Heart failure

By Paul Schoenfelder, CNO; also re: WebMD

Heart failure is common in the United States. Nearly 6 million Americans live with it. You get heart failure when your heart can't fill up enough, or isn't strong enough to push blood and oxygen to you muscles and organs. Doctors haven't found a cure, but many people with heart failure live active lives.

Heart failure usually doesn't sneak up on people, but develops over time and for a lot of reasons – for example: High blood pressure, Diabetes, Coronary artery disease, past heart attack, being overweight. Things like drinking too much alcohol, smoking, and using illegal drugs are all known to damage your heart. Things that you can do to help prevent heart failure are: Stick to a healthy weight, exercise regularly, eat fruits and vegetables, whole grains, and lean proteins, limit bad fats, added sugars, salt and alcohol, don't smoke or use drugs, reduce stress and get enough sleep. Stress seems to be a big factor – 10 ways to lower stress: chew gum, get outside (walking, hiking, anything active), smile, sniff some lavender, listen to some music, rhythmic breathing (breath in through your nose and out through your mouth slowly repeating a word or phrase and repeat for at least 10 min), be nice to yourself (positive self-talk, "everything will be OK", etc.), write down your problems so that you can deal with them and acknowledge them, talk to a friend, cardio (when you work up a sweat – you improve your mood).

Contact your provider at FCPHD If you have chest pain, shortness of breath and/or nausea . You may be having symptoms of a heart attack. Men and women are usually different in these symptoms. Women can have back pain or different symptoms from men so if you have questions or concerns – please call your provider or consult us at Ferry County Public Hospital District or call 911 to call for an ambulance.

Prior Hospital Happenings available at http://www.fcphd.org/news.html

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