

Heart Failure Care

What to do for my heart condition

There are two main types of Heart Failure: weak and stiff.

Weak: the heart muscle is big and floppy. It cannot pump enough blood to the rest of the body. We measure the strength of your heart with an Ejection Fraction. It is the amount of blood squeezed out from your heart to the rest of your body. Normal is about 55 to 70%.

Stiff: the heart muscle is thick and can't relax. It prevents the normal filling and stretching of the heart muscle.

My Ejection Fraction (EF) is _____%.

Both types reduce the blood flow and oxygen to the rest of your body.

Watch for Worsening Heart Failure

I know what to watch for when I go home.

I will call my doctor if:

- I notice increase in swelling, shortness of breath, or chest pain/tightness.
- I notice other symptoms like cough, extreme fatigue, dizziness, or heart racing.
- I gain more than 4lbs (2kg) over 2 days in a row **or** I gain 5lbs (2.5kg) in one week.



Monitor my Weight

- I understand I need to weigh myself every day and record it.
- My weight when I left the hospital was _____ lbs. or _____ kgs.



Watch my Salt Intake

I know changing my diet can improve my symptoms.

- I understand I need to reduce the **salt** in my diet to 2000mg or less **each day**. (1 teaspoon of salt equals 2300mg)
- I will not add salt to my foods.
- I will read labels to make sure **each meal** has less than 650mg of salt.



Watch my Fluid Intake

- I understand that too much fluid can increase symptoms.
- I should not drink more than 6 to 8 cups (1.5 to 2.0 litres) of fluid per day.
- I know that a **fluid** is any food or drink that is liquid at room temperature.

Check my Mental Health

- I will recognize, manage, and ask for support for stress, anxiety, and depression.

Take my Medications

- I understand there are some medications which will help prevent future heart failure episodes and help me live a longer, healthier life.
- I know I should check with my doctor, pharmacist, or nurse before stopping any medication.



Get Vaccinated

- I know that having all my immunizations updated (Pneumovax and flu vaccine) will protect my heart from harmful infections.

Be Active

- I know that keeping active and exercising are important to my long term health.
- I have received some guidance about how to return to exercise/sexual activity.



Quit Smoking

- I realize the single best thing I can do for my health is to stop smoking.
- If I want help to quit, I can get help by calling 1-877-455-2233 **or** going to the website: www.quitnow.ca



See my Doctor Regularly

- As soon as I get home from the hospital, I will book an appointment to see my family doctor in one (1) week.

Have an Advance Care Plan

- I will think about and write down a goal for my future medical care in case an unexpected illness leaves me unable to make choices.
- I know that discussing these goals with people closest to me and my doctor will make sure my wishes are honoured.

I am the expert in my own unique experience with Heart Failure.
I am the most important person in managing my Heart Failure.