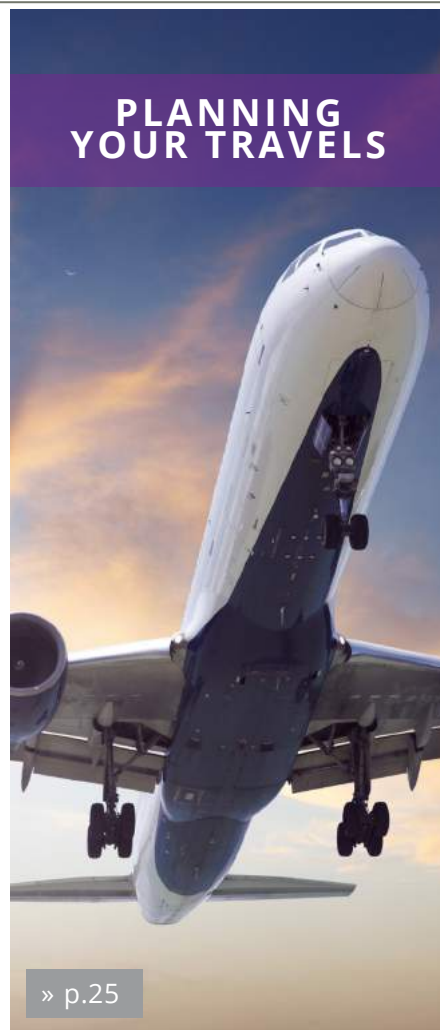
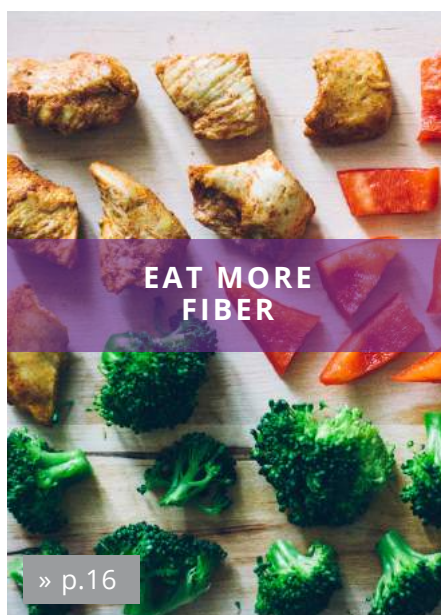


GUIDE AND MANAGEMENT FOR HEART FAILURE



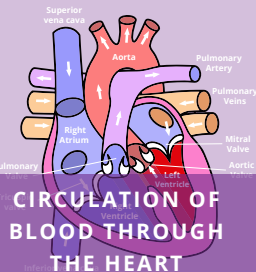


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MANAGING YOUR HEART FAILURE (HF)



Welcome to the Patient Care America guide to understanding, monitoring and managing your heart failure condition. This guide was designed to help you better understand heart failure. It was written by our Vice President of Cardiac Services who is a Registered Cardiopulmonary Clinician and Certified Clinical Research Professional with more than 30 years of experience in heart failure and all pre- and post-organ transplant from a reputable academic institution.

In this guide, you will find the necessary tools to take control and better manage your heart disease with the goal of reducing your symptoms and enabling you to live an improved and better quality of life long-term. Before we begin, we want you to know that you are not alone and that this is a team effort. Heart failure affects approximately 5.1 million Americans, and now that you have been diagnosed, you have a team of clinicians, dietitians, nurses and professionals who are here to help you better manage your disease. Learning as much as you can about the disease and the treatment plan you have been prescribed is the first step to ensure you take control and manage your heart failure. Let's first learn more about what heart failure is and better understand how it might affect you and your life.

WHAT IS HEART FAILURE?

Also known as Congestive Heart Failure (CHF), Cardiomyopathy or Cor Pulmonale, heart failure occurs when your heart muscle is weak, damaged and/or enlarged and unable to pump enough oxygenated blood to meet the individual demands of one's body causing serious symptoms.

WHAT ARE COMMON SYMPTOMS OF HEART FAILURE?

Heart failure symptoms may include the following:

- Fatigue (with or without exercise or activity)
- Frequent cough or wheezing or a cough that produces a pinkish-colored substance
- Shortness of breath during activity, when bending down or even while resting
- Sudden weight gain, feeling bloated and/or noticing an increase in water weight
- Swelling in your ankles, feet and legs
- Difficulty walking
- Nausea, poor appetite and/or feeling sick to your stomach
- Unexplained weight loss
- Feeling like your heart is racing

WHAT CAUSES HEART FAILURE?

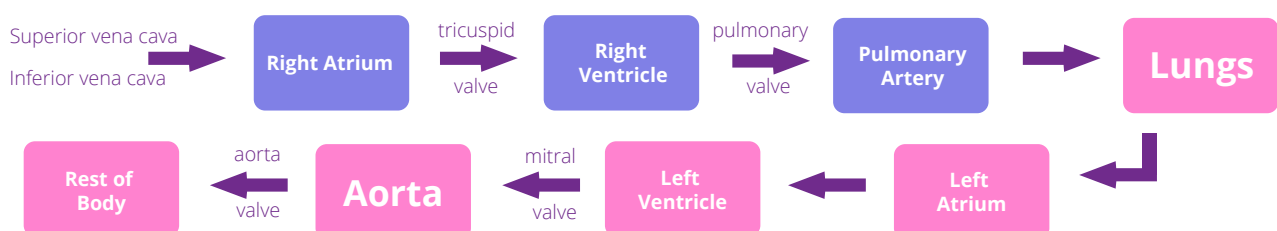
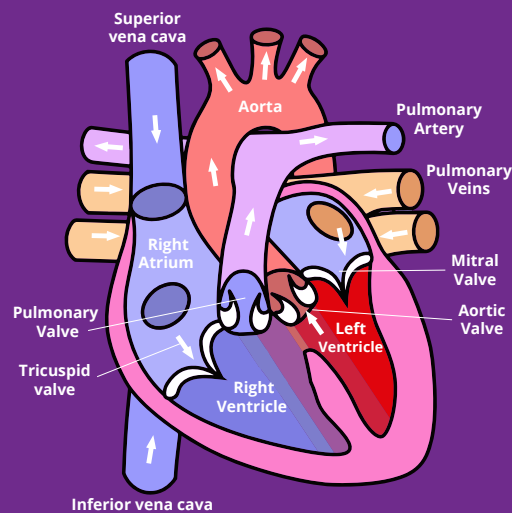
Heart failure can be hereditary or it can be caused by not taking your prescribed medications, extended usage of certain medications, use of recreational drugs, smoking or alcohol use and/or high blood pressure.

Abnormal heart valves may also lead to heart failure. Your heart valves open and close keeping blood moving steady in the right direction, but if the heart valve doesn't function correctly, it can keep the blood from circulating and moving forward – a condition known as stenosis. Another heart valve malfunction is called regurgitation, which is caused by a valve that leaks resulting in heart failure causing blood to flow backwards.

Atrial fibrillation, which causes rapid and irregular heartbeats that keep blood from flowing properly and decreases the heart's ability to pump blood by as much as 25%, can also lead to heart failure.

There are also times when the cause of heart failure is simply unknown. This is often referred to as idiopathic dilated cardiomyopathy.

CIRCULATION OF BLOOD THROUGH THE HEART:



HOW SERIOUS IS HEART FAILURE?

THE NEW YORK HEART ASSOCIATION (NYHA) functional class has been used to measure the progression of HF in a particular patient. It is based on respiratory abnormality and exercise limitations and not cardiac symptoms decompensation. Depending on symptoms on the NYHA scale, patients may move in either direction.

THE AMERICAN COLLEGE OF CARDIOLOGY/AMERICAN HEART ASSOCIATION (ACC/AHA) has taken a new approach to the classification of HF. Only stages C and D qualify for the traditional clinical diagnosis of Heart Failure reflecting the progression of the disease, and heart failure patients can only progress in one direction. This classification is complementary with the NYHA Functional Classification.

As heart failure progresses, patients may no longer be able to manage the disease using traditional first line of defense mechanisms such as diet, sodium restriction, restricted activities and oral medication. Thus, it is important to monitor your symptoms and take the appropriate steps to ensure your condition is not getting worse.

NEW YORK HEART ASSOCIATION (NYHA)		AMERICAN COLLEGE OF CARDIOLOGY/ AMERICAN HEART ASSOCIATION (ACC/AHA)	
Class 1	No symptoms with ordinary physical activity	Stage A	At high risk of developing heart failure but without structural heart disease or symptoms of heart failure OR patients using cardiotoxins or with family history of cardiomyopathy
Class 2	Comfortable at rest; ordinary physical activity results in fatigue, palpitations, dyspnea (shortness of breath), or angina pain	Stage B	Structural heart disease but without signs or symptoms of heart failure
Class 3	Comfortable at rest; less than ordinary physical activity results in fatigue, palpitations, dyspnea (shortness of breath), or angina pain	Stage C	Structural heart disease with prior or current symptoms of heart failure
Class 4	Symptoms at rest; discomfort increases with any physical activity	Stage D	Refractory heart failure requiring specialized interventions

WHAT IS THE PROGNOSIS FOR PEOPLE WITH HEART FAILURE?

With the right care and actions on your part, heart failure will not stop you from doing the things you enjoy and you can have a high possibility of living a long and comfortable life. Your future outlook will depend on how well you take control of your care and respond to therapy. You can help yourself by following your physician orders, taking your

scheduled and refilling medications, eating healthy, watching your salt intake and exercising. Everyone with a long-term illness such as heart failure is encouraged to discuss their desires for extended medical care with their doctor and family. An advanced directive or living will is one way to make sure everyone knows your wishes. Such documents are often best prepared early on while you are fully competent in case you are unable to make these decisions at a later time.

WHAT IS ACUTE HEART FAILURE?

Acute heart failure is when your heart condition suddenly worsens. It is important to monitor yourself daily so you are aware when your condition worsens to a level that requires immediate attention by a medical professional. Every day, you should monitor your condition by weighing yourself

in the morning before eating or drinking and recording your weight in your self-monitoring guide, taking your medications as prescribed, limiting salt in your diet, looking for swelling in your feet, ankles, stomach or hands, keeping track of the amount of fluid you are taking in and balancing your daily activities with rest.

Should you ever notice any of the symptoms below, call your doctor's office immediately or call 9-1-1 if your symptoms are severe such as:

- Fatigue (with or without exercise or activity)
- Frequent cough or wheezing or a cough that produces a pinkish-colored substance
- Shortness of breath during activity, when bending down or even while resting
- Sudden weight gain, feeling bloated and/or noticing an increase in water weight
- Swelling in your ankles, feet and legs
- Difficulty walking
- Nausea, poor appetite and/or feeling sick to your stomach
- Unexplained weight loss
- Feeling like your heart is racing

HOW IS HEART FAILURE TREATED?

Your cardiologist (heart doctor) will evaluate the cause of your heart failure and will prescribe the best mode of treatment specific for you. Although there is no cure for heart failure, you can control the symptoms with the goal of ensuring a better quality of life while keeping your heart failure from getting worse. Patient Care America created this booklet specifically to help you manage your heart failure so that you can work with your doctor and healthcare professionals to lessen the symptoms of heart failure and the effects it may have on your life.

HOW CAN I PREVENT FURTHER HEART DAMAGE?

Take the following steps to help prevent further damage to your heart:

- Stop smoking or chewing tobacco
- Control high blood pressure, cholesterol levels and diabetes
- Reach and maintain your health weight
- Exercise regularly
- Do not drink alcohol



WHAT DRUGS SHOULD I AVOID IF I HAVE HEART FAILURE?

A few types of drugs have been shown to cause problems for those with heart failure and should be avoided including:

- Certain painkillers called nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDS) such as Motrin
- Most calcium channel blockers such as Calan, Cardizem, Covera, Procardia and Isoptin for those patients with systolic heart failure
- Some nutritional supplements and growth hormone therapies – be sure to talk to your doctor about any supplements you have been taking so they can let you know if they should be avoided
- Antacids that contain sodium or salt
- Decongestants such as Sudafed (which makes your heart work harder)
- Over-the-counter stimulants, diet or energy pills
- And, of course, any illegal drugs

HOW CAN I IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF MY LIFE WITH HEART DISEASE?

We'll go through more specific tips below, but here are a few basic things you can do to ensure a better quality of life to help you live with, and not just suffer from, heart failure:

- Eat a healthy diet – limit salt and make sure you eat foods that are high in fiber and potassium and low in saturated fat, cholesterol and sugar. If you need to lose weight, make sure you are burning more calories than you are eating every day.
- Exercise regularly – a regular cardiovascular exercise program as prescribed by your doctor will give you more energy, improve your symptoms, add strength to your body and just help you feel better overall. It may also decrease the progression of your heart failure.
- Don't overdo it – plan rest into your day just as you plan exercise and activity. Remember, the goal is to have a balanced life.
- Get vaccinated – to prevent respiratory infections, ask your doctor about flu and pneumonia vaccines.
- Take your medications exactly as prescribed – make sure you don't forget or skip a dose and never stop taking them or take more than one dose at a time without contacting your doctor first.
- Get the help you need – heart failure can be difficult – not only for the patient but also for their family and caregivers. If you have questions, ask your doctor or nurse. If you need emotional support, a social worker, psychologist, clergy member or heart failure support group is only a phone call away. Your doctor or nurse can point you in the right direction.

HEART FAILURE TREATMENT IS A TEAM EFFORT



And, **YOU are our star player.** Your heart doctor will prescribe your medications and manage your medical issues.

Other team members, including your nurses, dietitians, pharmacists, exercise specialists, social workers and the caring healthcare professionals at Patient Care America

are all here to help you achieve success.

Your team at Patient Care America includes heart failure certified pharmacists, certified dietitians, clinical nurses and nurse navigators to help with your care. But, it is up to you to make sure you take your medications, eat healthy, stay active, live a healthy lifestyle, keep your follow-up

appointments and monitor your symptoms and condition to help your team best prescribe treatment specifically for you.

At Patient Care America, our primary concern is your health and quality of life. Each patient is assigned a nurse navigator to help meet your needs and facilitate your care. Through in-person and telephone conversations, your nurse navigator will help educate you and work to close any gaps in your care, monitor your progress, assist with nursing coordination, assist with treatment planning, intervention, monitoring, assessments, evaluation and documentation and communicate pertinent information to others on your care team as needed.

MONITORING IS YOUR FIRST LINE OF DEFENSE

It's up to you to monitor your own symptoms DAILY with the necessary tools we provided to you. . . Weigh yourself when you first wake up each day, before you've had anything to eat or drink, and make sure to record your daily weight in your self-monitoring guide so you will notice any unusual weight gain caused by changes in your fluids. After you weigh yourself, check for any noticeable increase in swelling in your hands, feet, ankles or stomach.



SCHEDULE REGULAR DOCTOR APPOINTMENTS

Make sure you are seeing your doctor often and are keeping all your follow-up appointments. During your follow-up visits, your physician will want to make sure you are staying healthy and that your heart failure is not worsening. Bring your self-monitoring guide with you to your follow-up visits so your doctor can review your weight, list of medications, fluid and salt intake. Also, be sure to write down any questions you have and bring them to your appointment. If you have an urgent question between visits, call your doctor. And, always notify a new doctor about your heart failure, medications and any dietary, fluid or other restrictions. Also, check with your heart doctor if you are prescribed a new prescription by another doctor. It's important to keep good records and bring them with you to every doctor appointment.

MAKE SURE YOU TAKE YOUR MEDICATIONS EXACTLY AS PRESCRIBED

Oral medications can be very beneficial in controlling heart failure symptoms, but only if you take your medications consistently and as prescribed by your doctor. If you do not understand what the medication does and how to properly take it, be sure to consult with your doctor, pharmacist and/or nurse.

Also, do not take over-the-counter medications, vitamins or supplements without consulting your doctor first. Certain medications can make heart failure worse, so you want to check with your cardiologist before you start something new.

Also, it is helpful to record your medication schedule and to bring that record to your doctor appointments. This will allow your doctor to better evaluate your condition and to recommend the best plan of care. If you have any questions at any time, reach out to your doctor, pharmacist and/or nurse.

It is also important to make sure that you have enough medicine left in your pill bottles. You don't want to run out of pills. Every time you pick up your medicines, check the number of refills you have left, which is printed on the pill bottle. If the label says No Refills or Refills: 0, call your doctor immediately to get more refills. It is also helpful to get all of your prescriptions filled by the same pharmacy every time.

Heart Failure Oral Medications

Class of Medication	Member of Class	Use of Medicine	Common Side Effects
Beta Blockers	Metoprolol, Carvedilol, Bisoprolol, Atenolol, Propranolol	Lowers blood pressure, reduces risk of increased heart rate, helps prevent serious irregular heart rhythm, improves heart function over time	Fatigue, dizziness, slow heart rate, low blood pressure, cold hands and feet, shortness of breath, nightmares, impotence
Diuretics (water pills)	Furosemide (Lasix), Bumetanide	Removes excess water, prevents sodium and fluid retention, increases urination	Nausea, muscle cramps or weakness, dizziness
ACE Inhibitor and Angiotensin II antagonists	Captopril, Enalapril, Perindopril, Lisinopril, Losartan, Valsartan	Lowers blood pressure, prevents sodium and fluid retention, prevents narrowing of blood vessels to allow blood to flow more easily, remodeling of the heart	Dry cough, dizziness, tiredness, changes in taste, skin rash, increased potassium level
Aldosterone Inhibitor	Spironolactone	Lowers blood pressure, prevents sodium and fluid retention, preserves potassium	Weight gain, breast tenderness, dizziness, increased potassium, irregular vaginal bleeding
Digoxin	Digox, Lanoxin	Increases the force of heart muscle contractions, may assist in controlling irregular heart beats	Nausea, loss of appetite, confusion, irregular heartbeats, blurred vision, headache
Inotropes	Dopamine, Dobutamine, Milrinone	Increases force of heart muscle contractions, helps blood vessels to dilate (open up) which decreases work required of heart muscle	Low blood pressure, dizziness, headache, irregular heartbeats
Vasodilators	Isosorbide, Dinitrate, Mononitrate, Hydralazine	Relaxes blood vessels, increases blood and oxygen supply to the heart	Headache, dizziness, flushing, low blood pressure, irregular heartbeats, palpitations, swelling of feet/lower legs, nasal congestion

WHAT ARE IV-DELIVERED INOTROPIC MEDICATIONS

Inotropic medications are typically administered through a special, intravenous (IV) catheter and contain an agent that increases the force of heart muscle contractions, allowing your heart to more effectively pump sufficiently oxygenated blood to cells throughout your body. Inotropic medications are typically administered in the hospital under close observation so your medical team can adjust the appropriate dose. The medication can then be delivered using a portable, continuous, electronic infusion pump from the comfort of your home. You will continue to take oral medications in addition to the inotropic therapy. Patient Care America will provide your IV-delivered inotropic medications, along with all the necessary supplies for infusing the medication. An experienced and caring Patient Care America nurse will come into your home to teach you how to administer the medication by yourself. With the education and training provided by Patient Care America, it should be easy for you and/or your caregiver to manage your IV therapy from the convenience and comfort of your home through a small, electronic pump.

It is also important to note that an infusion should not be interrupted unless ordered by your doctor, clinical pharmacist or nurse. Patient Care America will ensure you always have a back-up pump, extra bags of medication and extra batteries for your safety. Your bags of medication should be kept in the refrigerator at all times until you are ready to change out the bag. If you have any problems with your pump or infusion, please contact Patient Care America immediately at 888-348-0441. Our staff is here to answer questions and take care of any problems that may arise 24/7. Current guidelines suggest the use of one of the following inotropic agents for symptom relief and end-organ function for heart failure patients:

Brand Name	Generic Name	Effects
Primacor	Milrinone	Increased diastolic relaxation, increased cardiac output and vasodilation (widening of blood vessels)
Dobutrex	Dobutamine	Increased cardiac output
Intropin	Dopamine (more rarely used)	Increased cardiac output; vasoconstriction at higher doses (constriction of blood vessels)

CONTACT YOUR DOCTOR

Please contact your doctor immediately should any of the following items occur during your infusion:

- Your dressing gets wet and/or dirty.
- There is pain, swelling, redness, bleeding, tenderness or drainage at the IV catheter entry site.
- You are not able to or are having difficulty infusing the inotropic medication.
- Your pump alarm is going off and reads occlusion. This may be due to a blockage in the IV catheter that is keeping the inotropic medication from infusing.

VACCINATIONS

Patients undergoing treatment for heart failure should get their **flu vaccination** (flu shot) from their doctor, pharmacist or nurse each fall (October – December) before the start of the flu season. You must inform your clinician if you have an allergy to eggs or have ever had an allergic reaction to previous flu vaccinations.

Heart failure patients should also get a **pneumococcal vaccine** (pneumonia shot)

from their doctor, pharmacist or nurse. This protects against certain types of lung infections (pneumonia), bloodstream infection and meningitis (inflammation of the membranes that surround your brain and spinal cord).

Your doctor will have more information about which vaccinations are best for you and when they should be administered. Remember to keep them updated after you receive a vaccine and with any other changes in your medical care or condition.

HANDWASHING

Handwashing is the single most important step YOU can take to PREVENT infection. Wash your hands before you gather your supplies, start an infusion or whenever you touch ANYTHING not related to your infusion during the setup process.



Follow the methods outlined below for effective handwashing:

- Use antibacterial liquid soap, warm water and hand towel (at home) or paper towels (no common area hand towels in public settings).
- Prepare a clean sink and working area before washing.
- Make sure all your jewelry has been removed.
- Wash your hands for 30 seconds, at minimum. The more you cause friction between each finger, including nails, palms, back of the hands, and 2-3 inches above the wrist, the cleaner your hands will be from germs.
- Once you have completed cleaning your hands, make sure you thoroughly dry them using only paper towels in public settings. You may use a clean hand towel in your own home.
- Lastly, turn faucet off with paper towels or at home with your hand towel.

****If you touch anything other than your catheter and infusion supplies, wash hands again repeating all of the above steps.***



LIFESTYLE CHANGES

One of the best steps you can take in managing your heart failure symptoms is to make healthy changes in your eating and daily activities. Not only will these changes help you start feeling better almost immediately, but they can also help you lose weight, increase your energy, decrease your stress, lower blood pressure, improve cholesterol levels and even improve circulation. Your doctor can help you figure out the best exercise program for you and your level of fitness, so consult your doctor before beginning something new.

HEALTHY EATING

Your diet plays a very important role in your overall care when living with heart failure. Patient Care America will provide you with a personal dietitian to do a consultation with you shortly after discharge and to discuss your specific needs and dietary requirements. It's important to read food nutrition labels to ensure you are eating the best foods for your health. A diet that is low in sodium (salt), high in fiber and low in saturated fat is recommended for those patients suffering from heart disease.

HOW TO READ NUTRITION LABELS ON YOUR FOOD AND DRINKS

A food label is one of your best bets for monitoring your daily intake of calories, sodium, fat, cholesterol, fiber and other nutrients. It's helpful to look for items that are labeled heart-healthy or are approved by the American Heart Association. But, be sure to look at the serving size on the product label. Many food containers hold multiple servings, so if you eat the entire container, you need to record the nutrients multiplied by the number of servings included in the container.

Nutrition information on this label is based on a serving of 2/3 cup. If you eat the entire container, you will have 8 servings and will need to multiply the nutrition information by 8 to get the total amount of calories, fat, cholesterol, sodium and fiber for this particular package of food.

The amount of sodium in a 2/3 cup serving is 160 milligrams, or 7% of the recommended daily intake. Remember, your recommended daily intake may be much lower than that of a healthy person, so it is best to track mg of sodium and make sure you stay under the goal set by your doctor or dietitian.

The Daily Value, or recommended intake, for sodium is 2400 milligrams or less. This is a reasonable total for most people, but too high for those with heart failure or high blood pressure.

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 2/3 cup (55g)
Servings Per Container About 8

Amount Per Serving

Calories 230 Calories from Fat 40

% Daily Value*

Total Fat 8g **12%**

Saturated Fat 1g **5%**

Trans Fat 0g

Cholesterol 0mg **0%**

Sodium 160mg **7%**

Total Carbohydrate 37g **12%**

Dietary Fiber 4g **16%**

Sugars 1g

Protein 3g

Vitamin A 10%

Vitamin C 8%

Calcium 20%

Iron 45%

* Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet.
Your daily value may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.

	Calories:	2,000	2,500
Total Fat	Less than	65g	80g
Sat Fat	Less than	20g	25g
Cholesterol	Less than	300mg	300mg
Sodium	Less than	2,400mg	2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate		300g	375g
Dietary Fiber		25g	30g



JUST SAY NO TO SALT

Your goal should be to always LOWER the amount of sodium or salt you eat on a daily basis. The American Heart Association recommends that you take in no more than 2,000mg (or 2g) of salt per day. Just one teaspoon of salt contains 2,000mg of salt – so you can see how easy it might be to go over your daily recommended allowance for sodium.

Always make sure to see how many servings are in a box or can of food. If you eat a portion that is larger than one serving size, you are eating more salt than is listed on the label. For example, if you eat two servings of cereal, you will need to record the sodium listed on the label twice (or the sodium listed on the label x 2) in your self-monitoring guide. Keeping a journal of your sodium intake daily can be very helpful as you monitor your food intake and related symptoms.

Key Words on Label	Food must contain:
Sodium-free or Salt-free	Less than 5mg of sodium per serving
Very low sodium	Less than 35mg of sodium per serving
Low sodium	Less than 140mg of sodium per serving
Less sodium	At least 20% reduction from the original
Reduced sodium	At least 25% reduction from the original
Light in sodium	At least 50% reduction from the original
Unsalted. Without added salt. No salt add	No salt added during processing; however, food may contain sodium naturally



LIMIT CHOLESTEROL

The American Heart Association recommends that no more than 200mg of cholesterol be consumed per day. To help manage the amount of cholesterol you are taking in each day, try to limit foods that contain saturated fats and oils such as butter, lard, processed cookies, chips and crackers, fried and fast foods, fatty meats and full-fat milk products and eggs with yolks. Healthier fats such as olive and canola oil are better options, as are broiled low-fat meats such as turkey, chicken and fish.

EAT MORE FIBER

Fiber not only helps lower your cholesterol, but it can also play a very important role in helping you feel full and digest foods. Foods high in fiber are also usually lower in fat and calories too. Talk to your doctor before increasing your fiber significantly or supplementing your diet with fiber powders, as it can sometimes cause constipation and you may need to drink more water when upping the fiber in your diet. Your doctor and Patient Care America dietitian can help decide the best way to increase the amount of fiber in your diet.



EAT RIGHT

LIMIT FAT INTAKE

The American Heart Association recommends no more than 30% of your total daily calories should come from fat. Some good low-fat options include skim or 1% milk, egg whites or egg substitutes, fat-free or low-fat yogurt, and lean meats such as chicken, turkey and fish. Avoid fatty meats, organ meats, egg yolks, bacon and fried or breaded meats.

INCREASE OMEGA-3 FATTY ACIDS

Omega-3 fatty acids are a very heart-healthy polyunsaturated fat. They are found in fish and other heart-healthy foods such as walnuts, flaxseed, kale, spinach and brussel sprouts.

The American Heart Association suggests that you eat two servings of fish per week. It's best to eat fresh fish, but if you need to eat frozen, canned or packets of fish, you can always rinse the fish with water prior to cooking to help reduce the sodium.

ENJOY WHOLE GRAINS

Whole grains such as 100% whole wheat or 100% whole grain breads, pasta and flour, as well as brown rice, oatmeal and cereals with more than 5 grams of fiber per serving are sources of high fiber. Whole grains are healthier carbs that should be incorporated into your diet.

Carbohydrates that are not made from whole grains such as white and corn bread, biscuits, cakes, pies, cookies, chips, doughnuts, sugary cereals, crackers, frozen waffles and pancakes should be avoided.





ADD POTASSIUM TO YOUR DIET

Potassium plays a role in every heartbeat as it helps trigger your heart to pump blood throughout your body. It also helps your muscles, nerves and kidneys, so your physician should inform you how much your potassium intake should be each day. Your medications may also decrease the amount of potassium in your blood, making it even more important for you to consume additional potassium through high potassium foods or medications.

Examples of foods high in potassium include bananas, spinach, tomatoes, potatoes, fresh fruits, orange juice, beans and nuts.

REDUCE OR AVOID CAFFEINE

Caffeine is a stimulant, and research has shown that it can increase blood pressure increasing your risk for heart attack or stroke. Thus, it is important to limit the amount of caffeine you consume and for you to talk with your doctor and dietitian about the specific recommended total caffeine you should be taking in each day.

Caffeine is found in coffee, soda, chocolate, energy drinks and teas. Even decaffeinated coffee and drinks can contain some amount of caffeine— so be careful to read food and drink labels to make sure you are staying with your recommended total caffeine intake each day.



REMEMBER, MONITORING IS KEY

You should have been provided with the Patient Care America Heart-Healthy Self-Monitoring Guide to record your daily progress. This book was designed to help you monitor your daily weight, symptoms, blood pressure, temperature, medications taken, nutrition, exercise, sodium and fluid intake. Bring this record with you each time you visit your doctor so your condition can be better monitored. Also, feel free to discuss any of this information with your home nurse or dietitian. Use the space in the back of the booklet to write down any questions you may have for your health care providers. They are here to help you, and this self-monitoring guide will provide them with valuable information to help them adjust or fine-tune your treatment protocol.

WATER AND FLUIDS INTAKE

Water is extremely important to your health, but you may need to limit your intake of water and other fluids so your body doesn't hold onto extra fluid. Your doctor or dietitian will be able to recommend the proper fluid intake for your particular needs. Be sure to record your entire daily fluid intake, including those foods that contain liquids such as soup and fruits and vegetables like watermelon, cucumbers, grapefruit, cantaloupe, celery and radishes.



EATING OUT ON A HEART- HEALTHY DIET

It's possible to make heart-healthy choices when eating out, but you will need to remember your nutrition plan and make sure the restaurant doesn't add unseen fat or salt to your meal. High-fat foods can include meals with cheese or cream sauces, fried foods, fast foods and food prepared with mayonnaise or gravies. High-sodium foods include foods that are served pickled, smoked or in soy, teriyaki or cocktail sauce. Meals such as pizza, sausage, hot dogs, bacon, ham and cured meats should typically be avoided altogether because they are high in fat and sodium. Meals prepared in a soy or teriyaki sauce contain a very large amount of sodium, so avoid these items as well.

Instead, look for foods that are broiled, baked, steamed, roasted, grilled and garden-fresh. Pick lower-fat meats such as shrimp, chicken, fish, or lobster. Some restaurant menus will even identify which meals are healthier options or display which menu items meet the Heart-Check mark certification from the American Heart Association.



Remember to double check with your server when ordering your food and never hesitate to ask them for the following information and request the following services:

- How is the food prepared and is salt added? If salt is added, tell them you need your dish to be prepared without salt. Remember, a restaurant meal can contain 1500mg of sodium or more –nearly a full day's allowance.
- What type of fat is used in the preparation of this meal? See if butter can be replaced with a very small amount of olive oil or if the meal can be prepared without additional fat.
- Can you serve my meal with the cheese, sauce, gravy, butter, margarine, salad dressing, nuts and/or sour cream on the side? Use small amounts of these high-fat foods (if you use them at all) for added flavor.
- What healthier sides are available with my meal? Baked potatoes, steam veggies, side salad or fruit are better options than potato chips, potato sticks, onion rings, fries, hash browns or au gratin potatoes.

PATIENT CARE AMERICA HEART FAILURE KIT

To make monitoring and taking care of your health as easy as possible, Patient Care America will provide you with a Heart Failure Kit, which contains all the tools you need to properly monitor, record and manage your heart failure. This kit contains the following helpful tools for your health:

- A scale to weigh yourself daily
- Digital blood pressure kit
- Digital thermometer
- Medication organizer
- Pill cutter
- Five cup liquid container
- Heart stress ball
- Tape measure
- Heart failure zone measuring tool
- Helpful 3-in-1 key chain/wallet reminder
- This educational booklet
- Your Heart Failure Self-Monitoring Guide
- Pen and pad of paper

WEIGH YOURSELF DAILY

Place the digital scale provided to you by Patient Care America on a flat surface such as your bathroom or kitchen floor. Each morning, weigh yourself after you have gone to the bathroom but before you have had anything to eat or drink. It's important to weigh yourself every morning, at about the same time, on the same scale and with an empty bladder and stomach. Record your weight in your Heart Failure Self-Monitoring Guide and compare it to your weight the prior days before and over the past week. If you notice that you have gained more than 2 lbs. in one day or more than 5 lbs. over the last 7 days, contact your doctor immediately.



MEASURE YOUR ANKLES AND WAIST

Every morning prior to eating or drinking, measure your ankles and waist to see if you are retaining extra water. Record your waist and ankle measurements daily, and contact Patient Care America or your doctor should the measurements increase uncharacteristically.



CHECK YOUR HEART RATE

Ask your doctor or nurse what they would consider a normal heart rate range for you, and double check your heart rate reading from the blood pressure kit daily. Record your heart rate in your self-monitoring guide and bring it with you to your doctor visits so they can review the data.



TAKE YOUR TEMPERATURE

Utilize the digital thermometer to take your temperature daily and ensure you do not have a fever. If the thermometer shows a temperature above 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit, contact Patient Care America or your doctor, as fevers are often associated with an infection.



PLAN YOUR MEDICATIONS WEEKLY

Each Sunday, fill your medication organizer with all of the oral medications you will need for the week. Notice if you are getting low on any pill or prescription and need to reorder through your pharmacy or call your doctor to get a refill. Make sure to take your pills as prescribed and at approximately the same time each day. Record your daily medication in your self-monitoring guide. If you happen to miss a dose, call Patient Care America, your nurse or pharmacist. Never double up on a dose unless instructed by a medical professional. You can utilize the pill cutter in your Patient Care America Heart Failure Kit if you need to cut a pill in half (either to half the dose of the pill or to help you swallow it).



TRACK YOUR FLUID INTAKE

Your Patient Care America Heart Failure Kit contains a fluid container that can hold up to 5 cups of water. Use this to help measure the amount of fluid you consume each day. Be careful not to drink more than your doctor has allowed. Typically, heart failure patients are restricted to 6-9 cups of fluid per day. Remember, you will also need to count water-rich foods as part of your total fluid intake. The following pages contain some helpful tips for managing your fluid intake.

MANAGING YOUR **FLUID INTAKE**

Patient Care America knows that managing fluid intake can be a challenge. So we have included a few tips, references, and fluid alternatives below that may help you avoid some of the undesirable side effects associated with fluid retention.

When fluid intake is controlled, quality of life often improves. You may notice that you breathe or sleep better, have fewer trips to the hospital, an increased appetite and/or achieve better results from your therapy.



COMMON **MEASUREMENTS**

2 tablespoons = 1 oz.

1/2 cup = 4oz.

1 cup = 8oz.

4 cups = 1 quart = 32 oz.

8 cups = 2 quarts = 64oz.



FLUIDS

We have provided a number of common dietary items that should be counted as part of your daily fluid intake.

The recommended daily fluid intake for heart failure patients is typically **1.5 liters**, but always confirm what is right for you with your team of medical professionals.

Cranberry Juice



Apple Juice



Grape Juice



**Watermelon
(almost all water)**



Ice Cream



Soup



Jello



Milk



WATER **ALTERNATIVES**

The following are excellent water alternatives that can refresh your thirst without compromising your recommended daily fluid intake.

**Sugar free gum
and candy**



**Butterscotch
candies**



**Sour candies,
such as lemon
drops**



Ice chips

NOTE: Consume in
moderation. One cup of
ice chips = 1/2 cup of water.



**Frozen
strawberries**



**Frozen
grapes**



**Citrus flavored
water
(Ex.: lemon/lime)**



**Biotène®
Dry Mouth
Oral Rinse**



OTHER TIPS

1

Sour items are generally better than sweet, which can cause thirst in most people.

2

Reserve some of your daily fluid intake to take with your medication.

3

Limit or avoid coffee, black tea, soda, caffeinated beverages, and high sodium drinks like tomato or vegetable juice, which can make you thirsty.



DETERMINE WHAT HEART FAILURE ZONE YOU'RE IN TODAY

It is important to track your weight, medications, sodium, fluids, swelling and activities each day so you can measure what zone you are in each day: green, yellow or red.

Green is where you want to be each day. A green day means you have no trouble breathing, have not gained more than 2 lbs. in one day or 5 lbs. in the past week, have no swelling in your feet, ankles or abdomen and do not have chest discomfort, heaviness or pain. If you're green, you're good and need to continue your healthy habits.

When you find yourself in the yellow zone, you need to call your doctor's office that day. If you have any one of the following symptoms, you are in the yellow zone:

- You gain 2 or more lbs. overnight
- You gain 5 or more lbs. in a week
- Your legs, ankles and/or stomach become more swollen
- Your socks and shoes suddenly become tight and uncomfortable
- You have increased shortness of breath for a prolonged period of time
- You feel unusually tired or don't have the energy for your typical activities
- You have a dry cough or cough up pinkish, frothy foam
- You are dizzy or weak
- You have blurred vision
- Your heart beats are irregular or rapid
- You have chest pain
- You have a reaction to a medication or food

If you ever find yourself in the red zone, call 9-1-1 immediately. Any one of the following symptoms indicate an emergency, you are in the red zone and should call 9-1-1:

- You are struggling to breath even when you sit up
- You're having stronger and more regular amounts of chest discomfort
- You have new confusion or can't think clearly
- You faint or nearly faint



ASK IF YOU'RE HEALTHY ENOUGH TO START AN EXERCISE ROUTINE

Talk to your doctor before increasing your activity. However, depending on the severity of your heart failure, regular exercise such as walking or riding a bike may give you increased energy, lower your stress and anxiety, help control your blood pressure and weight and make your heart stronger. Let your doctor know before you start a new routine, and if you are cleared for light to moderate exercise, keep these tips in mind:

- Schedule your exercise just like a doctor's appointment or other important meeting, and stick to it. For example, if you'd like to go for a walk three times per week, commit to walking your neighborhood or a park close to your home every Monday, Wednesday and Friday after dinner. Or, even better, find an exercise partner to help keep you accountable. You can meet them at a nice walking path or to walk the local mall three or four times per week. Not only can you catch up, but you can get in a good workout too.
- Regular exercise should not completely wear you out – so pace yourself as you get started on an exercise

program. If done right, exercise will give you more energy and soon you'll be able to walk longer distances and/or do more life activities thanks to the movement you get in your exercise routine.

- Be careful not to exercise in the extreme heat or cold. If you live in a climate that gets cold or has ice or snow covering the ground in the winter, look for an indoor walking track at a gym or visit an indoor mall. If you live in a climate that gets warm in the summer, try to plan your outdoor activities such as walking or going for a bike ride for the early morning or late afternoon/early evening hours. You can also exercise in a pool (with sunblock on, of course) if you like to swim or do water aerobics.
- If you experience any chest pain, significant shortness of breath, light-headedness, blurred vision or feel uneasy while working out **STOP IMMEDIATELY**. Call your doctor or **9-1-1** immediately if you think you could be having a heart attack.

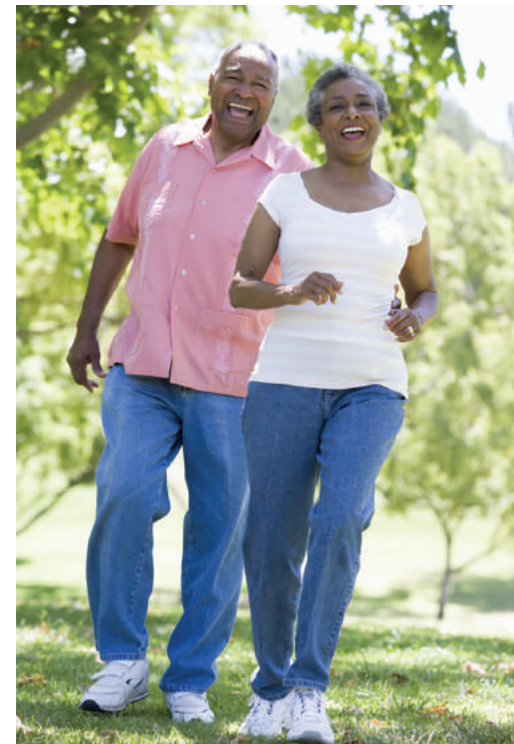
Remember, exercise will get easier. Your body just needs a little time to get used to being more active.

Try doing an activity for 10 minutes three times a week when you're just beginning. After a week or two, add 5 minutes to your workout routine so you

are exercising 15 minutes three times per week. Keep adding 5 minutes as you feel comfortable until you are exercising for 30 minutes three times per week. Once that gets easy, ask your doctor to approve you to exercise longer or more times every week.

Your doctor can help identify the best exercises for you, but you might consider using a stationary bicycle, walking your neighborhood or at the mall, going to a low-impact exercise class or doing a workout video at home, sweeping, vacuuming or dusting, mowing the lawn or working in a garden, walking to the bus, playing with your children or grandchildren or even dancing around your living room. Find something fun and easy for you.

Remember, walking is always free – and when you do it with your friend or pet – many people also find it fun.



STOP SMOKING AS SOON AS POSSIBLE



Smoking reduces the amount of oxygen that your heart gets, raises your blood pressure, speeds up your heart rate, increases your risk of blood clots that can lead to heart attacks or strokes and harms the inside of your blood vessels. Kicking the habit is one of the best things you can do for your health. Not only does stopping smoking help lower your blood pressure and decrease your odds of having a heart attack or stroke, but it also makes it less likely that you will get lung cancer, emphysema and many other serious conditions. The bottom line is that you'll most likely live longer if you quit smoking and you'll probably even feel better too.

If you haven't been able to stop smoking by yourself, ask your doctor for help. There are also many state and national smoking cessation programs that may be helpful. You may also want to record when you smoke in your Heart Failure Self-Monitoring Guide and work on reducing the number of cigarettes you smoke each day until you are able to quit. Set a date to quit smoking and make a list of all the reasons you want to quit smoking, as well as a list of things you can do instead of smoking:

Why quit:

- Save money
- No more smoky smell
- Healthier skin, hair and nails
- Be here for grandchildren
- Freedom from addiction

What to do instead:

- Chew gum or on a toothpick
- Chew on carrot sticks or other veggies
- Call a friend or family member
- Go for a walk

PLANNING YOUR TRAVELS

If you plan to travel, make sure Patient Care America, your doctors and nurses know about your travel plans. If Patient Care America regularly ships you medicine, it is important that we have your travel details to make sure you are able to get your proper medication while you're not at home. If you plan to fly, you should ALWAYS pack your medicine in a carry-on bag. Never pack it in checked luggage, as your flight may be delayed or your luggage could get lost by the airline. You never want to be without your medication when it is time to take it. Also, make sure your medicine is all properly labeled with the prescription information so there are no questions. Arrive at the airport at least 2 hours prior to your flight to make sure you have time to get through security and get to your gate in plenty of time.

You should contact the airline ahead of your travel to let them know that you are traveling with intravenous medications and medical supplies and equipment. The airline can help you with wheelchairs and will assist many travelers with medical needs to help you get through security and to your flight as safely and quickly as possible.

Medicines that need to be kept cold should be placed in a cooler with a frozen ice pack and taken onto the plane. The ice packs that are sent with your medication delivery are perfect



for this purpose. Just make sure to place them in your freezer and add them to the cooler right before you leave for the airport. If you are traveling long distances, make sure to place a thermometer in the cooler so you can monitor the temperature of your medications. Your Patient Care America pharmacist can advise you on the proper storage temperature for your medication. If a medication bag change is necessary in flight, be sure to speak to the flight attendant and let him or her know prior to proceeding. Talk with your Patient Care America nurse if you have any questions or anxieties about traveling. You can also reach out to the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) through its Passenger Care Hotline at **855-787-2227** if you have questions about what you can and cannot bring on a flight.

SAFE HANDLING / DISPOSAL OF BIOMEDICAL WASTE

NEEDLE DROP MAILBACK PROGRAM

The all-in-one mailback kits comply with government and USPS regulations and are specially designed for mailing needles, syringes, lancets, and other sharps waste. For your convenience, the all-in-one home needles disposal kit includes:

- Specially designed sharps container
- Postage-prepaid shipping box
- Pre-addressed shipping labels
- Sharps disposal tracking form

Once the container is full, you complete the simple sharps disposal tracking form and ship the container back to Stericycle in the provided box. Stericycle will properly document, treat, and dispose of the sharps container and its contents for you.

**PLEASE CALL STERICYCLE AT 1-877-33-SHARP (1-877-337-4277)
WITH ANY QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS.**



FURTHER REFERENCES & RESOURCES

Heart Failure Society of America

www.hfsa.org

1-301-312-8635

National Heart Lung and Blood Institute

www.nhlbi.nih.gov

1-301-592-8573

American Heart Association

www.heart.org

1-800-242-8721

Medline Plus (US National Library of Medicine)

www.nlm.nih.gov

	Name	Phone
Pharmacist		
Clinical Specialist/ Nurse Navigator		
Dietitian		
My Heart Doctor		
My Nurse Practitioner or Physician Assistant		
Primary Doctor		
My Heart Failure Case Manager		
My Social Worker		
My Home Health Nursing		
Other		
Other		

MEDICATION SCHEDULE

Please utilize this form in your self-monitoring guide and take it with you when you visit your doctor or heart failure clinic. In your self-monitoring guide, write down all of your medications, doses and the times you are taking these on a daily basis. Taking your medications as your doctor ordered (right drug, right dose, right time) is critical to controlling your heart failure and keeping you out of the hospital.

- Take your medication according to your doctor’s instructions. Be compliant!
- Do not stop any medications without your doctor’s approval.
- Do not skip doses unless instructed by your doctor.
- If you miss a dose, do not take two doses at once.
- Except for the medication you placed in your medication organizer, store all medications in their original prescription containers and store them according to the labeled instructions.
- It is important to keep all medication out of the reach of children for their safety.
- Notify your doctor or other medical professional if you think you are having any unusual side effects.

Medication, Dose and Instructions	Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner	Bedtime

HEART FAILURE SELF-MONITORING GUIDE

Patient Care America will provide you with a self-monitoring guide that you can use to track your weight, blood pressure, temperature and other daily measurements daily. Please utilize this to track your progress and bring it with you to all doctor appointments. When you complete a full booklet, contact Patient Care America to receive a new one.

PARAMETERS ORDERED BY YOUR PHYSICIAN

Your doctor has established acceptable ranges for your vital signs, weight increase, oral fluid intake, and sodium intake. Using the table below, write down the acceptable ranges your doctor has set for you. You can use your self-monitoring guide to track your vital signs and progress each day. Contact your doctor if any of these measurements fall outside the acceptable range listed.

Parameter	Range
Blood Pressure	____/____ to ____/____
Heart Rate	____ to ____ beats/minute
Respiratory Rate	____ to ____ breaths/minute
Temperature	Call doctor if temperature is more than ____
Weight Gain	2 lbs in 24 hours or 5 lbs in 7 days
Sodium Intake (mg)	____ mg
Fluid Intake (liters/day)	____ liters



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