

Congestive Heart Failure Self-Management Plan

EVERY DAY:

- Weigh yourself in the morning
- Eat low salt food
- Take your medications
- Balance activity with rest periods

Green Flags — All Clear

What this means ...



If you have:

- No shortness of breath
- Weight gain less than 2 pounds (although a 1–2 pound gain may occur some days)
- No swelling of your feet, ankles, legs or stomach
- No chest pain
- Ability to do usual activities

- Your symptoms are under control.
- Continue to take your medications as ordered.
- Follow health eating habits
- Keep all physician appointments.

Keep up the great work!

Yellow Flags — Caution

What this means ...



If you have any of the following:

- A weight gain of 2–3 pounds in 2–3 days or 4–5 pounds in a week
- Shortness of breath
- Swelling of your feet, ankles, legs or stomach
- Fatigue or lack of energy
- Dry hacking cough
- Dizziness
- An uneasy feeling—you know something is not right
- Difficulty breathing when lying down or you sleep sitting up with extra pillows
- Chest pain or heaviness

- Your symptoms may indicate that you need an adjustment of your medications.

Call your doctor, consulting nurse, or health care provider if symptoms do not improve.

Name:

Number:

Instructions:

If you notice a Yellow Flag, work closely with your health care team.

Red Flags — Stop and Think

What this means ...



If you:

- Are struggling to breathe or have unrelieved shortness of breath while sitting still
- Have chest pain not relieved or reoccurs after taking 3 nitro tablets
- Have confusion or can't think clearly

You need to be evaluated by a health care professional immediately.

If possible, notify your health care provider's office.

Name:

Number:

Follow these instructions:

CALL 9-1-1

If you notice a Red Flag, CALL 911. Emergency!

Congestive Heart Failure Fast Facts

- About 5.7 million adults in the US have heart failure and there are new people diagnosed every year.
- Congestive Heart Failure is a clinical diagnosis. Your heart doesn't work as well, and it can't pump the blood throughout your body. You could have mild, moderate, or severe heart failure.
- You may have trouble breathing when you exercise or trouble breathing when you are resting, particularly if you are lying flat. You also may have wheezing, or have a dry, hacking cough. You may feel tired and not able to do as much activity as you usually do.
- Some diseases increase your risk of heart failure, and these include coronary artery disease, high blood pressure, and diabetes.
- Other risk factors include smoking tobacco, being overweight, lack of physical exercise, and eating foods high in fat and sodium(salt).
- By not pumping well, there is less blood delivered to your kidneys. This causes your body to hold onto fluid, so you may have swelling in your ankles, legs, and even into your abdomen. This swelling is called "edema".
- You can have heart failure along with other chronic conditions, which makes taking care of this diagnosis more challenging.
- Heart failure is the #1 reason for hospital admissions in older adults.
- Paroxysmal Nocturnal Dyspnea (PND) is associated with congestive heart failure. PND means you have difficulty breathing when lying down or you sleep sitting up with more pillows than usual, or you wake up a couple of hours after falling asleep short of breath.

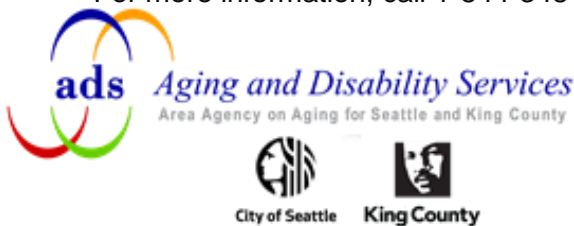
What can you do?

- Talk with your health care provider about your treatment plan and goals.
- Take all medications as prescribed.
- Eat a healthy/low sodium diet.
- Check your weight daily. If you notice a 2-pound weight gain in a day, or 5 pounds in a week, call your health care provider.

Aging and Disability Services

Aging and Disability Services (ADS)—the Area Agency on Aging for King County— plans, coordinates, and advocates for comprehensive services for older adults, family caregivers, and people with disabilities throughout Seattle and King County.

For more information, call 1-844-348-5464 or e-mail info@communitylivingconnections.org



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