

“Are Nurses the Best Way to Translate New Findings to our Patients?”



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Conflict of Interest Disclosures

I have no conflict of interest in relation to this program or presentation.

Learning Objectives

- Review tips & tricks for successful communication with Heart Failure patients
- Discuss the use of patient education and communication tools to improve compliance and understanding

Introduction

- In hospitals, clinics, communities and the home environment, nurses are integral in providing clinical care and education to HF patients and families
- **HF nurses provide:**
 - Patient-centered education on HF self-care
 - Work within teams to adopt GDMT & new pharmacological therapies
- Nurses, as part of an interdisciplinary team, are well positioned to translate new findings on the management of HF to patients
- Strengthening communication between patient-provider teams is essential to improving HF patient outcomes

Importance of Communication in HF Care

Effective communication is essential to developing strong patient-provider relationships:

- Supports patient understanding of:
 - HF diagnosis
 - Importance of medical therapy (new advances)
 - Engagement in HF self care
- Leads to establishing treatment plans that fit with patient goals & preferences
- Improves patient satisfaction with care and outcomes

We can use education tools to enhance patient-provider partnerships



Communication Tips



- Take the time
- Actively listen
- Use open-ended questions
- Understand a patients' beliefs, values & goals
 - "What does having a diagnosis of heart failure mean to you?"¹*
 - "What are some challenges you may experience living with heart failure?"²*
- Involve patient families and caregivers in education & discussion of therapies
- Recognize that a patient's ability to hear/learn information may be impacted by symptoms

Communication Tricks



- Language matters - both verbal & non-verbal
 - Use simple plain language
- Information should be direct and personalized
- Build on a patient's existing knowledge
- Adopt an approach of 'shared decision making'
 - Mutual realistic goal setting - seek patient commitment
- Ensure information delivered is culturally appropriate
- Provide follow-up information (written materials, online tool)
- Continuity - reinforce key messages at follow-up visits or through education tools

Communication and Adherence

- Poor communication can result in a higher risk of non-adherence
- **Factors affecting adherence are multifactorial:**
 - SES
 - How we deliver health care:
 - Team based approach to education
 - Patient comorbidities:
 - Polypharmacy, depression
 - Therapy-related factors:
 - Complex medical regimen, prolonged duration of treatment
 - Patient factors:
 - Lack of knowledge about HF, fear of side effects

Nursing-Led Education on Medical Therapy

Nursing interventions can improve medication adherence:

- “What/Why/When/How/How Long” Approach
- Talk honestly about benefits & risks
- Discuss common side effects & management
- Cost of medications (insurance coverage)
- Drug interactions (OTC, herbals)
- Discuss the use of personalized aids:
 - Charts, calendars, diary
 - Phone alarms
 - Dosette
- Provide follow-up information (written, website)



Nursing-Led HF Education

‘Patient-centered’ approach to HF education:

1. Assess current understanding of HF diagnosis & treatment plan
2. Explore patient perspective, preferences & goals of care
3. Culturally appropriate
4. Assess individual learning style
5. Assess health literacy
6. Deliver education that aligns with current best-practice:
 - On appropriate GDMT?
 - Opportunity for medication titration?
7. Consider any physical limitations (hearing or visual impairment) in choosing an education tool



Importance of Assessing Health Literacy

- “The ability to access, understand, evaluate and communicate information as a way to promote, maintain and improve health in a variety of settings across the life-course.” (CPHA 2008).
- **Essential to assess health literacy in HF patients:**
 - 32% of patients with HF or LVAD/heart transplant have low health literacy
 - Patients with low health literacy were older, less formal education, English 2nd language

McConnery, J. et. al. (2016). Impact of Health Literacy on Knowledge and Self-Care in Heart Failure Patients, Pre- and Post-Intervention. *The Journal of Heart and Lung Transplantation*, 35(4):S141.

Health Literacy

- **Low health literacy has been associated with:**
 - ↓ self-care abilities and knowledge about HF
 - ↓ medication adherence; ↑ medication errors
 - ↑ hospitalization and use of emergency services
 - ↑ mortality (elderly)
 - ↑ health care costs
- Nurses can lead in assessing health literacy in HF programs and integrate into education programs

Evangelista et al. (2010). Health Literacy and the Patient with Heart Failure – Implications for Patient Care and Research: A Consensus Statement of the Heart Failure Society of America. *Journal of Cardiac Failure*, 16(1):9-16.

HF Education & Communication Tools

Evolution in HF Education & Communication Tools

Traditional: Face-to-Face

Fact-sheets, Brochures, Books
Diaries, Action-plans

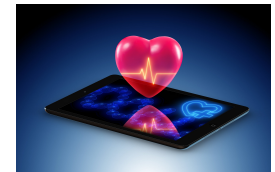
Group Classes:

Signs/Symptoms, Dietary modifications
In-person support groups


Web-Based:


Comprehensive HF Patient Education Websites
Patient Education Videos, Interactive online-tools
Website Blogs, Social media
Telehealth

Digital Tools & Apps:
Remote Monitoring Programs
Wearables

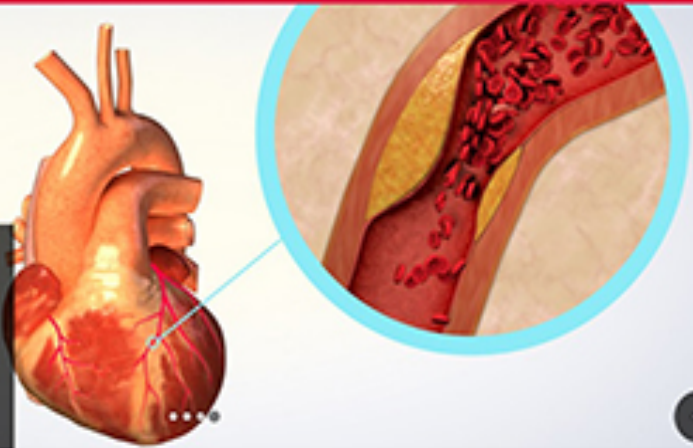


TRCHR: Heart Failure Patient Education Website

**TED ROGERS CENTRE
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Heart Failure Patient Education Site


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What Causes Heart Failure?

There are many different causes of heart failure. The most common cause of heart failure in Canada ... [Learn More](#)




How Is Heart Failure Diagnosed?

When your healthcare provider suspects that you may have heart failure, a number of tests ... [Learn More](#)




Introduction to Treatments

Luckily, there are many treatment options for heart failure. The understanding of heart ... [Learn More](#)



Nutrition Guide for Heart Failure

The major nutritional considerations specific to heart failure are fluid and sodium ... [Learn More](#)



Preparing for Your Heart Function Clinic Appointment

During your appointment, you may meet a number of people. These people are here to assist ... [Learn More](#)

HF Patient Apps

HF apps may support key components of self-care management:

- Track weights (target weight)
- BP, HR monitoring
- Track signs/symptoms (identify changes)
- Manage medications (reminders)
- Set activity goals (sync with other devices)
- Nutritional goals
- Connect with resources (websites); Deliver key education
- Calendar for health care appointments
- Record notes to discuss with health care providers

Summary

- HF Nurses can lead in strengthening communication between patients and the health care team
- HF Nurses are critical in developing and implementing a structured approach to HF education
- Innovative educational tools can be useful platforms for communicating advances in HF treatment
- Choice of educational tool should be based on individual patient needs and preferences
- HF teams/programs should adopt multiple education approaches
- Ultimately, all members of the health care team play a role in educating HF patients