

# Preparing for your heart failure appointments



Entresto®  
sacubitril/valsartan

Entresto® (sacubitril/valsartan) is licensed for adult patients for treatment of symptomatic chronic heart failure with reduced ejection fraction.



A guide to help you get the most from your conversations with your heart failure healthcare professional team, typically consisting of a Heart Failure Specialist Nurse, GP, Pharmacist and Cardiologist.

Whether you have been recently diagnosed with heart failure or have been prescribed the Entresto® as part of your treatment, this booklet is designed to help you get the most from your appointments with your healthcare team. It provides tips and advice on what you can do to share information and play an active role in conversations, to help facilitate the right care and guidance tailored to your needs.

**Never stop taking your medication without first consulting your healthcare professional.**

When taking sacubitril/valsartan, you may experience side effects which could make you feel as though the treatment is unsuitable. Stopping your Entresto treatment may exacerbate your symptoms. You should seek medical advice before you make the decision to stop taking it, even if you are feeling better.

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# Making the most of your appointments

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## What to expect from your consultation

Your doctor or nurse will likely start by asking you a number of questions about your heart failure symptoms and/or any side effects of your treatment, including how regular or severe they are. They may also carry out a physical examination which may include additional investigations such as an echocardiogram, scans or blood tests. When assessing how severe your heart failure is, they may refer to the New York Heart Association (NYHA) classification. If you would like to understand more about the severity of your heart failure, ask your doctor or nurse about your classification and what it means for you.

Your appointment is your chance to openly discuss the impact of heart failure on your life, as well as work closely with your doctor or nurse to discuss and agree next steps.

**There are three stages to any appointment to think about:**



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# Before your appointment

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## Think about any questions you would like answered

To get the most out of your appointment, it is important that you take the opportunity to ask any questions and raise any concerns you have regarding your heart failure or your Entresto® treatment.

### Consider asking about:

- Recent or upcoming medical tests or results
- Information about your Entresto® treatment
- Further support, advice and information on managing your heart failure

## Track your symptoms and side effects

Noting your symptoms and side effects the moment you feel them and bringing your notes with you to your appointment is a great way to ensure all information is conveyed clearly to your doctor. We have included a symptom tracking sheet and a side effect tracking sheet for you to fill in and bring along with you, which you can find on pages 5 and 6.

Below we have given you some examples of the things you might want to talk about with your doctor.

*How have you have been feeling since your last appointment?*

### Physically:

- Are there any changes in your heart failure symptoms (such as breathlessness, tiredness or ankle swelling)?
- What side effect(s) of your treatment have you felt? Can you describe them clearly to your doctor?
- Try to be specific, for example, when did they start and what makes them better or worse?



# Before your appointment

*How are you feeling emotionally, and have you been feeling any differently?*

## **Emotionally:**

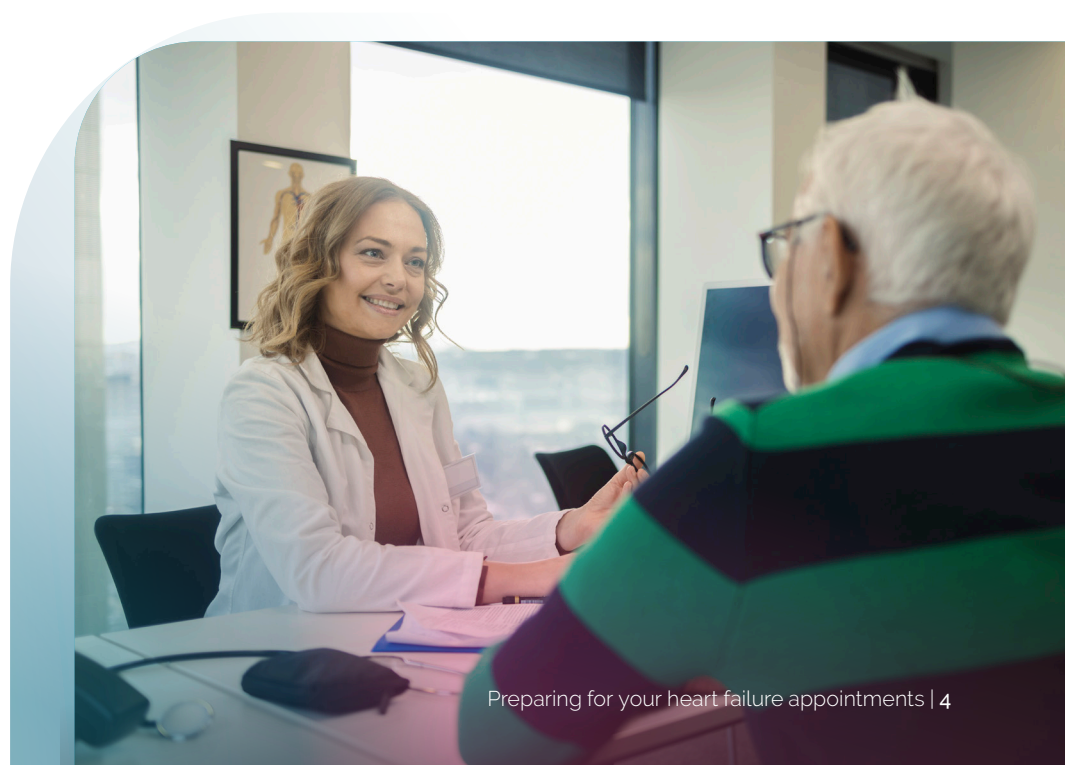
- Have you been feeling depressed, anxious or worried?
- How do your symptoms or side effects affect your day-to-day life?
- What information from your recorded symptoms and side effects do you want to discuss? For example, are there any significant changes or a gradual change that you are particularly concerned about?

## **Involve your friends and family**

This is your choice; however, it can be helpful to have two sets of ears listening, especially if one or both of you are taking notes. This way, it is less likely any information received will be lost or forgotten about. If you have spoken to them about any concerns beforehand, they can prompt you to make sure you don't forget to mention it to your healthcare team.

## **Reflecting on past appointments**

Taking notes at each appointment can be helpful when referring to previous ones. Is there anything you wanted to follow up on regarding your treatments or your symptoms? What points would you like to discuss further?



# Symptoms tracking sheet

Date/time	Description of symptoms and any medication taken to help with this	Circle the appropriate rating (if applicable). Higher numbers indicate greater discomfort
		1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
		1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
		1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
		1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
		1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
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		1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
		1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
		1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
		1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

# Side effects tracking sheet

Date/time	Description of side effects and any medication taken to help with this	Circle the appropriate rating (if applicable). Higher numbers indicate greater discomfort
		1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
		1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
		1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
		1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
		1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
		1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
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		1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
		1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10





# During your appointment

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Arriving to your appointment prepared with noted symptoms and notes from previous appointments can ensure a more structured conversation with your doctor or nurse. Start the conversation with how you are feeling, both physically and emotionally.

- **Be honest** – be open about how you are feeling and any noticeable changes in your symptoms or overall well-being. Try to be specific and give examples of how they are affecting you. Without giving all the relevant information, your doctor or nurse cannot provide the best advice and care.
- **Take your time** – try not to feel rushed and stay relaxed so you remember the key points you wanted to discuss. Referring to your notes and symptom tracker should help with this.
- **Be forthcoming** – do not wait to be asked about a symptom or concern. Tell your doctor or nurse what is on your mind. Give as much information as you can by referring to your list if you have prepared one.
- **Write things down** – particularly if you do not have time to discuss everything you wanted to raise. If you have someone with you, ask them to write notes for you.
- **Agree** – your next appointment date, together with an action plan.
- **Ask questions** – do not be afraid to ask questions if there is anything you want to know about your condition or treatment.
- **Summarise** – ask your doctor to summarise with you, and match up what you have written down with what they are saying.
- **Symptoms** – ask your doctor or nurse about any signs or symptoms you need to look out for during your day-to-day activities. Be clear on what you need to do if you notice additional symptoms or if your existing symptoms worsen. Ask how you should report any significant changes between appointments and who to contact if you have any concerns out of hours.
- **Keeping a record** – make sure that you obtain a copy of all documents used or drafted during your discussion, such as referral letters and test results, as you may need to refer to them later.
- **Support** – you may want to ask if there are other sources of further information and local support available to you.





# After your appointment

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Hopefully, you will have left your last appointment with a plan of how you want to manage your condition, knowing what symptoms to monitor and when to contact your doctor or nurse with any changes to your condition.

Here are some suggestions to help you reflect and remember the key points you discussed and agreed:

## Reflecting on your appointment

If you took notes during your appointment, it is worth reading them now to check if there is anything missing and/or if they make sense. If a family member had also taken notes, it might be a good idea to cross-check them for any information you may have missed.

- Did you get answers to all of your questions?
- Was there anything you didn't quite understand?
- Do you know when your next appointment is?

## Updating your friends, family or carers

If you are comfortable with it, letting your close friends or family know the outcomes of your appointments means they can help you prepare for your next one, while also strengthening your support network.

If they were in the appointment with you, it may be helpful to reflect on your appointment together.

Have you shared what was discussed at your appointment with your family, friends or carer? If they attended with you, do they agree with your thoughts and understanding of what was discussed? Is there anything you may have missed? Tell them about any symptoms or changes you have been advised to look out for and ask them if they can keep an eye on these too.

If you get side-effects with any medication you are taking, talk to your doctor, pharmacist or nurse. This includes any possible side effects not listed in the information leaflet that comes in the pack. You can report side effects via the Yellow Card Scheme at [www.mhra.gov.uk/yellowcard](http://www.mhra.gov.uk/yellowcard) or search for MHRA Yellow Card in the Google Play or Apple App Store.

By reporting side effects, you can help provide more information on the safety of your medication.



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