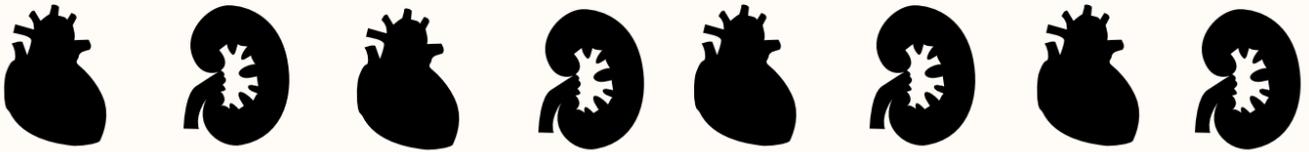


5 Ways to Manage Congestive Heart Failure & Chronic Kidney Disease

The interplay between the heart and the kidneys is one of a fine balance. While each one of these conditions represents a series of events that are independently complicated, when they occur together, it can become even more of a challenge to manage them simultaneously.



#1

Patient Education

The first step to managing CKD and CHF is understanding these diseases and the interplay between them. Congratulations on taking the first step to educate yourself. We recommend visiting our YouTube channel at www.youtube.com/nephrologypracticesolutions and watching our two part series on CHF and CKD for a more detailed explanation of these diseases and management options.



#2

Dietary Changes



Following a low salt or a 2 gm salt diet is a very important intervention. Diuretics (water pills) and high blood pressure medications work better when a patient eats less salt.

1. DON'T use a salt substitute as it has a large amount of potassium that can be dangerous for kidney function, cause heart rhythm abnormalities or sudden death.
2. DON'T drink soda or consume prepackaged foods as they tend to be high in sodium content.
3. You MAY be put on a fluid restriction to help rid the body of excess fluids and decrease fluid accumulation.

#3

Weight Based Diuretic Management

You may be started on diuretics to help remove excess fluid and to prevent weight gain from fluid accumulation. We do this with daily or 3 times a week weight monitoring to determine the dose of diuretic.

Patients should take water pills (diuretics) as prescribed and weigh themselves at least 3 times a week at the same time each day. If a patient gained more than 5 pounds in the last 2-3 days, they need to call their doctor.



#4

Treatment of Concurrent Medical Conditions



It is crucial to continue treatment of concurrent conditions such as:

1. Appropriate treatment of the underlying CHF with medications that reduce the work of the heart pump
2. High blood pressure treatment; taking medications as prescribed for your high blood pressure
3. Diabetes management

#5

Exercise

In CKD patients, studies have shown that both resistance (exercise with weights) and aerobic (exercise such as swimming or running) training may improve:

- Overall physical function
- Quality of life
- Symptoms of depression
- Patient survival
- Number of hospitalizations

While sometimes difficult to do, even moderate weight loss and light exercise can help. Of course, it is always best to talk with your doctor before starting a diet or exercise program, but working together with your healthcare team can help you accomplish even small goals.



While having both Congestive Heart Failure and Chronic Kidney Disease sounds overwhelming, with careful monitoring and treatment in partnership with your physician and the healthcare team, you can experience both a healthy lifestyle while decreasing potentially disabling effects of both conditions.