

# Heart Failure: Medication Treatment

The goals of heart failure medication are to:

1

Reduce the  
risk of death

2

Reduce  
symptoms

3

Improve your  
quality of life

4

Avoid going to  
the hospital

## ACE Inhibitors (ARBs)

ACE inhibitors are blood pressure medicines that relax and open your blood vessels. This makes it easy for your heart to pump blood. These medicines make your heart work better. You need to take your blood pressure medicine every day for them to work.

### Some names of ACE or ARB medicine:

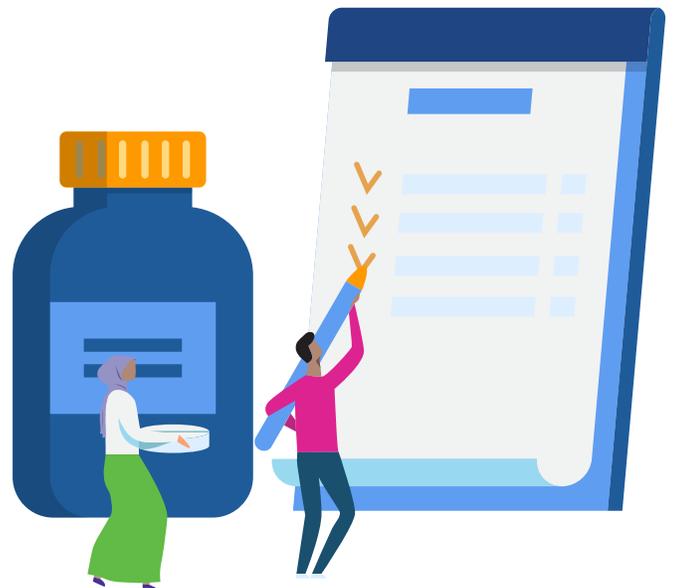
- ACE inhibitors: Benazepril, Enalapril, Lisinopril, or Quinapril
- ARB: Losartan, Valsartan, or Candesartan

### Common side effects for ACE Inhibitors/ARBs:

- Dry cough (only seen in ACE Inhibitors)
- Headaches
- Feeling dizzy
- Feeling weak

Feeling weak or tired can be common if you have just started taking your blood pressure medicine. These symptoms often go away after a week or two. If you are feeling weak after starting a blood pressure medicine and don't feel better after 2 weeks, or feel any other side effects, talk to your Primary Care Provider\* (PCP) about changing your medicine.

\*Your Primary Care Provider (PCP) is your doctor, physician assistant, or nurse practitioner in charge of your health care.





## Beta Blockers

Beta Blockers slow your heart rate and keep your heart from working too hard. Take your beta blocker every day for it to work.

### Some names of Beta Blockers:

- Carvedilol
- Bisoprolol
- Metoprolol

### Common side effects for Beta Blockers:

- Feeling dizzy
- Lightheaded
- Feeling tired

If you have diabetes, beta blockers may hide the normal symptoms of low blood sugar. For example, you may not feel a rapid heartbeat. If you have diabetes, make sure to test your blood sugar often.



## Diuretics

Diuretics, sometimes called water pills, help rid your body of water and salt. Diuretics help stop fluid buildup in the lungs or legs. Take your diuretic every day to prevent fluid buildup.



### Some names of Diuretics:

- Furosemide
- Hydrochlorothiazide
- Spironolactone

### Common side effects of Diuretics:

- Headaches
- Feeling dizzy
- Feeling thirsty

Taking a diuretic may make you go to the bathroom more often. Take your diuretic early in the day so your sleep is not disrupted. If you feel very thirsty talk to your PCP. Signs to look out for are extreme thirst, dark-colored pee, and feeling dizzy.



**Prevent** yeast infections by having good hygiene, such as wiping after using the restroom and wearing underwear made of cotton that absorbs moisture.

## SGLT2 Inhibitors

SGLT2 Inhibitors help your kidneys get rid of more sugar.

### Some names of SGLT2 Inhibitors:

- Jardiance
- Farxiga
- Invokana

### Common Side effects of SGLT2 Inhibitors:

- Feeling thirsty
- Kidney Problems
- Yeast Infections

SGLT2 inhibitors may make you go to the bathroom more often. If you feel very thirsty talk to your PCP. Signs to look out for are extreme thirst, dark-colored pee, and feeling dizzy.

## Medically Tailored Meals Program with Project Open Hand

There is a **special program** for SFHP members who have a chronic health condition and need help buying, making, or eating healthy foods. Please ask your PCP for a referral.

If you are eligible, you can get:

- Meals or groceries for 12-26 weeks designed for your chronic condition
- 4 nutrition counseling sessions with a Registered Dietician Nutritionist



**Project Open Hand**  
meals with love



## Diet

What you eat can change how you feel and how your medicine works. Talk with your PCP about eating foods that are good for your life and health conditions. Your PCP can help you learn if avoiding or eating less of certain foods can help your health.

Choosing healthy foods helps you to:

- Feel better each day
- Manage your chronic condition
- Lower your risk for heart disease, diabetes, and other problems



## References:

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3. "Dehydration." Mayo Clinic, Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research, 14 Oct. 2021.
4. [Diabetesjournals.org](https://diabetesjournals.org)
5. Lopaschuk GD, Verma S. Mechanisms of Cardiovascular Benefits of Sodium Glucose Co-Transporter 2 (SGLT2) Inhibitors: A State-of-the-Art Review. JACC Basic Transl Sci. 2020 Jun 22;5(6):632-644. doi: 10.1016/j.jacbts.2020.02.004. PMID: 32613148; PMCID: PMC7315190.
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