

Common Signs & Symptoms of Heart Failure

- Sudden weight gain of more than 5lbs in three to five days
- Shortness of breath (more than usual)
- Swollen ankles, lower legs
- Abdominal bloating
- Congested cough
- Trouble sleeping because you are short of breath (may be especially noticed 2-4 hours after going to sleep)
- Needing to sleep in a chair because you are unable to lie flat, or using an extra pillow when sleeping due to shortness of breath.



What To Do If Your Condition Worsens

Call the clinic if any of the symptoms described in this brochure are getting worse.

Call 911 and seek emergent care if you are extremely short of breath or experience unresolved chest pain

Connecting With the Heart Function Clinic

Please send an email, or leave a voice message with: your name, phone number and reason you are calling. Messages will be returned by the next business day.

To cancel or reschedule an appointment please email heart.function@mahc.ca
OR call (705) 645-4404, ext. 2378

The clinic is a partnership of Muskoka Algonquin Healthcare and the Muskoka and Area Ontario Health Team



Welcome to the Heart Function Clinic

This includes information for patients and families to help you become familiar with our clinic.

Outpatient Clinic Next to Emergency Waiting Area 1st Floor

South Muskoka Memorial Hospital

75 Ann Street
Bracebridge, ON P1L 2E4
(705) 645-4404 ext. 2378
heart.function@mahc.ca

Clinic Hours

Monday: 8am to 4pm

Your Referral to the Heart Function Clinic to Help With Your Heart Function:

The Heart Function Clinic team includes an Advanced Cardiac Nurse Practitioner, and a Case Manager.

You may not see all team members at each visit.

We encourage you to bring a support person with you, if needed.

Appointments with the Nurse Practitioner or the Case Manager will be patient specific.

Remember to schedule an appointment in the clinic if you have attended the Emergency Department for urgent care, or have been admitted to the hospital. By keeping us updated on your care, we can ensure that your heart medications remain at the correct dose.

Blood work should be done three to seven days prior to your clinic appointment time.

What Happens During My Visit?

The team will assess your heart and fluid status.

The team will review your current medications and adjust as needed. Please bring your medications in their original containers to each clinic visit.

The team will provide you with education and will work to develop your individual treatment plan.

Follow up appointments should be made prior to leaving the clinic. NOTE: initially you may require frequent appointments for medication adjustments.

Please call the clinic if you need to cancel an appointment(s) because you are unable to attend. We ask you to provide at least 24 hours' notice of a cancellation.

What You Can Do Every Day:

Monitor Weight

- Weigh yourself first thing in the morning. Write it down. Contact the clinic if you have gained more than five (5) pounds in 2-3 days.

Limit Salt

- Restrict salt/sodium intake to 2000mg per day.
- Quick tip: aim for about 500mg of sodium/meal.
- Look for all hidden sources of salt by reading all nutritional labels.
- Do not add salt when cooking.
- Table salt/sea salt/Himalayan salt are all sources of sodium.
- Avoid salt substitutes as many contain potassium.
- Fresh foods have less salt than prepackaged foods.

Limit Fluid

- Ensure you drink between 6-8 cups (1500-2000ml) each day.
- Quick Tip: to combat thirst, freeze water/fluids in a bottle and sip on it as it melts.