

Living Longer with Heart Failure: ACE Inhibitors

My ACE Inhibitor is: _____

What Are ACE Inhibitors?

Many medications are used to treat the symptoms of heart failure, but only a few are known to help you live longer. ACE inhibitors can do this. Medical research shows that patients who take ACE inhibitors often live longer and their hearts work better.

ACE inhibitors help the heart and body work more normally again, especially if the heart is or the heart muscle is stiff or thick.

What Are the Common Side Effects of ACE Inhibitors?

Low Blood Pressure

The ACE inhibitor lowers blood pressure. And it can even be used if your blood pressure is already low.

If you have low blood pressure and take an ACE inhibitor, you may feel dizzy or lightheaded, especially when you stand up. To reduce this feeling, sit up for a few seconds before standing. Stand up slowly to give your body a chance to adjust.

High Potassium Levels

The amount of potassium in your blood may increase when you take an ACE inhibitor. If you are taking a potassium pill, the amount you take may need to be changed. Your doctor will check your blood tests to monitor the amount of potassium in your blood.

**What Are the
Common Side
Effects of ACE
Inhibitors?
continued**

Dry Cough

Occasionally, ACE inhibitors also cause a dry cough that doesn't go away. If this occurs, your doctor can give you a different medication that has many of the same advantages as ACE inhibitors, but it does not cause coughing. This alternative medicine is an angiotensin (AN je o TEN sin) receptor blocker.

Tell your doctor if you are feeling dizzy or if the medicine is making you feel bad in any other way. Remember that alcohol and overeating can make side effects worse.

**How Do You Take
Your ACE
Inhibitor?**

ACE inhibitors cause fewer problems when your doctor starts with a low dose and gradually increases it. For this reason, don't worry if your doctor changes the amount you take.

If you have trouble with low blood pressure or dizziness, it may help to take the ACE inhibitor at a different time from when you take other blood pressure medicines.

Try to take the ACE inhibitor close to the same time every day. Don't stop taking the medicine without first talking to your doctor. Work with your doctor to get the right amount of ACE inhibitor and take it as directed.

Glossary

Term	Pronunciation	Definition
Angiotensin	AN je o TEN sin	A hormone that causes blood pressure to rise