

Your  
Hospital's  
Logo  
Here

# CONGESTIVE HEART FAILURE DISCHARGE INSTRUCTIONS

PATIENT IDENTIFICATION

## What is CONGESTIVE HEART FAILURE?

- Heart Failure simply means that your heart is not pumping as strong as it should. It does not mean that your heart is about to stop or that you have had a heart attack.
- Heart Failure can effect the kidney's ability to rid the body of salt and water. The excess water causes swelling in your feet, ankles, legs and abdomen. The term "Congestive Heart Failure" (CHF) means your heart's poor pumping ability has caused excess fluid to build up in the lungs.
- Symptoms of Congestive Heart Failure may include: feeling very tired, shortness of breath during physical activity or when lying in bed, waking up short of breath, a dry hacking cough that lasts a long time, bloating or swelling in the ankles or feet, a sudden weight gain, or a loss of appetite.

## HOW TO CONTROL YOUR Congestive Heart Failure

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>1. TAKE YOUR MEDICATIONS</b><br>Be sure to get all your prescriptions filled. Take your medication everyday as ordered, even when you are feeling great. Do not skip medications. Always carry a list of medications with you. Avoid over-the-counter medications unless recommended by your doctor. | <b>5. EXERCISE</b><br>Activity and exercise is important for a person with CHF. Walking is a good exercise which strengthens your heart, muscles and lungs. Start slowly; don't over do it. If you get short of breath, sit down and rest.  |
| <b>2. MONITOR YOUR WEIGHT DAILY</b><br>Empty your bladder and weigh yourself first thing in the morning with the same clothing. Write your weight down on a log sheet. Take your log sheet to each doctor's visit. A sudden gain in weight may mean your body is retaining fluid.                       | <b>6. IF YOU SMOKE, STOP SMOKING</b><br>Do not smoke. Do not use chewing tobacco. If you do smoke, you have already begun to stop (you have not smoked for several days while in the hospital).   |
| <b>3. DIET - EAT LESS SALT TO RETAIN LESS FLUID</b><br>Maintain a diet with 2 grams or 2000mg of sodium or less per day. Take the salt shaker off the table. Become a label reader. Avoid canned foods and snacks high in sodium. DO NOT ADD SALT TO YOUR FOOD.   | <b>7. SYMPTOMS - CALL YOUR DOCTOR IF ...</b><br>If your symptoms become worse, contact your doctor. Symptoms may include <b>[a]</b> an unexplained weight gain of 3-5 pounds over night -or- over 2 days; <b>[b]</b> increased swelling in your feet / ankles; <b>[c]</b> chest pain; <b>[d]</b> a slow or rapid pulse; <b>[e]</b> experiencing medication side effects; <b>[f]</b> severe shortness of breath; or, <b>[g]</b> decreased urination by day and increased urination at night. |
| <b>4. DIET - LIMIT THE FLUIDS YOU DRINK</b><br>Restrict your fluid intake as instructed by your doctor. This includes all liquids (like soup, ice cream, pudding, etc.) Keep a record of how much fluid you drink each day.   | <b>8. SCHEDULE A FOLLOW-UP APPOINTMENT</b><br>Schedule a follow-up appointment with your doctor, and keep that appointment.   |

PATIENT Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

RN Signature / Title: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

Follow-Up Appointment: \_\_\_\_\_

CHF Patient Teaching Booklet Received?  YES  NO  N / A

Smoking Cessation Information Received?  YES  NO  N / A

Vaccination Received: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

WHITE = Chart

YELLOW = Patient

## PART OF THE MEDICAL RECORD