

Care of the Heart

A Special Newsletter for MVP Health Care[®] Members **Issue 1, 2023**

How Does Regular Activity Help When You Have Heart Failure?

Regular activity has many benefits for people who are living with heart failure. It may help you to:

- Have fewer symptoms. For example, you may feel less tired or less out of breath
- Feel stronger and have more energy
- Improve your mood
- Stay independent and live longer
- Avoid having to go to the hospital

If you aren't already active, talk with your doctor before you start an exercise program. Your doctor can help you decide how much activity is safe for your heart. But even if you can do only a small amount of exercise, it's better than not doing any exercise at all.

Staying Safe

Your doctor can help you make a plan to be active in a safe way. In general, these things are important to keep in mind:

- Find your own balance between too little activity and too much. Regular activity has many benefits, but don't overdo it
- Check your pulse (heart rate) during activity. Your doctor can show you how to do that and give you a good target range
- Listen to your body
 - o Stop if you're having chest pain or you don't feel right
 - o Cut back or avoid activity if you're not feeling well

Contact Us

1-866-942-7966

Monday–Friday,

8:30 am–5 pm

TTY 711

We Value Your Opinion

Please fill out a brief, anonymous survey at mvp-listens.com.

We will use this information to create a better experience for all of our members. All responses are 100% confidential. The survey only takes a few minutes to complete.

MVP Health Care offers a health management program for members living with heart failure. For more information or to see if you qualify, call 1-866-942-7966. MVP's program is based on the American Heart Association (AHA) and the American College of Cardiology's Guidelines for Preventing a Heart Attack and Death in Patients with Atherosclerotic Cardiovascular Disease. This program must be coordinated with your physician.

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Be Mindful of Worsening Heart Failure

Try to become familiar with signs that mean your heart failure is getting worse.

Here are some things to watch for as you practice your daily self-care:

- You have sudden weight gain, such as more than two-to-three pounds in a day or five pounds in a week (your doctor may suggest a different range of weight gain)
- You have new or worse swelling in your feet, ankles, or legs
- Your breathing gets worse. Activities that did not make you short of breath before are hard for you now
- Your breathing when you lie down is worse than usual, or you wake up at night needing to catch your breath

Call your doctor if you experience any of the above. Also, be sure to make and go to all of your appointments.



Know When to Call 911

Sometimes, symptoms get worse very quickly. This is called sudden heart failure. It causes fluid to build up in your lungs.

Sudden heart failure is an emergency. If you have any of these symptoms, you need care right away. Call 911 if:

- You have severe shortness of breath
- You have an irregular or fast heartbeat
- You cough up foamy, pink mucus





Quick Tips for Your Next Appointment

Patients who have good relationships with their doctors are more satisfied with their care and have better results.

Whether your appointment is in-person or virtual, here are some tips to help you and your doctor become better partners in improving your health care:

- Write down your questions before your visit. List the most important ones first to make sure they get asked and answered
- Bring a “health history” list with you and keep it up to date
- Always bring any medications you are taking, including over-the-counter, or a list of those medications (including when and how often you take them) and their strength
- Bring someone along to help you ask questions and remember the answers

Source: Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ)

When Should I Use Gia®?

The *Gia* by MVP mobile app is a guide to your health, and an easy way for you to talk or text with a doctor anywhere, anytime.

Available 24/7, Gia is a good option when you:

- Want to avoid busy waiting rooms
- Cannot get an appointment with your doctor
- Do not have transportation
- Feel unwell and would prefer to stay home

Did you know that Gia doctors can diagnose and treat many different illnesses? Some of these include:

- Cough or upper respiratory infection
- Cold, flu, and COVID-19
- Allergies, mild allergic reaction, wheezing
- Strep throat
- Ear infection
- Sinus infection
- Muscle or joint pain

And many more!



Based on your symptoms, your Gia doctor can often recommend a treatment plan, or prescribe a medication right from the app. If you do need an in-person visit, your Gia doctor can refer you to the most appropriate care in your area. To learn more about when to use Gia, visit mvphealthcare.com/UsingGia.

Have a **Health Question?**

Our Health Library is your one-stop resource for the latest health information. Visit mvphealthcare.com/HealthandWellness.



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Stay a Step Ahead with Preventive Care

Preventive care helps you stay healthy by screening for illnesses early on when treatment is more effective. Talk to your doctor to find out if you are due for screenings or any other preventive care services.

Living Well Programs

From yoga and strengthening to gardening and meditation, our Living Well programs have something for everyone. Classes and workshops are offered in-person and virtually and can help you live well physically, emotionally, and otherwise! View and register for upcoming classes at mvphealthcare.com/Calendar. Filter by county to find the programs nearest to you.



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