

HEART FAILURE AWARENESS DAY
FRIDAY 11TH MAY 2011
LEVEL 2, JOHN RADCLIFFE HOSPITAL, OXFORDSHIRE



On Friday 11th May we organised 2 stands across two hospitals to present Heart Failure Awareness Day. Kirstine Pittam (left photo) was at the Horton Hospital, whilst Helen Jackson, Rebecca Bone, Zoe West and Dr Jeremy Dwight (right photo; left to right) were at the John Radcliffe Hospital. We made each stand look very bright and welcoming, we had lots of bright balloons and boiled sweets available for the public. The Heart Failure Specialist Nurses took it in turn to offer free blood pressure checks throughout the day from 10am-3pm, and the public were very grateful for the information that was available on blood pressure.

We had a Media and Communications colleague come and take photos of the stand as we shall be producing an article about HF Awareness in our local Trust Newsletter which will be published in June. We also did a pre-recorded interview with Helen Jackson for the Local BBC Oxford Radio, which was then broadcasted in the morning news on Friday 11th May.

We produced information posters on Heart Failure and Blood Pressure Awareness for the public to read. Along side these we also produced several hand out sheets. We had many positive comments from the public and lots of them took away the printed information leaflets.

HEART FAILURE SYMPTOMS

The most common symptoms of Heart Failure are:



If you have two or more of these over a period of 2/3 days, we would advise that you go and see your GP.

HOW TO LOWER BLOOD PRESSURE

- Cut down on Salt
- Increase your fresh fruit and vegetables
- Drink alcohol in moderation
- Increase your level of activity
- Lose weight if you need to

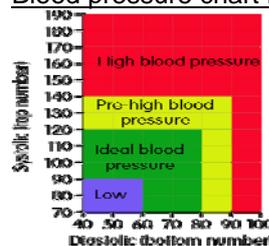
Taking your prescribed tablets and following the lifestyle tips above, will help you to live a longer and healthier life.

UNDERSTANDING YOUR BLOOD PRESSURE READING

When you have your blood pressure measured it is written like this: 120/80mmHg, which is said "120 over 80". The first number is the systolic pressure, when your heart pushes blood around your body. The second is the diastolic pressure, when your heart relaxes.

Blood pressure usually ranges between 90 to 120 from the top or maximum number (systolic) and 60 to 80 for the bottom or minimum number (diastolic).

Blood pressure chart for adults



WHAT IS HEART FAILURE?

Heart Failure is a serious medical condition where the heart does not pump blood around the body as well as it should. This can cause fluid to accumulate in lungs and other parts of the body. However, if recognized early, and adequately treated, people can have a long and a good quality life.

Heart Failure often develops because you have a medical condition, such as high blood pressure or coronary artery disease (furring up of the arteries to the heart) which has damaged or put extra workload on your heart.

WARNING SIGNS

IT IS IMPORTANT TO ALWAYS MONITOR YOUR SYMPTOMS ON A REGULAR BASIS!!

You should call for help immediately if you experience:

- Persistent chest pain
- Severe and persistent shortness of breath
- Fainting

You should call your GP ASAP if you experience:

- Increased shortness of breath
- Waking up at night due to shortness of breath
- Needing more pillows to sleep comfortably
- Rapid heart rate

You should discuss with your GP if you experience:

- Rapid weight gain
- Progressive swelling/pain in the abdomen
- Increased swelling of legs/ankles
- Loss of appetite/nausea
- Increased tiredness
- Worsening cough

HEART FAILURE INFORMATION LEAFLET



HEART FAILURE AWARENESS DAY

6TH MAY 2011

SYMPTOMS



Shortness of breath



Coughing/wheezing



Weight gain



Swollen ankles



Tiredness / fatigue



Dizziness



Rapid heart rate



Loss of appetite



Need to urinate at night

HELPING YOURSELF

(If you have been diagnosed with HF)

Maintaining a Healthy Weight:

HF is often associated with rapid changes in weight. Try to maintain a sensible weight for your heart. If you should lose weight, lose it gently.

Salt Intake: Reducing your salt intake can be important for people with HF.

Fluid Intake: People with HF should usually only be drinking 1.5-2litres of fluid a day.

Alcohol Intake: People with HF should drink no more than 1-2 alcoholic drinks a day. If you have serious symptoms you may be advised to avoid it altogether.

Medications: If you have HF it is extremely important that you take all your medications as prescribed every day.

Fats and Cholesterol: Your diet should include fruit and vegetables, fish, poultry, lean meat, and unsaturated fats.

Adapting your Lifestyle: HF is a chronic condition, which means it requires long-term treatment. You may have to adapt other aspects of your lifestyle. This can be discussed with your GP or Community HF Nurse.

LIVING WITH HEART FAILURE (HF = Heart Failure)

Activity and Exercise: This is beneficial for the majority of people with HF. If you wish to start an exercise program or increase/change your exercise you must always seek advice from your GP or Community HF Nurse.

Smoking: If you are a smoker and you have been diagnosed with HF this will and can make your condition worse. To seek help to stop please see the practice nurse at your GP surgery.

Travelling: As long as your HF is well-controlled and stable, travelling will be fine. If you wish to go abroad please seek advice from your GP or Community HF Nurse.

Driving: Most people with HF can drive safely, although people with history of lost consciousness or fainting due to abnormal heart rhythm must not drive and should seek advice from their GP.

Immunizations: It is always best to ensure you have your Flu and Pneumonia vaccine as respiratory problems can worsen HF.

Relationships: Good management of HF will involve group effort from family members and friends. Why not make it a family activity to measure your heart rate and blood pressure.