

Achieve

A Newsletter
for AvMed
Members

▶ YOUR HEALTHIEST LIFE WITH HEART FAILURE

Lifestyle changes that can help manage CHF

When it comes to congestive heart failure (CHF), there isn't a one-size-fits-all approach to treatment. Aside from taking your medications as prescribed, there are plenty of lifestyle changes that can help manage your CHF. These strategies are a great place to start to better manage your condition.

Follow a heart-healthy diet.

That's a diet rich in fruits, vegetables, lean protein, and whole grains. Limit sweets and fatty foods.

Manage your medications.

Be sure to take your CHF medications as prescribed. Not doing so can lead to

adverse effects to your health, such as condition-related flare-ups.

Monitor sodium and fluid intake.

Excess sodium (salt) in the body causes you to retain water. This fluid can back up into the lungs — that's the congestive part of CHF. Limiting fluid intake can help. Just remember to drink enough water to stay hydrated.

Get physically active.

Exercise can strengthen

the heart and lower blood pressure, making it easier for your heart to pump.

Take time to de-stress.

Stress increases your blood pressure and heart rate. This makes the heart work harder. Try to relax with activities such as yoga, meditation, or journaling.

Get enough sleep.

Like the rest of the body, the heart repairs itself during sleep. Aim to get at least seven hours of shut-eye each night.





Eating right with congestive heart failure

Nutrition is key to managing congestive heart failure. And luckily, it's possible to maintain a heart-healthy diet without giving up all your favorite foods. Here's how.

Reduce sodium. High sodium can lead to water retention, making your heart work harder.

Prioritize potassium. This mineral helps balance sodium in your cells and lowers blood pressure. Potassium-rich foods include bananas, oranges, leafy greens, and tomatoes.

Include omega-3 fatty acids. Omega-3s, found in fatty fish such as

salmon and mackerel, help reduce inflammation, lower blood pressure, and reduce "bad" cholesterol.

Choose healthy carbs. Opt for whole grains, fruits, and vegetables, which are high in fiber and help control blood sugar. Limit refined carbs such as white bread and sugary drinks.

Focus on proteins. Lean protein, such as white meat poultry, fish, and legumes, is healthier. Avoid high-fat meats that can raise cholesterol and worsen heart disease.

Pick healthy fats. Monounsaturated fats (e.g., olive oil, avocados) and polyunsaturated fats (e.g., fatty fish, walnuts) are beneficial. Limit saturated fats (e.g., red meat, whole milk dairy) and avoid trans fats (e.g., fast food).

Limit high-cholesterol foods. Foods such as organ meats and full-fat dairy can worsen heart conditions.

Avoid high-sugar foods and drinks. These contribute to weight gain and diabetes, both of which increase the risk of heart disease.

Spotlight on Program Manager

Alissa Kennedy, RN, CCM, has been with AvMed for 13+ years and a registered nurse for 25+ years.



"Our mission within the Disease Management program is to educate and empower our Members to assist with successfully managing their chronic conditions and achieving their health goals." Alissa really enjoys knowing that she and the Disease Management team are helping our Members live their best lives.

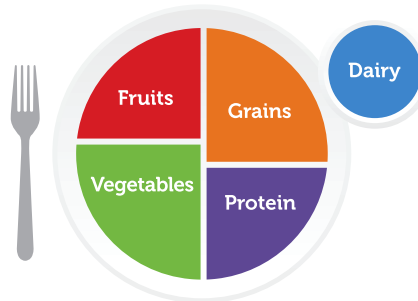
To reach us, please call 1-833-609-0735.



Healthy Eating Made Simple

Natalie M. Sinel-Rojas, M.S., R.D., L.D.N., C.Ph.T., AvMed's Registered Dietitian, shares her favorite tips for happier, healthier meals — without feeling deprived.

How to build a balanced meal



grains. Foods such as brown rice, whole wheat bread, and oatmeal are excellent sources of whole grains, providing essential nutrients such as fiber, B vitamins, and minerals.

MyPlate tip: **Remember to mix it up**

MyPlate offers helpful guidelines about portion sizes, but that doesn't mean your meals need to stay divided into quadrants on your plate.

Salads, for example, can be more than just a side dish. Mix different types of greens, add colorful vegetables (such as tomatoes, cucumbers, and carrots), and top it with a source of protein such as chickpeas or hard-boiled eggs. Toss in some quinoa or farro for added texture and whole grains.

Balanced meals are key to maintaining a healthy weight and feeling energized all day long. While the Food Pyramid served as a helpful guide in the past, the U.S. Department of Agriculture now promotes healthy eating through MyPlate.

Half your plate: **FRUITS AND VEGETABLES**

These nutritional powerhouses provide essential vitamins, minerals, and fiber that help reduce the risk of chronic diseases. Fruits and veggies are also low in calories and fats.

Quarter of your plate: **PROTEIN**

Protein is essential for building tissues and enzymes, preserving muscle mass, supporting brain function, and bolstering the immune system. However, it is important to select lean proteins and avoid consuming undesirable fats, such as the ones found in processed baked goods. Tofu, beans, poultry, fish, and nuts are examples of lean protein.

Quarter of your plate: **WHOLE GRAINS**

Whole grains are more beneficial than refined

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Recipe



Fiesta egg tortilla cups

Serves 6 | Prep time: 35 min

This is a great make-ahead breakfast option for busy mornings. These egg cups can be refrigerated and reheated for up to three days after cooking.

Ingredients

- 12 (4.5" - 5") flour tortillas ("street taco" size)
- 12 large eggs
- 1 cup prepared pico de gallo, plus more for serving
- Salt and black pepper to taste

Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 350° F. Place tortillas in a stack and wrap in a damp paper towel. Place on a microwave-safe plate, and microwave for 30 seconds. (This makes the tortillas more pliable.)
2. Press one tortilla into

each cavity of a muffin tin, pressing along the sides to secure. Crack one egg into each tortilla cup, and top with 1 mounded tablespoon of pico de gallo. Repeat with remaining tortillas until all are filled. Season each egg cup with a pinch of salt and black pepper to taste, if desired.

3. Place muffin tin in the oven and bake for 22 to 25 minutes, until the whites are set and yolks are slightly runny. Serve with extra pico de gallo, if desired.

Nutrition facts Calories 300 | Fat 13 g | Carbs 28 g | Fiber 4 g | Protein 17 g