

Chapter 7: Glossary

ACE (angiotensin converting enzyme) inhibitors

ACE inhibitors are medicines that relax blood vessels. This makes it easier for your heart to pump blood.

Angina

This is pain or discomfort in your chest when there isn't enough blood flow to your heart. It is caused by narrowing of the coronary arteries.

ARB (angiotensin receptor blocker)

An ARB is a medicine that relaxes your blood vessels. This allows your heart to pump easier.

Bendopnea

Shortness of breath you have when bending over when doing a task like tying your shoe or putting on socks.

Beta blockers

Beta blockers are medicines that reduce your heart's workload and decrease the amount of oxygen your heart needs to work.

Cardiomyopathy

This is a disease of the heart muscle.

Coronary arteries

These are blood vessels that wrap around your heart. They supply your heart with blood.

Coronary artery disease

Plaque (fatty deposits) on the insides of your arteries reduces or blocks the amount of blood that flows through them.

Digoxin

Digoxin is a medicine that makes your heart stronger so it can pump stronger and better.

Diuretics

Diuretics (water pills) help your body get rid of extra fluid by increasing the amount of urine you make. This reduces the workload on your heart.

Edema

Swelling in your hands, feet, ankles and legs caused by extra fluid in your tissues.

Ejection fraction

A measurement used to determine how well your heart is pumping out blood.

Heart attack (myocardial infarction)

When blood cannot flow to your heart, damage or death to the heart muscle may occur. A heart attack leaves your heart permanently damaged or scarred.

Heart failure

Your heart cannot supply your body with enough blood.

High blood pressure (hypertension)

When the amount of pressure inside your arteries is high, your heart has to pump with greater force to push the blood through the blood vessels.

Hydralazine/nitrates

Hydralazine and nitrates are medicines that relax your blood vessels and increase blood and oxygen supply to your heart. This eases the workload on your heart. They are taken together.

Orthopnea

Shortness of breath you have while lying flat but improves when you sit or stand.

Valves

Valves are gate-like “doorways” that open and close to let blood move between the chambers of the heart.

Valve disease

This is a disease that causes blood to flow in the wrong direction.

Warfarin

Warfarin is a medicine that lowers your blood's ability to form clots.

