

# Achieve

A Newsletter  
for AvMed  
Members

## ▶ YOUR HEALTHIEST LIFE WITH HEART FAILURE

### 6 heart failure symptoms that are easy to miss

Worsening heart failure symptoms can be subtle. Keep an eye out for these early warning signs.

**S**ome symptoms of congestive heart failure (CHF), such as severe shortness of breath or swelling in the legs, are impossible to miss. But others can sneak up on you. Catching them early can help you avoid complications.

#### 1. A little weight gain

Even a 2- to 3-pound increase in a short period may signal fluid buildup.

#### 2. Increased fatigue

If daily tasks like climbing stairs or doing chores leave you more drained

than usual, it may be because your heart is working harder to keep up.

#### 3. A new cough

Fluid in the lungs can cause coughing that doesn't go away or wheezing that feels different from seasonal allergies or a cold.

#### 4. Trouble breathing at night

Needing extra pillows to sleep comfortably or waking up short of breath can be a sign of fluid backing up in the lungs.

#### 5. Lower appetite or nausea

When fluid builds up in the abdomen, it can make you feel full quickly or cause stomach discomfort.

#### 6. Confusion or difficulty concentrating

Reduced blood flow to the brain may lead to memory problems, trouble focusing, or feeling mentally foggy.

It's easy to dismiss these symptoms as aging or stress, but they're all worth a call to your care team.





## 5 ways to avoid another hospital stay

Some simple strategies and a little planning make it easier to stay healthier at home.

**H**ospital stays for heart failure are common, but they don't have to be routine. With the right approach, you can lower your risk and feel more in control of your health.

### STEP 1

#### Set up for success

Before leaving the hospital, review discharge instructions carefully.

Enlist a family member or friend as your advocate to help coordinate follow-up appointments and help organize your prescriptions.

### STEP 2

#### Make some pantry swaps

Too much salt can worsen heart failure. Clear out processed foods and replace them with heart-

healthy fruits, vegetables, and whole grains to help keep fluid levels in check.

### STEP 3

#### Monitor symptoms

Daily tracking is key. Watch for sudden weight gain, swelling, shortness of breath, or changes in thinking. Early intervention may prevent hospitalization.

### STEP 4

#### Keep follow-ups

Staying up to date with all follow-up visits can help your healthcare team catch problems early. If transportation is difficult, ask about telehealth or ride services.

### STEP 5:

#### Mind your mood

Mental health conditions such as depression can affect recovery, so let your care team know if you're struggling.



### To reach a Case Manager

Simply call 1-833-609-0735, email [DM@AvMed.org](mailto:DM@AvMed.org) or scan the QR code provided.



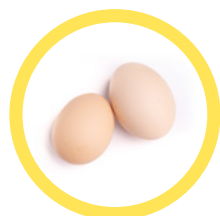
# Healthy Eating Made Simple

## How to get enough protein without overdoing red meat

**R**ed meat is a rich source of protein, but too much can be hard on your heart. Learn how to balance your meals with other protein sources.

### What 10 grams of protein looks like

Nutrition labels are your friend. A quick glance will tell you how many grams of protein per serving. Here are some examples to get you started:



**2 small eggs**



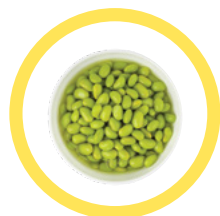
**2 ½ tablespoons  
peanut butter**



**1 cup cooked  
quinoa**



**½ cup cooked  
lentils**



**½ cup  
edamame**



**½ cup plain  
nonfat Greek  
yogurt**



**1 ½ ounces  
canned tuna**



**3 ½ ounces tofu**

### Why you need it

Protein helps you feel fuller longer, build strong bones, increase muscle mass, boost metabolism, support immunity, and repair tissue.

### Calculating your needs

The National Resource Center for Aging and Nutrition recommends adults get 1 to 1.2 grams of protein per kilogram of body weight to shore up muscle mass and overall wellness. That translates to 68 to 82 grams of protein each day for a 150-pound person. Rather than get stuck on the math, dietitians encourage people to simply aim to consume 25 to 30 grams of protein at every meal.

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## Recipe



## Easy Lentil Stew

Serves 2 | Prep time: 5 min  
Cook time: 20 min

### Ingredients

½ cup red lentils  
1 cup canned pumpkin  
purée

3 cups sodium-free  
vegetable stock  
¼ tsp salt  
½ tsp ground ginger  
¼ tsp ground cumin  
Optional: ¼ cup fresh  
cilantro or parsley,  
chopped

### Directions

**1.** Combine all the ingredients, except the optional parsley or cilantro, together in a medium saucepan. Bring to a

boil, then reduce to a low simmer. Cover the pot and cook for 15 minutes.

**2.** Remove the lid and stir. The texture will be very thick and stew-like, and the lentils will be mushy.

**3.** Transfer the soup to a blender and purée for 30 seconds, until creamy. Return to the pot and heat over low to reheat, if necessary. Ladle into bowls, and top with the fresh parsley or cilantro, if using. Enjoy warm.

**Nutrition facts** Calories 208 | Fat 0 g | Saturated fat 0 g | Cholesterol 0 g  
Sodium 205.1 mg | Carbs 37.6 g | Fiber 11 g | Protein 15 g | Sugar 6 g  
Calcium 71 mg | Potassium 671 mg