

Patient information from BMJ

Last published: Dec 06, 2021

Heart failure: questions to ask your doctor

If you've been told you have heart failure you may want to talk to your doctor to find out more.

Here are some questions that you might want to ask:

- Why did I get heart failure?
- What does heart failure mean? How does it differ from a heart attack?
- Will I have a heart attack?
- Will I get better?
- What's the best treatment for me?
- Will I need to have treatment for the rest of my life?
- What are the side effects of treatment? How can I cope with them?
- Will I need surgery?
- Do I have to stop any activities, such as playing sports or swimming?
- Can I still have sex?
- Should I change what I eat? If so, how? What should I avoid eating?
- Is it safe for me to drive?

If you smoke, you may want to ask your doctor:

- Will it help if I stop smoking?
- Where can I find someone who can help me stop smoking?
- What treatments are available to help me stop?
- Is there a local support group I can join to help me stop?

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