

NUTRITION AND HEALTHY EATING MODULE

MANAGING CONGESTIVE HEART FAILURE WITH DIET

In this learning session, you will discover:

- ▶ main aspects of diet that affect congestive heart failure
- ▶ how your choices can affect you
- ▶ how to make some changes to your diet
- ▶ the importance of changes in appetite

BALANCED DIET

A balanced diet chosen from *Canada's Food Guide* is a good starting point for managing congestive heart failure. Extra weight makes more work for your heart. A gradual, but steady weight loss can be achieved by using the lowest recommended number of portions from each of the four food groups. If you need professional help with diet planning, talk to a dietitian.

You may find proper eating with congestive heart failure is a bit of a "balancing act". While you don't want to eat too much, you have to be sure you eat enough to have good nutrition. Some people with congestive heart failure have a hard time keeping a healthy weight, because of higher energy needs, poor appetite, nausea and other CHF-related symptoms. For people who find it hard to eat enough, special food supplements may be advised.

With heart failure it is important to decrease or avoid caffeine use to prevent increased heart rates or abnormal heart rhythms.

SALT (SODIUM)



One of the best steps you can take is to reduce the amount of salt (sodium) in your diet. Food that does not seem "salty" can have hidden salt (sodium). It causes extra fluid to build up in your body and makes the heart work harder. The Heart and Stroke Foundation recommends that Canadians eat no more than 2,300 mg of sodium (about 1

Managing Congestive Heart Failure and the information contained in this publication is not medical advice and is not to be considered a substitute for medical advice. Anyone with CHF should talk to their doctor and healthcare team about their individual condition and appropriate course of action.

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Patient Education and Counselling, Vol 42 (2001) pp. 279–287.
The Canadian Nurse, February 1998, pp. 36–42.
Medical Care, Vol. 40 (2002), No. 4, pp. 271–282.



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