

Congestive Heart Failure

Congestive heart failure (CHF) is the most common cause of death for people over age 65. It occurs when the heart cannot pump out enough blood to meet the needs of the body.

Any form of heart disease may lead to CHF, which results in a reduced ability to exercise and, in severe cases, can impair daily function. The following traits can contribute to CHF: smoking, high-fat diet, excess body weight, alcohol abuse, high sodium intake, influenza and pneumonia.

Noncompliance with prescribed medications or recommended diet can also be a contributing factor.

Signs & Symptoms

Individuals experiencing CHF may exhibit some or all of the following symptoms:

- Shortness of breath
- Fatigue, exercise intolerance
- Rust-coloured sputum
- Distended neck veins
- Cough, especially upon waking
- Excessive night-time urination
- Excessive protein in the urine
- Insomnia
- Nausea, vomiting
- Anorexia
- Anxiety
- Swelling in the extremities

Therapeutic Approach

In addition to conventional measures that may include medication, modalities such as CranioSacral Therapy can play an important role in a comprehensive therapeutic approach. It can help balance body fluids by releasing adverse mechanical tensions in the body. This in turn can enhance fluid flow, which can then ease the amount of work the heart has to do.