

# Care of the Heart

A Special Newsletter for MVP Health Care<sup>®</sup> Members **Issue 1, 2024**

## What is Self-Care for Heart Failure?

Self-care means doing certain things every day to help you manage heart failure. It's about knowing which symptoms to watch for to prevent your heart failure from getting worse. When you practice good self-care, you know when it's time to call your doctor and when your heart failure has turned into an emergency.

### Top Five Daily Self-Care Tips

1. **Take your medicines as prescribed.** This gives them the best chance of helping you.
2. **Weigh yourself every day.** Sudden weight gain may be a sign that your body is holding on to too much fluid.
3. **Keep a daily record of your symptoms.** Checking your symptoms helps you know which are normal for you and if they change or get worse.
4. **Limit sodium.** This helps keep fluid from building up and may help you feel better. Your doctor can tell you how much sodium is right for you.
5. **Try to exercise regularly.** Talk with your doctor first about exercises that are safe and enjoyable for you.

Some people with heart failure may need to limit how much fluid they drink each day. Your doctor will let you know if you need to limit fluids.



**Contact Us**  
**1-866-954-1872**  
Monday–Friday,  
8:30 am–5 pm  
TTY 711  
**careteam@**  
**mvphealthcare.com**

### We Value Your Opinion

Please fill out a brief, anonymous survey at [mvplistens.com](https://mvphealthcare.com/mvplistens).

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.

As part of your MVP DualAccess plan, you have your own personal MVP Care Team. Your team is a group of nurses, social workers, and coordinators who are dedicated to making it easier for you to manage heart failure and other health concerns. You can call your care team at **1-866-954-1872** from 8:30am to 5pm Monday–Friday.

MVP Health Plan, Inc. is an HMO-POS/PPO/HMO D-SNP organization with a Medicare contract and a contract with the New York State Medicaid program. Enrollment in MVP Health Plan depends on contract renewal.

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# The Importance of Diet and Medicine

Taking your medicines as prescribed and following the diet your doctor has recommended may help you feel better. And you may be able to do more of your normal daily activities.

Medicine and diet are most effective when they are used together. Heart failure can become more severe if diet and medicine recommendations are not closely followed.

A registered dietitian can help you make changes in how you eat. You and the dietitian can make meal-planning guidelines that are realistic and that meet your needs.

## Need help starting or managing a heart healthy diet?

Your Care Team has the tools you may need. Connect with your Care Team today! Call **1-866-954-1872** (TTY 711) Monday–Friday, 8:30 am–5 pm.

You also have access to nutritional services through our partner, myVisitNow. Speak with a dietitian about your nutritional needs or get help starting or maintaining a healthy eating plan. Download the myVisitNow app or visit **myvisitnow.com**.

## Breathing Easier When You Have Heart Failure

The following tips may help you deal with fluid buildup that makes it hard to breathe. Call your doctor if you have new symptoms or if your symptoms have become worse.

### Elevate your upper body.

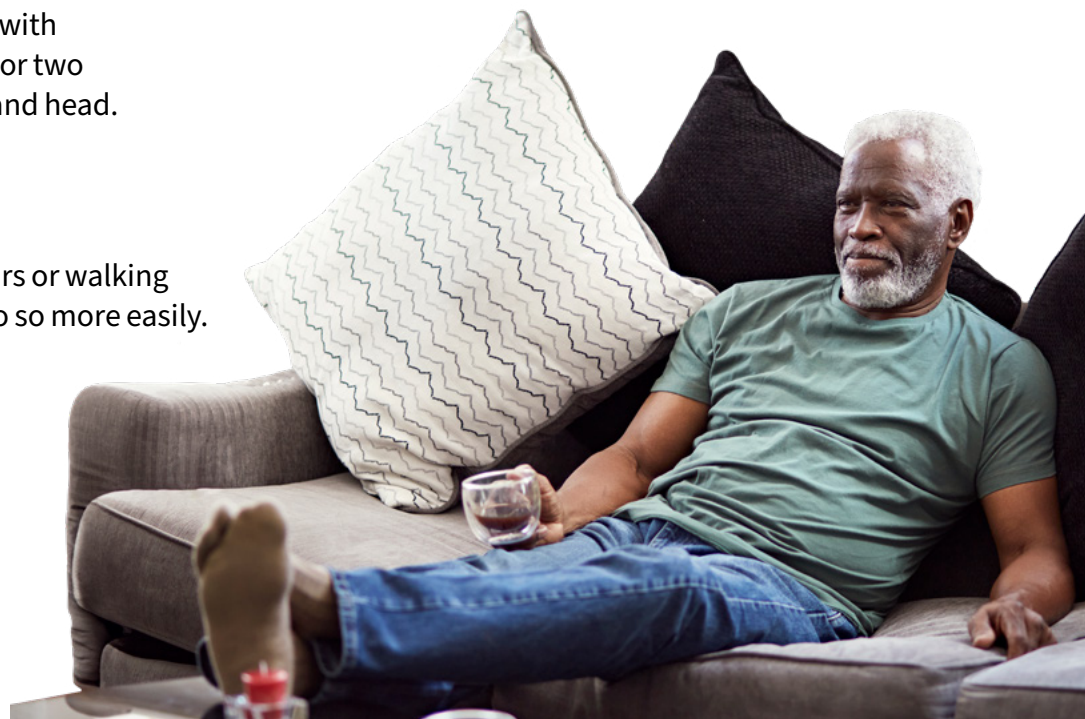
Sit in a chair or prop yourself up with pillows. At night, sleep with one or two pillows under your upper body and head.

### Avoid doing too much until you feel better.

For example, avoid climbing stairs or walking longer distances until you can do so more easily.

### Don't smoke.

Smoking will make it harder for you to breathe.



# 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)

## Living Well Programs from MVP

The MVP Health Promotions team is proud to offer a variety of free classes, discount programs, and vouchers throughout our service area.

To learn more, find classes by you, or to register for any of our programs, check out [mvphealthcare.com/calendar](https://mvphealthcare.com/calendar).

## Heart Failure Support at Your Fingertips

If you have questions related to heart failure and need answers quickly, the *Gia*® by MVP mobile app is here when you need it. Connect with a doctor to talk about managing heart failure, your medications, and even concerns about stress or anxiety.



Scan the code with the camera on your mobile device, or visit [mvphealthcare.com/GetGia](https://mvphealthcare.com/GetGia) to get the app.

# 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.



## Health and Wellness or Prevention Information

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## Get Your Newsletter by Email

Good news! You will soon be able to get this newsletter by secure email. Make sure your communication preferences are up-to-date. Sign in to Gia at [my.mvphealthcare.com](https://my.mvphealthcare.com) and under Important Links, select *Communication Preferences*. Select *Go Paperless!* and be sure email is selected for Plan Related Documents.

## Have a Health Question?

Our Health Library is your one-stop resource for the latest health information. Visit [mvphealthcare.com/HealthandWellness](https://mvphealthcare.com/HealthandWellness).



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