



**T H O R A T E C**<sup>®</sup>  
C O R P O R A T I O N

## FOR USE ANYTIME

**CONTACT:** Susan Benton Russell  
Phone: 310.697.3488  
susan@bentoncommunications.com

### The Facts About Advanced Heart Failure

- The Human Heart:** The human heart is divided into four chambers, two upper chambers, or atria, and the two lower chambers, or ventricles. The heart is responsible for pumping blood through the body. Blood pumped by the heart brings oxygen to the body's organs and cells and removes carbon dioxide. For patients with advanced heart failure, the heart has a hard time pumping blood. This results in the body getting less oxygen. This makes a person feel tired or weak, even when doing simple things, like walking or eating.
- Heart Failure Defined:** The New York Heart Association (NYHA) classifies heart failure as follows.
- Class I: patients with no limitation of activities; they suffer no symptoms from ordinary activities.
  - Class II: patients with slight, mild limitation of activity; they are comfortable at rest or with mild exertion.
  - Class III: patients with marked limitation of activity; they are comfortable only at rest.
  - Class IV: patients who have trouble breathing when resting or lying down.
- Causes:** High blood pressure, high cholesterol, diabetes and being overweight can cause heart failure.
- Symptoms:** When the heart is not working well, fluids can build up in the lungs, legs, feet and ankles. This extra fluid can stress the heart even more. Symptoms of heart failure include:
- Shortness of breath
  - Swollen feet, ankles and legs
  - Trouble sleeping when lying flat
  - Feeling weak and tired

Facts and  
Figures:

- Nearly six million Americans suffer from heart failure.<sup>1</sup>
- It is responsible for over 250,000 deaths annually and approximately 670,000 new cases are diagnosed each year in the United States.<sup>2</sup>
- Only between 2,000 and 2,500 of these advanced heart failure patients will receive heart transplants due to the limited supply of donor hearts.<sup>3</sup>
- Heart failure is the only major cardiovascular disease that is rising, with the number of deaths in the United States more than doubling since 1979.<sup>4</sup>

Advanced  
Heart Failure  
Treatment  
Options:

- Typical care for managing advanced-stage heart failure patients often involves drug therapy combined with a strict diet and exercise program.
- In many cases, heart transplantation is the only hope of survival, yet many advanced heart failure sufferers are not eligible for transplant due to their age or other diseases.
- Studies show that Mechanical Circulatory Support (MCS) therapy through the use of a left ventricular assist device (LVAD) – such as the HeartMate II<sup>®</sup> - is a proven treatment option that improves survival and quality of life for advanced heart failure patients for those awaiting a donor heart or those ineligible for transplantation
- For patients waiting for a heart transplant, MCS therapy may help them survive until a donor heart is found.
- Those who do not qualify for transplant may benefit from long-term LVAD support or “Destination Therapy.”
- Destination Therapy can potentially treat the sickest heart failure patients among the 50,000-100,000 Americans each year who have no alternative for their debilitating disease.

###

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: American Heart Association

<sup>2</sup> Ibid

<sup>3</sup> Source: International Society of Heart & Lung Transplantation, 2012 data

<sup>4</sup> Source: Heart Failure Society of America