

Understand Heart Failure —and Know Your Risk

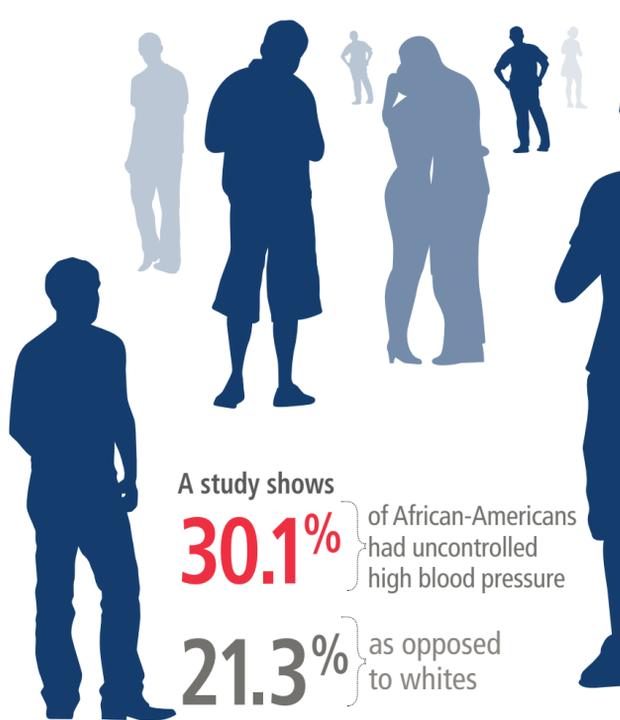
Heart failure affects approximately 6.5 million Americans, and

900,000 new cases are diagnosed each year.

Heart failure was once considered a “man’s disease,” but we now know that 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 ever year, women account for **505,000**. Women die from congestive heart failure more often than men do, accounting for **56.3%** of all heart failure deaths.

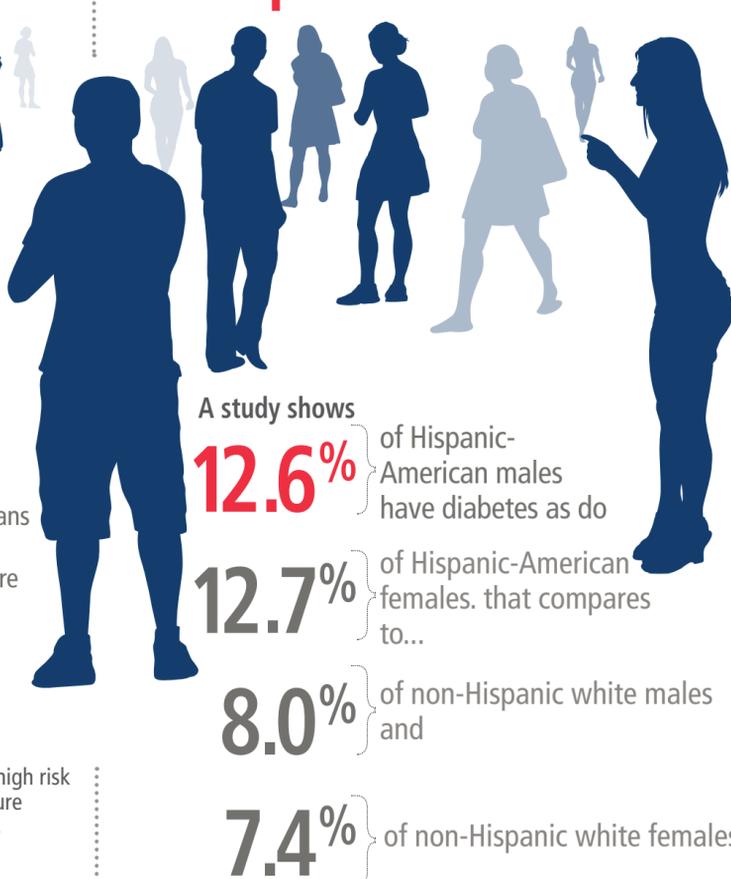
Heart disease for African-Americans:



Among all ethnicities, African Americans are at a particularly high risk for heart failure, and more African Americans die of heart failure within 5 years of diagnosis than any other group. This trend is expected to continue growing over the coming years.

The leading cause of heart failure in African Americans is poorly controlled hypertension (high blood pressure). African Americans tend to get high blood pressure at an earlier age, and it tends to be more severe in African Americans than in their white counterparts. African Americans experience **uncontrolled high blood pressure** more often than whites.

Heart disease for Hispanic-Americans:



Among all Americans, Hispanic Americans have **higher rates of cardiac dysfunction**, which can lead to heart failure. They also have high rates of incidence of heart failure compared to whites (3.5 to 2.4 per 1000 person-years, respectively).

Hispanic Americans also tend to experience the comorbidities of heart failure more frequently. They have higher rates of diabetes, obesity, and metabolic syndrome than do their white counterparts.

Heart Failure Symptoms

It’s important that people at risk of heart failure understand themselves and their symptoms. When you think about heart failure symptoms, remember **FACES**:

- F** Fatigue
- A** Activities limited
- C** Chest congestion
- E** Edema or ankle swelling
- S** Shortness of breath

There are other symptoms, as well.

Breathing difficulties

- Shortness of breath from simple activities, such as walking stairs (dyspnea)
- Trouble breathing when resting or lying down
- Waking up breathless at night (paroxysmal nocturnal dyspnea)
- Needing more than two pillows to sleep (orthopnea)

Coughing

- Frequent coughing
- Coughing that produces mucus or pink, blood-tinged sputum
- Dry, hacking cough when lying flat in bed

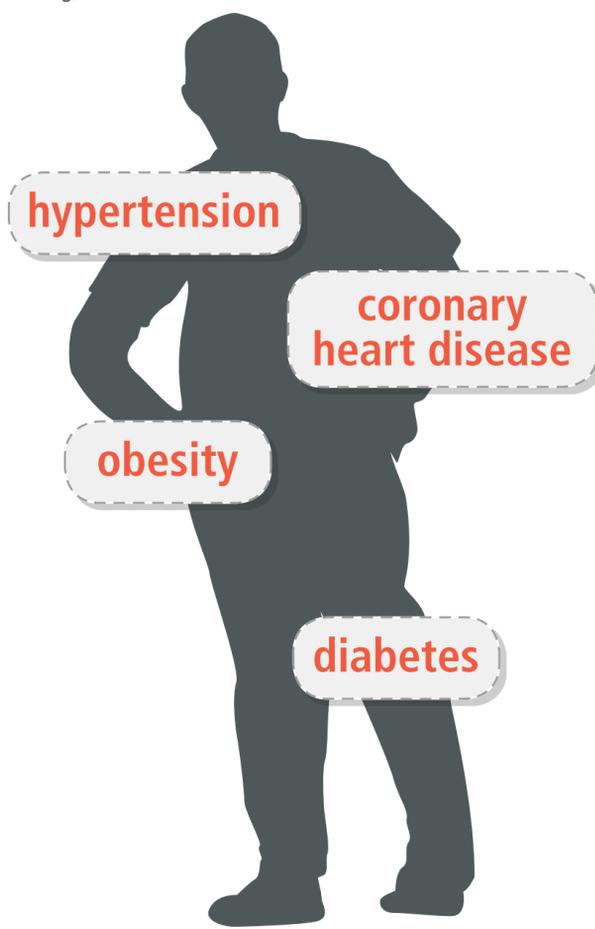
Keep in mind that these symptoms are common and may represent other diseases. If you experience any of these symptoms or face any of these risk factors, talk with your doctor.

Fatigue/exercise intolerance

- Tiring easily
- Swelling of feet, ankles, or legs (edema)
- General feeling of fatigue

Heart Failure Risk Factors

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

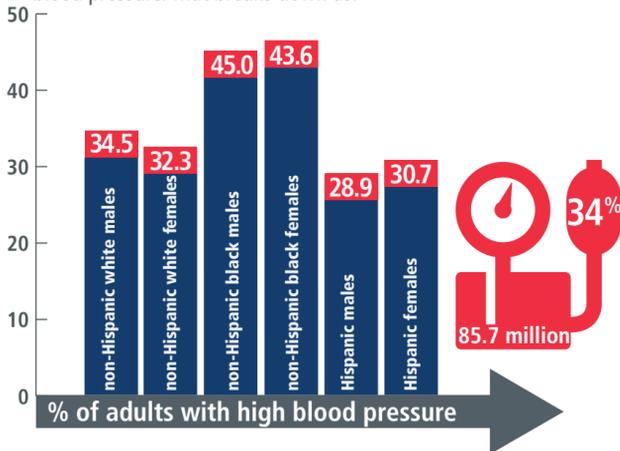


Those who have risk factors should speak with their doctor. Getting diagnosed with heart failure **early** in the disease’s course often means **more effective treatments and better outcomes**.

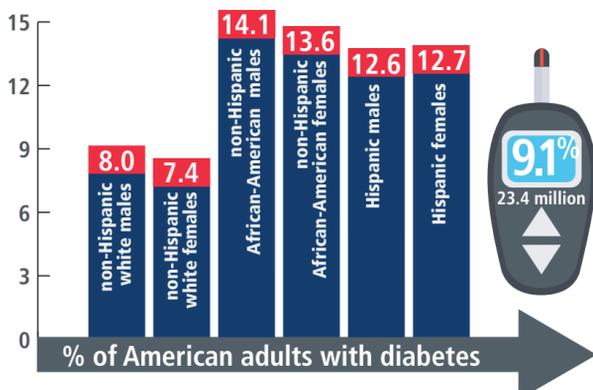
Comorbidities

Comorbidities are other health conditions that can accompany heart failure. The most common that occur with heart failure include coronary heart disease, hypertension (high blood pressure), abnormal cholesterol levels, obesity, and diabetes.

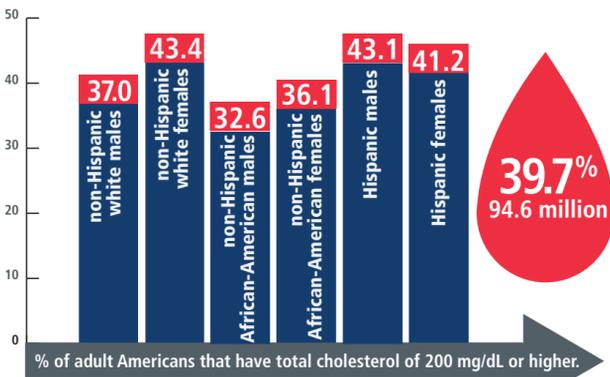
- Nearly half of all non-Hispanic African Americans have some form of cardiovascular disease (**47.7 percent** of females and **46.0 percent** of males).
- Coronary heart disease is the leading cause of deaths attributable to cardiovascular disease, at **45.1 percent**.
- About **34 percent** (85.7 million) of American adults have high blood pressure. That breaks down as:



- Nearly half of all people with hypertension do not have it under control.
- It’s estimated that **23.4 million** (9.1 percent) of American adults have diagnosed diabetes. That breaks down as:



- An additional estimated **7.6 million** (**3.1 percent**) American adults have diabetes that is undiagnosed, and another **81.6 million** (**33.9 percent**) American adults have prediabetes.
- Too many Americans have high total cholesterol levels, as well—**39.7 percent** of American adults (94.6 million) have total cholesterol of 200 mg/dL or higher. This breaks down as:



- Obesity continues to be an epidemic in the U.S. among adults and children. The prevalence of obesity grew from 1999 to 2000 through 2013 to 2014, from **30.5 percent** to **37.7 percent**.

About the Heart Failure Society of America, Inc.

In the spring of 1994, a small group of academic cardiologists gathered in New York to discuss the formation of a society that would focus on heart failure. This group had long recognized that the disease was on the rise; yet there was no venue for researchers, trainees, and clinicians to gather to discuss new treatments, research results, and the rise in health care costs associated with heart failure. A society dedicated to heart failure would bring together health care professionals, including researchers, physicians, nurses, and other allied health care professionals, to learn more about the mechanisms of the disease, how best to treat patients, play a role in reducing health care costs, etc. The meeting led to the incorporation of the Heart Failure Society of America, Inc.

The Heart Failure Society of America, Inc. (HFSA) represents the first organized effort by heart failure experts from the Americas to provide a forum for all those interested in heart function, heart failure, and congestive heart failure (CHF) research and patient care.

