# Congestive Heart Failure Management Guide

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Medication Type</th>
<th>Name of Medications</th>
<th>How much to take</th>
<th>When to take it</th>
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**GREEN ZONE: ALL CLEAR:**
Your Goal Weight: _____________________
- No shortness of breath
- No swelling
- No weight gain
- No chest pain
- No decrease in your ability to maintain your activity level

**GREEN ZONE ACTIONS:**
- Your symptoms are under control
- Continue taking your medications as ordered
- Continue daily weights
- Follow low-salt diet
- Keep all physicians appointments

**YELLOW ZONE: CAUTION:**
If you have any of the following signs and symptoms:
- Weight gain of 3 or more pounds in 2 days
- Increased cough
- Increased swelling
- Increase in shortness of breath with activity
- Increase in the number of pillows needed
- Anything else unusual that bothers you

Call your Home Health Nurse if you are going into the YELLOW zone

**YELLOW ZONE ACTIONS:**
- Your symptoms may indicate that you need an adjustment of your medications
- CALL YOUR PHYSICIAN, NURSE COORDINATOR OR HOME HEALTH NURSE.

**RED ZONE: MEDICAL ALERT:**
- Unrelieved shortness of breath at rest
- Unrelieved chest pain
- Wheezing or chest tightness at rest
- Need to sit in chair to sleep
- Weight gain or loss of more than 5 pounds in 2 days
- Confusion

**RED ZONE ACTIONS:**
This indicates that you need to be evaluated by a physician right away

CALL YOUR PHYSICIAN IMMEDIATELY IF YOU ARE GOING INTO THE RED ZONE

Doctor: ________________________________
Number: ______________________________

IF UNABLE TO REACH DOCTOR CALL 911
How to Cope with Congestive Heart Failure:

Congestive Heart Failure (CHF) is not an unchanging condition. Heart Failure may deteriorate for a variety of reasons. For instance: excessive salt or fluid intake, illness such as flu or pneumonia, cardiac arrhythmias, anemia, medications which cause salt retention such as anti-inflammatory medications, episodes of angina and heart attack all may worsen heart failure. Sometimes the patient with heart failure worsens for no apparent reason. The educated patient must know how to anticipate deterioration, and to know how to react to it in order to correct the deterioration before it becomes serious. Just as when steering a car, the heart failure patient must adjust to changes in their condition in order to stay on course. A little too wet and they become congested and short of breath. A little too dry and they become weak, fatigued and dizzy.

When your doctor examines your neck, he is looking at your veins to assess how much fluid is in the circulatory system. Although the patient cannot do this, paying attention to your condition, particularly how you feel, how much swelling is present at the ankles and your body weight can give a pretty good indication of your fluid status. A little bit of swelling of the ankles at the end of the day is normal and indicates sufficient fluid in the circulatory system to allow a weakened heart to pump normally. More than a trace of swelling at the ankles indicates fluid excess. This fluid may re-enter the central circulation when you lie down, awakening you with shortness of breath or forcing you to sleep on several pillows for comfort. Similarly if your weight goes up by more than 2-3 pounds in one day or by 5 pounds over a week, the body may be retaining too much fluid and worsening heart failure may ensue.

To monitor your own fluid status:
1. Weigh yourself daily.
2. Weigh yourself at the same time every day – before breakfast is best.
3. Use the same scale all the time.
4. Wear the same amount of clothes when you weigh yourself.
5. Empty your bladder before weighing.
6. Record your weight on a daily record.
7. The weight at which there is just a little bit of swelling in the ankles at the end of the day is your ideal weight-try and maintain it.
8. When taking diuretics avoid drinking too much in the way of fluids, even if your mouth is dry and you feel thirsty. This could counter the effect of the diuretic and dilute the body’s salts causing weakness and confusion.
9. You should drink no more than 2000 ml (8 glasses or cups) of fluid per day, or whatever amount is prescribed for you.
10. If your weight goes up by more than 2-3 pounds in one day or by 5 pounds over a week CALL YOUR DOCTOR for an appointment.

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Weight</th>
<th>Exercise Duration</th>
<th>Symptoms Better/Worse/Same</th>
<th>Swelling Better/Worse/Same</th>
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