



Welcome to the

RVH Royal Victoria
Regional Health Centre

Heart Function Clinic

Royal Victoria Regional Health Centre Site

201 Georgian Drive, Barrie, ON
Located in the
Cardiorespiratory Department

Rizzardo Health and Wellness Site

7325 Yonge Street, Innisfil, ON
Located on the first floor,
Suite 1600

Telephone: 705-739-5604 x5

Email: HFC@rvh.on.ca

What is Heart Failure?

- Heart failure, also known as congestive heart failure, is a disease that develops when your heart does not pump enough blood to meet your body's needs for oxygen and nutrients.
- Over time, people with heart failure are more likely to suffer from symptoms like shortness of breath, swelling, and fatigue. This can lead to a hospital stay. Getting support from heart failure specialist teams will help you stay out of the hospital and manage your symptoms.

What is the Heart Function Clinic?

- A specialized cardiac clinic that cares for people living with heart failure.
- Nurse practitioners with special training in heart failure lead the Heart Function Clinic. The team also includes nurses and pharmacists. We work with your cardiologist, primary care provider (family doctor or nurse practitioner) and specialists to make sure you have the proper knowledge, education, and support.
- Together with you and your family, we design a plan of care that meets your needs, goals, and treatment preferences.

Why was I referred to the Heart Function Clinic?

- After you have been in the hospital, the heart function clinic team works with you and your other healthcare providers to determine the cause of your heart failure and make a plan to reduce the risk of you going back to hospital.
- Sometimes you will be referred to the heart function clinic even if you have not been in hospital to help manage your symptoms and provide education and coaching to control your heart failure.

What can I expect at the Heart Function Clinic?

- You will meet with a dedicated team of heart failure experts who treat common symptoms like trouble breathing, swelling, palpitations, fatigue, stomach bloating, and low appetite.
- Assess your symptoms and how they affect your daily life.
- Discuss how you are coping with your illness and what extra help you may need at home.
- Special instructions related to your heart failure. This includes fluid restriction, low-salt diet, and physical activity recommendations.
- Education about monitoring your weight, vital signs, and symptoms. Direction for who to contact when they are not within your usual range.
- Possible changes to prescriptions for your heart failure medicines, such as your water pills (diuretics).
- Counselling about preparing for future health decisions and what you would like to happen when your disease worsens.
- Referrals to other community support services. These could include home and community care, personal support workers, nursing, physiotherapy, cardiac rehab, community paramedics, or palliative care.

What do I bring to my first appointment?

- Your health card
- Your medicines in their original bottles or packaging
- Updated list of your medicines from your pharmacy
- A log of your daily weights, blood pressure, heart rate, and oxygen saturation, if available

What happens at my first appointment?

- Arrive at the Simcoe Entrance and register at the patient registration kiosk.
- If not done before the appointment, you will be directed to have blood work and an electrocardiogram (ECG or EKG) when you arrive.
- Your vital signs and weight will be recorded.
- Wait in the waiting area until you are called by the nurse or nurse practitioner.

You will meet with the nurse or nurse practitioner in a private room. They may:

- Ask you questions about your past and present health.
- Review your medications in detail, including how you take them and any side effects you may have.
- Listen to your heart, lungs and stomach and check for swelling.
- Provide you with education to help track and manage your heart failure.
- Recommend changes to your medicines and arrange for more tests based on their assessment of your condition.
- Refer you to other services based on their assessment.
- Discuss how often you need to come back to the Heart Function Clinic.

Other information about your visit:

- Your first appointment may take up to 90 minutes.
- We encourage you to bring a family member, caregiver, or friend with you. It is sometimes helpful for more than one person to hear all the recommendations given.
- Wear clothing that allows the team to easily assess you, such as a buttoned or zipper shirt, loose fitting pants, and shoes that are easy to remove.

What happens after my first appointment?

- You will be given a requisition to complete blood work at a community laboratory clinic if changes were made to your medicines.
- The nurse or nurse practitioner will let you know if you need further blood work monitoring.
- The nurse may contact you by phone before your next in-person visit.
- You will track your weight, vital signs, and symptoms daily and notify us if there have been changes.
- You will complete more testing or consultations if other referrals were made.

How can I contact the Heart Function Clinic?

Call the scheduling clerk at 705-739-5604 x5, if:

- You have questions about your appointment
- You need to reschedule the appointment

After your appointment at the Heart Function Clinic, call 705-728-9090 x46114, if:

- You need to speak with the nurse about your condition

The clinic is open Monday to Friday, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.
We are closed weekends and holidays.

How do I get to the Heart Function Clinic?

We have two sites available for Heart Function Clinic.

Our main site is at the Royal Victoria Regional Health Centre at 201 Georgian Drive, Barrie, ON. We are in the Cardiorespiratory Department, on Level 1, near the food court. If arriving by car, you can park on-site (parking fees apply). Enter through the Simcoe Entrance.

Our second site is at the Rizzardo Health and Wellness Centre at 7325 Yonge Street, Innisfil, ON. We are in suite 1600 on the ground floor. There is free on-site accessible parking. This site does not have access to immediate laboratory results, so you will need to have these done at least 48 hours before to your appointment.