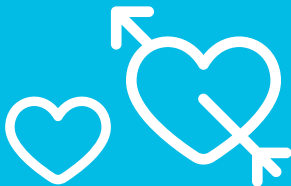


Relationships & Romance

Relationship Communication

An old TV advert said 'it's good to talk' and indeed it is. All relationships will come under pressure at some time or other, for a variety of reasons. Keeping an open channel of communication is vital. When you are diagnosed with a condition such as Heart Failure, you and your partner's world may be turned upside down. It is good for both of you to discuss and share your concerns and feelings. You may find that the social, financial and physical implications of your condition put your relationship with your partner under considerable pressure.



Relate provides invaluable information, support and counselling for individuals and couples of any gender or orientation.

www.relate.org.uk

You may find that talking to another person with Heart Failure (or another carer of a Heart Failure patient) helps considerably. There may be a local group which can help you. If not, we run a closed Facebook group where you can become a member.

www.facebook.com/groups/pmhelforhearts

This group has many patients who help each other on a daily basis with living with Heart Failure. Patients talk about their conditions and how they have overcome their challenges. It is a safe place to talk and is highly moderated just for this reason.



Fifty Shades of Pink and Green



Having a physical relationship is important to many people, and having Heart Failure should not prevent you having one. Indeed many would say that whatever form a physical relationship takes, it can bring pleasure, closeness and a feeling of normality. When first diagnosed with Heart Failure you may feel too unwell for a physical relationship, but once your symptoms are under control then your Heart Failure should not prevent you from enjoying a healthy sex life.

- If you have any concerns, discuss these with your partner, it is important to talk about any fears or limits you may feel you have.
- Discuss with your GP, Doctor or Nurse any issues or difficulties you may be having. They will not be embarrassed, it's part of their job, and neither should you be.
- Avoid sex for the time being if you are feeling unwell, or having any pain or chest discomfort.
- Don't expect too much of yourself, as with any long-term condition, you may feel anxious or depressed which may be having a bearing on you wanting to having a physical relationship. Discuss with your partner or healthcare team member if this is the case.
- Choose a time and environment that is right for you, where you feel relaxed and comfortable.
- Many people feel that just holding each other, hugging and kissing is rewarding and reassuring for both partners.
- Often issues with intimacy can be due to fear, but sometimes there may be a physiological issue. Please do talk to your healthcare provider as they can advise. It could be as simple as managing fatigue, changing tablets or sometimes onward referral to a specialist. They have heard it all before!



Help us make Heart Failure clearer for everyone

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B.E.A.T
HEART FAILURE