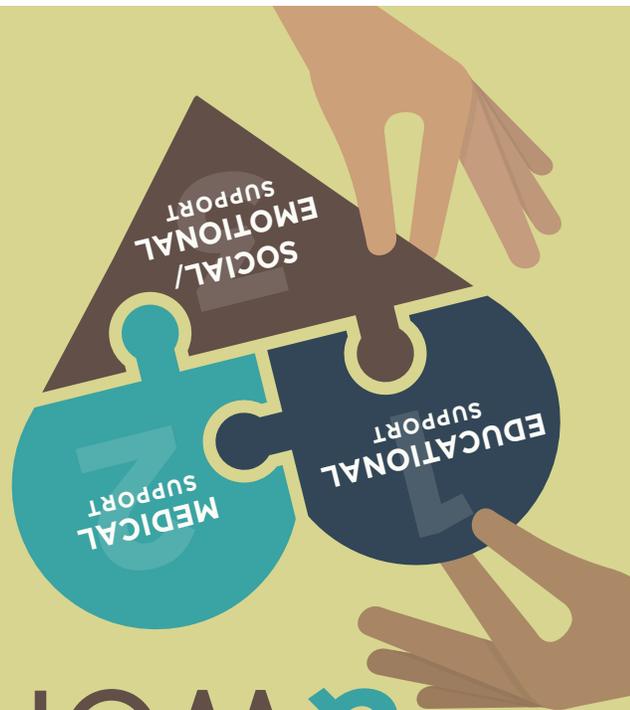
WomenHeart provides a broad spectrum of patient support programs nationwide, including in-person support groups; hospital visitation programs; one-on-one in-person, online, and telephone support; and web-based virtual support meetings.

WomenHeart
The National
Coalition for Women
with Heart Disease

WWW.WOMENHEART.ORG

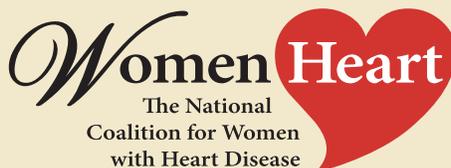


6.5 million Americans are living with heart failure, and more than half of them (3.6 million) are women.¹ In fact, women tend to experience a greater number of symptoms than men.² Despite the challenges many women face, a combination of educational, medical, and social support can help you thrive after a heart failure diagnosis.



HEART FAILURE & WOMEN

A 3-PRONGED APPROACH



1100 17th Street NW • Suite 500 • Washington, DC 20036
P 202.728.7199 • F 202.728.7238 • www.womenheart.org

www.womenheart.org

WOMENHEART: The National Coalition for Women with Heart Disease is the nation's first and only patient-centered organization solely serving the nearly 48 million American women living with or at risk for heart disease — the leading cause of death in women. WomenHeart is devoted to advancing women's heart health through advocacy, community education, and the nation's only patient support network for women living with heart disease. WomenHeart is both a coalition and a community of thousands of members nationwide, including women heart patients and their families, physicians, and health advocates, all committed to helping women live longer, healthier lives. To receive a free online heart health action kit or to donate, visit www.womenheart.org.

SOURCES

¹ Benjamin, E. J., Blaha, M., Chiuve, S., Cushman, M., et al. (2017). *Heart Disease and Stroke Statistics 2017 Update*. American Heart Association.

² Hsich, E. (2016). *Heart Failure in Women*. Retrieved from <http://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/articles/heart-failure-women>.

³ National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute. (2015). What is heart failure? Retrieved from <http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/health-topics/topics/hf/>.

⁴ "10 Tips for Living with Heart Failure." CardioSmart.org (2016) Retrieved from <https://www.cardiosmart.org/-/media/Documents/Fact%20Sheets/Tips/Managing-HF.ashx>.

⁵ Yancy C. W., et al. (2016). *2016 ACC/AHA/HFSA Focused Update on New Pharmacological Therapy for Heart Failure: An Update of the 2013 ACCF/AHA Guideline for the Management of Heart Failure*.

⁶ Witt, D., Benson, G., Campbell, S., Sillah, A., & Berra, K. (2016). Measures of Patient Activation and Social Support in a Peer-Led Support Network for Women with Cardiovascular Disease. *Journal of Cardiopulmonary Rehabilitation and Prevention*, 36, 430–437.

SUPPORTED BY A GRANT FROM NOVARTIS PHARMACEUTICALS CORPORATION