CONGESTIVE HEART FAILURE (CHF) FACT SHEET

WHAT IS CONGESTIVE HEART FAILURE OR CHF? Heart failure does not mean that the heart has stopped working or is about to stop working. It means that the heart's pumping power is weaker than normal. Heart failure develops over time as the pumping action of the heart gets weaker.

WHAT ARE THE SIGNS OF CHF?

- Shortness of breath, especially when lying down
- Tired, run-down feeling
- Swelling in feet, ankles, and legs
- Weight gain from fluid buildup
- Confusion or can't think clearly

WHAT CAN HAPPEN IF YOU HAVE CHF?

- Fluid builds up, causing swelling in feet, ankles, and legs.
- Fluid builds up in lungs.
- Body does not get enough blood, food, and oxygen.
- Decreased ability to take care of daily hygiene needs

WHAT ARE THE RISK FACTORS?

- People over 65.
- African Americans are at greater risk.
- High cholesterol.
- High blood pressure.
- Diabetes.
- Prior heart attack.

WHAT CAN I DO IF I HAVE CHF?

- Take medication as prescribed.
- Eat a healthful diet that's low in salt and saturated fat.
- Weigh daily to check for increased fluid.
- Stop smoking.
- Reduce everyday stress
- If you are overweight, lose weight.
- Cardiac Rehabilitation Program (a medically supervised program designed to improve your cardiovascular health if you have experienced heart attack, heart failure, angioplasty, or heart surgery.

RPM Branch/County:_____
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