

Aim for a  
**healthy lifestyle**

- **Eat less salt (sodium).** Salt can increase blood pressure and excess fluid in your body.
- **Stop smoking.** Smoking damages the heart, blood vessels and lungs. It is never too late to stop.
- **Limit alcohol.** Alcohol can further reduce the heart's ability to pump.
- **Maintain a healthy weight.**
- **Be active.** Talk to your doctor about the amount and type of activity that is best for you.
- Ask your doctor about **flu and pneumonia vaccinations.**

If you would like help to make changes to your lifestyle, talk to your doctor

## For more information:

Talk to your doctor or pharmacist.  
Ask for a Home Medicines Review.  
Visit the Heart Foundation website  
<http://www.heartfoundation.org.au/>

## Veterans' MATES

[www.veteransmates.net.au](http://www.veteransmates.net.au)

Provided by:

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## Veterans' MATES

Do your part  
to care for  
your heart

Get the best from  
your medicines





## checklist

As we get older our hearts may have more difficulty pumping blood around our bodies. This can lead to fluid retention, breathlessness, coughing and problems with everyday activities.

By working with your doctor and pharmacist you can help to control your symptoms, avoid unnecessary hospital visits and live a longer and healthier life.

Use this checklist to ensure you are doing your part to care for your heart.

### **Talk to your doctor or pharmacist** before taking any new medicines

Some medicines can worsen your heart problem.

Talk to your doctor before starting any new medicines, including medicines from alternative practitioners, health food shops, supermarkets and pharmacies.



## checklist

### Take your **medicines as prescribed** by your doctor

Many people take medicines for their heart. These may:

- reduce blood pressure
- reduce fluid
- reduce cholesterol levels
- control the heart beat
- prevent blood clots

Some medicines work in combination to prevent future problems. If you are not sure what each of your medicines is for, ask your doctor or pharmacist.

To help you take your heart medicines as prescribed by your doctor:

- maintain a current list of all your medicines
- use reminders if you need to
- ask your doctor or pharmacist about DVA's Dose Administration Aid (DAA) Service



## checklist

### **Talk to your doctor** as soon as possible if you:

- gain or lose more than 2kgs in weight within two days
- have worsening shortness of breath
- find your heart is beating very quickly
- become very dizzy or light headed
- have increased swelling in your ankles
- are coughing a lot - especially at night
- are generally feeling more tired than usual

### Have a **Home Medicines Review**

A home medicines review can help you obtain the best results from your heart medicines.

If you haven't had a home medicines review in the last 12 months, talk to your doctor.

