

heart failure medicines

HOW THEY CAN HELP YOU

Most people with heart failure benefit from taking several types of medicine to protect their heart. These medicines can help you feel better and live longer. Your doctor will recommend which medicine is best for you. It's important to take all your medicine exactly as directed. Be sure to schedule and go to all of your appointments, and call your doctor or care team if you have any problems.

Medicine type: diuretics

Names: furosemide (Lasix), torsemide (Demadex), bumetamide (Bumex), metolazone (Zaroxolyn)

Where it works: kidneys

How it works: helps kidneys get rid of excess salt and fluid; helps reduce symptoms of heart failure (shortness of breath and leg swelling/edema)

Medicine type: angiotensin converting enzyme (ACE) inhibitors *

Names: lisinopril (Zestril, Prinivil), captopril (Capoten), enalapril (Epaned, Vasotec)

Where it works: heart, kidneys, blood vessels

How it works: reduces blood pressure, which helps the heart pump easier; relaxes and widens blood vessels; blocks hormones that can cause progression of heart failure

Medicine type: angiotensin receptor blockers (ARB)

Names: losartan (Cozaar), valsartan (Diovan)

Where it works: heart, kidneys, blood vessels

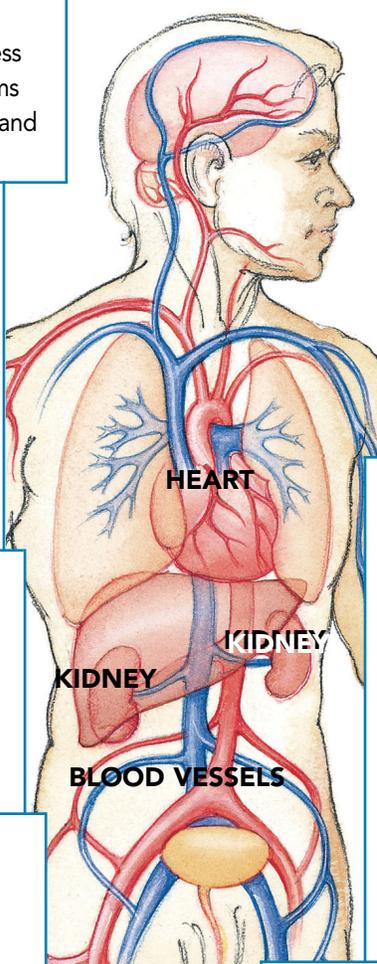
How it works: same as ACE inhibitors; used as alternative when ACE inhibitors cause cough, rash, or throat swelling

Medicine type: beta-blockers *

Names: carvedilol (Coreg), bisoprolol (Zebeta), metoprolol succinate (Toprol XL)

Where it works: heart

How it works: helps to control heart rate and reduce blood pressure, which improves heart function; reduces chest pain (angina)



Medicine type: aldosterone antagonists *

Name: spironolactone (Aldactone), eplerenone (Inspra)

Where it works: heart, kidneys, blood vessels

How it works: reduces blood pressure, which helps heart pump easier; relaxes and widens blood vessels; blocks hormones that can cause progression of heart failure; mild diuretic, which can also help with swelling and symptoms of heart failure

Medicine type: digoxin

Name: digoxin (Lanoxin)

Where it works: heart

How it works: helps to control heart rate; helps reduce symptoms of heart failure for some people; shown in clinical trial to reduce heart failure hospitalizations

Drug combination: long-acting nitrate and hydralazine

Names: isosorbide dinitrate (Isordil), isosorbide mononitrate (Imdur), hydralazine hydrochloride (Apresoline)

Where it works: heart, blood vessels

How it works: reduces blood pressure, which helps heart pump easier; relaxes and widens blood vessels; improves angina; shown in clinical trials to improve life expectancy and progression of heart failure in African Americans; used when kidney function will not allow use of ACE, ARB, or aldosterone antagonists

Drug combination: neprilysin antagonist and angiotensin receptor blocker

Names: sacubitril and valsartan (Entresto)

Where it works: heart, blood vessels, kidneys

How it works: reduces blood pressure, which helps heart pump easier; relaxes and widens blood vessels; blocks hormones that can cause progression of heart failure

* Shown in clinical trial to slow progression of heart failure and improve life expectancy with heart failure

What to know about heart failure medicine

- Take all your medicine exactly as directed.
- Talk with your doctor if you think any of your medicine causes unmanageable side effects.
- Wear a medical alert bracelet and/or carry an updated list of all the medicine you're taking.
- Learn more about your heart failure medicine at kp.org/medications or consult with a pharmacist.

Tips to help you remember to take your medicine

Everyone sometimes has trouble remembering to do things on a regular schedule. Here are ways to help you remember. Check off things you might try, or come up with something on your own:

- Make a simple chart and post it in an obvious place where you will see it every day, like on the mirror in the bathroom.
- Set an alarm clock or watch as a reminder.
- Establish a daily routine for taking your medicine, such as at bedtime or mealtime.
- Use a pillbox that has sections, representing the days of the week and different times of day.
- Download our My KP Meds app on your phone to help track your medicine. Learn more at kpdoc.org/mykpmeds.

It's easy to get prescription refills at Kaiser Permanente pharmacies.

- Reorder your medications at least 7 to 10 days before you run out.
- Use EasyFill, our automated phone prescription refill system. Find the number to call in the upper right-hand corner of your prescription label, or call the pharmacy near you.
- Refill prescriptions online at kp.org/rxrefill. Click on the "Appointments/Rx refills" tab, then click on "Refill prescriptions."

Call Kaiser Permanente if you:

- Have side effects from your medicine that you've not already discussed with your doctor.
- Have new or increased shortness of breath.
- Are dizzy or lightheaded, or you feel like you may faint.
- Gain over 2 pounds in one day, or 5 or more pounds in a week.
- Have increased swelling in your legs, ankles, or feet.

Additional resources

For more health information, tools, classes, and other resources:

- Search kp.org/mydoctor
- Contact your local Health Education Department

HEALTH EDUCATION



This information is not intended to diagnose health problems or to take the place of medical advice or care you receive from your physician or other health care professional. If you have persistent health problems, or if you have additional questions, please consult with your doctor. If you have questions or need more information about your medication, please speak to your pharmacist. Kaiser Permanente does not endorse the medications or products mentioned. Any trade names listed are for easy identification only.