What is heart failure?

Heart failure is a condition in which your heart does not pump blood as efficiently around your body as it should, which makes it difficult for your body to get as much oxygen and blood as it needs.

**Symptoms of heart failure** include breathlessness, fluid build up on the lungs, swollen legs, ankles and abdomen, a persistent cough, tiredness, palpitations, fainting and dizziness.

**Causes of heart failure** are high blood pressure, coronary heart disease, cardiomyopathy, damage to the heart valves, arrhythmias, congenital heart disease, myocarditis, some drugs used in cancer treatment and excessive alcohol consumption.

At least **15 million** people across Europe, and **900,000** people in the UK have heart failure.

65,000 new cases of heart failure are diagnosed each year.

Heart failure is the **number one cause** of unexpected hospital admissions in the UK.

5% of all emergency hospital admissions are due to heart failure.

Those with heart failure are **2–3 times** more likely to have a stroke.

1 in 5 of us will develop heart failure at some time in our lives.

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