Heart disease affects approximately 6.5 million Americans, and 900,000 new cases are diagnosed each year. Heart failure was once considered a “man’s disease,” but we now know that it is not the case. Heart failure can happen to anyone, but some are at greater risk than others. About 3 million American women have heart failure. Of the 900,000 new cases of heart failure diagnosed each year, women account for 505,000. Women die from congestive heart failure more than one and a half times as often as men, accounting for 56.3% of all heart failure deaths.

Heart Failure Symptoms

- Shortness of breath
- Fatigue
- Chest congestion
- Edema or ankle swelling
- Tired easily
- Tiring easily
- Breathing difficulties
- Activities limited
- Swelling of feet, ankles, or legs (edema)
- General feeling of fatigue
- Waking up breathless at night (paroxysmal nocturnal dyspnea)
- Frequent coughing
- Coughing that produces mucus or pink, blood-tinged sputum
- Coronal heart disease
- Obesity

Comorbidities

- Nearly half of all non-Hispanic African Americans have some form of cardiovascular disease (47.7% of females and 46.8% of males).
- Coronary heart disease is the leading cause of deaths attributable to cardiovascular disease, in 45.1%.
- African-American females and males are more obese than their white counterparts.
- African-American females and males are more likely to have high blood pressure, diabetes, and metabolic syndrome than their white counterparts.

Heart Disease for African-Americans:

- A study shows 30.1% of African-Americans have high blood pressure.
- 21.3% of American adults are opposed to whites.

Heart Disease for Hispanic-Americans:

- A study shows 12.5% of Hispanic American males have diabetes as do 12.7% of Hispanic American females.
- 8.0% of non-Hispanic white males and 7.4% of non-Hispanic white females.

About half of all non-Hispanic African Americans have some form of heart disease. Of the 900,000 new cases of heart failure diagnosed each year, women account for 505,000. Women die from congestive heart failure more than one and a half times as often as men, accounting for 56.3% of all heart failure deaths.

Heart Failure Risk Factors

Preventing heart failure means controlling and where possible, preventing risk factors for heart failure. These include:

- Hypertension
- Coronary heart disease
- Obesity

Those who have risk factors should speak with their doctor. Getting diagnosed with heart failure early in the disease’s course often means more effective treatments and better outcomes.

About the Heart Failure Society of America, Inc.

The Heart Failure Society of America, Inc. is the largest professional society of its kind representing over 5,000 healthcare professionals and organizations that care for individuals with heart failure and their families. The Society provides the only evidence-based guidelines supporting heart failure treatments and better outcomes. Additionally, the Society promotes, supports, and encourages research in the prevention, diagnosis, and management of heart failure.