Heart Failure Pathway

We were glad to have Dr. Kathleen Love, Cardiologist at Confluence Health, speak to us about Heart Failure at our February 1st Mended Hearts Meeting. Heart Failure is her area of specialty. Heart Failure is more common than you might think. Over 6 million Americans have heart failure and it’s the leading cause of hospitalization for people 65+.

She said heart failure is a continuum. Dr. Love explained that heart failure is a problem with how the heart pumps. The heart still works but it is weaker or stiffer than before. The heart has trouble pumping enough blood to the rest of your body. Pumping dysfunction affects kidney function, causing an increase of fluid in the belly and legs. Diuretics are used to help the body get rid of the extra water and salt.

- Heart Failure Pathway continued on back -

Join Mended Hearts Today

Membership is about how you can help improve the lives of heart patients and their families, beginning with your own. To find out more, contact Chris or Chuck Phelps, Membership Chairpersons, at 509-860-4554 or email: membership91@nwi.net.

“You Are Not Alone”

Hope and encouragement are just a phone call away. If you or your family would like to talk with one of our Mended Hearts Visitors about your heart condition and concerns, please call Dominick Ferraro, Visiting Program Chair, at 509-421-3641.
Installation of Vice-President

Phil Aamodt, elected in January 2021, was installed at our February chapter meeting to serve a two-year term of office (2021 - 2023) as Vice-President of Chapter 91. This is Phil’s second term of office as Vice-President and we appreciate his willingness to serve. Thank you, Phil!

Dr. Love emphasized that heart failure is not a fix it and forget it condition. It requires patient management and ongoing attention. To help us see and understand what that means, she gave us a handout from CardioSmart, called “Turning Heart Failure Into Heart Success.” It includes the following information about learning to live with heart failure and what to expect:

It's OK to feel
- Scared or uncertain
- As though your world has been turned upside down
- Overwhelmed with questions

Physical Health
- Weigh yourself each morning
- Take medications as directed
- Ditch the salt, eat heart healthy
- Take breaks and know your limits

Emotional Health
- Find support from others who have heart failure
- Stay connected with what matters most to you
- Keep in close contact with your care team

What Your New Normal Means
- Speaking up about how you feel—you know your body best
- Celebrating what you CAN DO (versus what you can’t)
- Sticking with your treatment plan

Heart Failure Triggers and What to Do
Understanding what might cause your heart failure to flare-up is an important part of managing the disease and staying well. For example, some people say they feel worse after eating out or drinking too much alcohol, missing their medications, when they have a viral illness, if their diabetes or thyroid disease is not well controlled, when atrial fibrillation kicks in, or during periods of high stress. It’s equally important to know what you can do to avoid or head off common triggers.

Once you identify those things that seem to make your symptoms worse, identify what you might be able to do and what is helpful in trying to cope with triggers. Eating too much salt is a common reason for symptoms getting worse. Think of other factors, such as traveling (makes taking medications and daily weights difficult), being overweight (makes the heart work harder) or not getting enough physical activity.

Some symptoms that might signal worsening heart failure are: shortness of breath even with minimal activity, not being able to exercise, rapid weight gain, difficulty lying flat without being propped up, feeling even more tired and swelling.

Source: CardioSmart.org

Giving a Gift of Hope
Tax deductible contributions may be made to Greater Wenatchee Mended Hearts by mailing a check made payable to Greater Wenatchee Mended Hearts, P.O. Box 3231, Wenatchee, WA 98807.