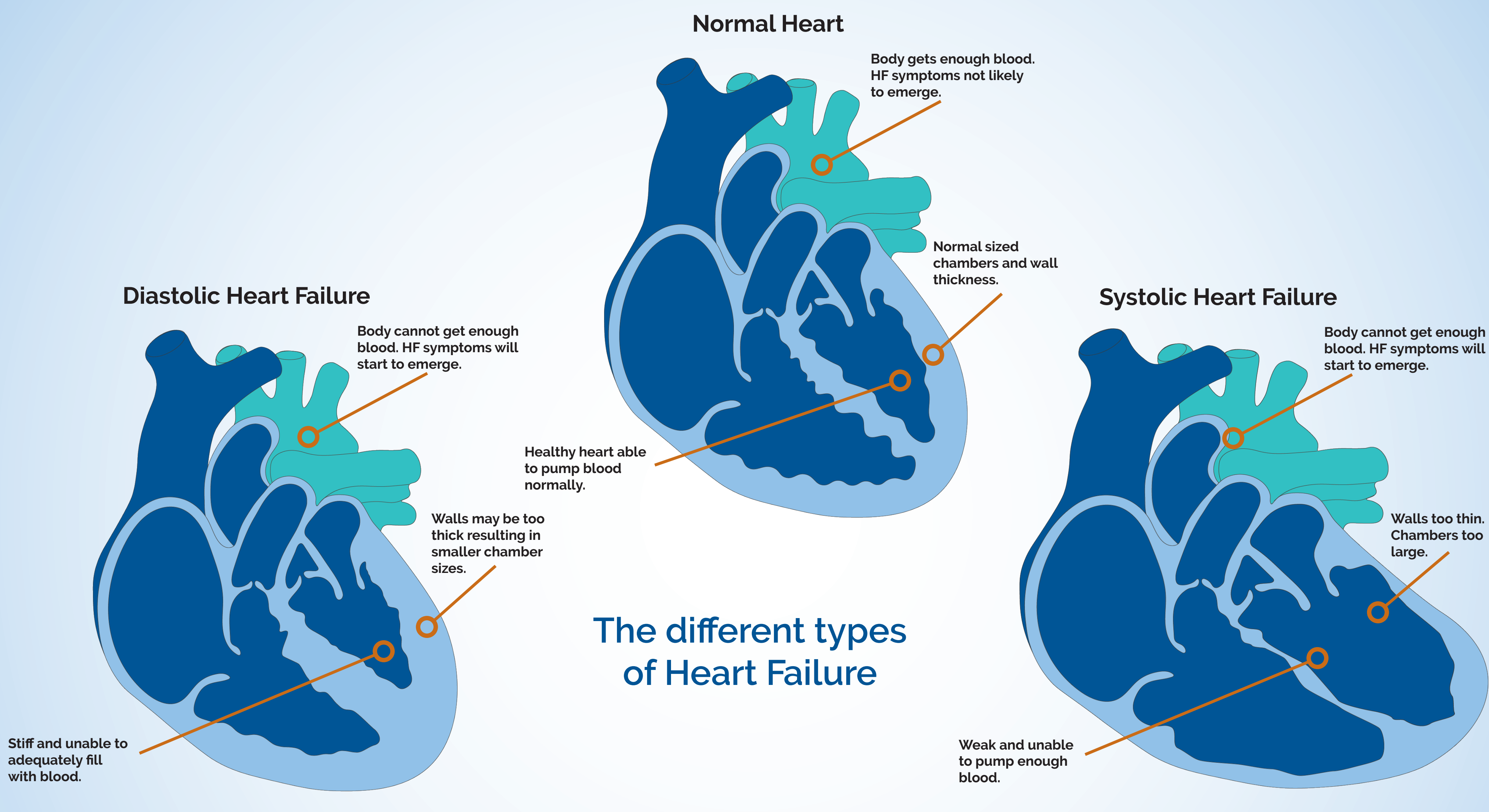


Understanding Heart Failure

Heart Failure may start suddenly, and you may feel symptoms immediately, or it may start slowly and progress unnoticed for some time.


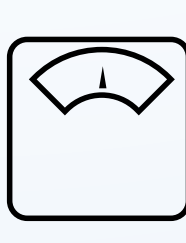
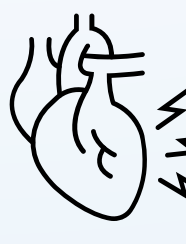
Some patients do not realize that they have heart failure because they believe their symptoms are just a normal part of getting older. But heart failure is a progressive condition, and there are treatments that can improve symptoms and ensure a meaningful quality of life.





Diagnosing Heart Failure:

- Tell your health care provider about your symptoms
- Answer their specific questions
- Possibly undergo a series of tests to confirm the diagnosis of heart failure and to identify the cause(s)

Heart Failure Symptoms:

- Swelling (edema) in lower extremities 
- Swelling of your abdomen (ascites) 
- Rapid weight gain and fluid retention
- Rapid or irregular heartbeat 
- Lack of appetite

- Difficulty concentrating 
- Shortness of breath (dyspnea)
- Fatigue and weakness
- Reduced ability to exercise 
- Persistent cough
- Inability to lie flat due to shortness of breath

Treatment Options:

The following approaches can be considered in the following sequence as heart failure continues to progress.

1. For all stages of HF

Lifestyle changes: A healthy diet and regular exercise are crucial at all stages of heart failure.

Medications: These may help to reduce HF symptoms, make patients feel better and live longer. As the disease progressively gets worse, they can lose some of their effectiveness.

2. For relatively healthier patients - with an EF of 25% - 45%. (EF = Ejection Fraction is the heart's ability to pump blood)

CCM[®] Therapy: Is designed to improve contraction of the heart which allows more oxygen-rich blood to reach the body resulting in patients feeling better and enjoying a better quality of life.

3. As HF progresses, and the EF falls below 35%

Cardiac Resynchronization Therapy (CRT): may be required to resynchronize the heart or to reverse potentially fatal disturbances called arrhythmic events.

4. For the most severe stages of HF

Left Ventricular Assist Devices - which are surgically implanted battery operated pumps - can be used to help the severely weakened, end-stage heart pump blood or

A heart transplant, which involves replacing the heart with a donor organ, can be used when all other options have been exhausted.

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impulse-dynamics.com

Impulse Dynamics
50 Lake Center Executive Parkway
401 Route 73 N, Building 50, Suite 100
Marlton, NJ 08053-3449
(856) 642-9933

