

# MANAGING PSYCHOLOGICAL STRESS IN HEART FAILURE PATIENTS

Patients with heart failure often experience psychological stress because managing their condition can be complicated, together with the decline of their bodily functions over time. They often have to deal with frequent symptom flare-up and hospital stays.

## Sources of Stress

### Heart Failure Related Stressors

- ✓ Lifestyle changes
- ✓ Cost/complexity of treatment
- ✓ Restrictions in daily activities

### Other Stressors of Daily Life

- ✓ Family/work commitments
- ✓ Management of other coexisting medical conditions



## DID YOU KNOW?

### Chronic stress can:

- ✓ Increase blood pressure
- ✓ Increase cholesterol level
- ✓ Increase blood sugar
- ✓ Promote buildup of plaques in your arteries

## SIGNS & SYMPTOMS

### Physical:

1. Fatigue
2. Headaches
3. Fast heartbeat

### Emotional:

1. Feelings of sadness/despair
2. Feeling irritable
3. Difficulty in concentrating on a task

### Mental:

1. Forgetfulness
2. Confusion
3. Difficulty concentrating/making decisions

### Behaviourial:

1. Restlessness
2. Change in eating and sleeping habits
3. Difficulty concentrating/making decisions



Do not hesitate to seek professional help if you think you are experiencing any of these symptoms!

## MANAGEMENT



Regular exercise



Avoiding alcohol and drug use



Eating a healthy diet



Getting sufficient sleep



Avoiding smoking



Seeking social support from family and friends