

# Medications for Heart Failure



If you have heart failure, a condition where your heart may not pump blood or relax as well as it should, your doctor may prescribe medications to help improve your heart function.

These medications can:

- Help you live longer
- Prevent heart failure from getting worse
- Improve your quality of life or your overall sense of well-being
- Reduce symptoms related to heart failure, such as fatigue, shortness of breath, and swelling
- Help you stay out of the hospital or emergency room

You may need to take more than one type of medication for the best results. Each medication does a different job to help you. Your doctor will decide the best medications for you based on your heart's condition.



## Common Heart Failure Medications

The following medications are often prescribed for people with heart failure. Your doctor may also recommend other medications.

### ACE Inhibitors, ARBs, and ARNIs

**Angiotensin-converting enzyme (ACE) inhibitors, angiotensin II receptor blockers (ARBs), and angiotensin receptor-nepriylsin inhibitors (ARNIs)** relax blood vessels and lower blood pressure. This improves blood flow and makes it easier for the heart to pump.

**Examples:** lisinopril, quinapril, losartan, valsartan, Entresto®

### Beta Blockers

**Beta blockers** slow heart rate and lower blood pressure. This makes it easier for the heart to pump blood.

**Examples:** bisoprolol, carvedilol, metoprolol succinate

### MRAs

**Mineralocorticoid receptor antagonists (MRAs)** prevent stress hormones from worsening heart failure and help the kidneys remove extra fluid and salt. This reduces the amount of blood the heart must pump.

**Examples:** spironolactone, eplerenone

### SGLTi

**Sodium-glucose cotransporter inhibitors (SGLTi)** prevent heart failure from getting worse. They are often prescribed for people with diabetes but also work for people who do not have diabetes.

**Examples:** Farxiga®, Invokana®, Jardiance®

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## Other Types of Medications

Many people with heart failure take medications to help with heart failure symptoms such as shortness of breath or swelling. These include diuretics (also called “water pills”), blood pressure medications, and heart rhythm medications. Talk to your doctor if you have questions about your medications.



**Tip:** Heart failure medications work best when combined with a healthy low-salt diet and regular exercise.

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## What Do I Need to Know About Taking Heart Failure Medications?



- **Take your medicine at the same time each day.** Try not to miss or skip doses.
  - » **Tip:** If it is hard for you to remember to take your medicine, try using a calendar, pillbox, phone alarm, or an app on your phone to remind yourself. Healthmap recommends the Round Health and Medisafe medication reminder apps.
- **Check with your doctor or pharmacist** any time you start or stop a medication or supplement.
- **Tell your doctor if you have side effects.** Do not stop or change how you take your medications without first talking to your doctor.
- **Tell your doctor or pharmacist if you cannot afford your medications,** as they may be able to help.
- **Your doctor may ask you to weigh yourself, watch out for swelling, and check your blood pressure.** Keep a log of the results and bring it to your medical appointments. This helps your doctor determine the best heart failure medications for you.
  - » **Tip:** Visit [healthmapsolutions.com/patient-resources](https://healthmapsolutions.com/patient-resources) to download a Blood Pressure Log Sheet. This will help you keep track of your blood pressure readings.
- **Do not take nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs).** NSAIDs are over-the-counter pain or anti-inflammatory medications such as ibuprofen (Advil®, Motrin®) or naproxen (Aleve®). These can cause harm if you have heart failure.



**If you have heart failure, review the medications you take with your doctor at each visit.**



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Healthmap Solutions is here to help you manage your health. To learn more, call Healthmap at **1-800-481-0474** or visit [patients.healthmapsolutions.com](https://patients.healthmapsolutions.com).

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### Reference:

2022 AHA/ACC/HFSA Guideline for the Management of Heart Failure: A report of the American College of Cardiology/American Heart Association Joint Committee on Clinical Practice Guidelines. *Circulation*, 145(18).