Congestive Heart Failure

With congestive heart failure, the heart cannot pump the blood well. As a result, blood doesn’t flow well.

Fluid leaks out of your blood vessels and backs up in the lungs and the legs.

Salt makes it harder for your body to get rid of fluid. You should avoid salt.

Fluid in lungs

Fluid in legs
How Bad Is Your Congestive Heart Failure?

You can tell how well your heart is doing by how you feel and what you can do.

**SWELLING**
- Good – No Swelling
- OK – Swelling in Ankle or Shin
- Bad – Swelling in Knee Area

**WALKING**
- Good – You can walk easily with no shortness of breath
- OK – Shortness of breath when walking fast
- Bad – Short of breath at rest

**SLEEPING**
- Good – Sleeping flat, no shortness of breath
- OK – Needing 2 pillows or more to avoid shortness of breath
- Bad – Have to sleep upright to avoid shortness of breath

Call Your Doctor 📞
Your **Good Weight** is ____

Your **Good Weight** is the weight at which your body and heart will work best, which means no extra fluid in your body.

**WEIGHT GAIN** from gaining fluid can be bad for your health.

**WEIGHT LOSS** from losing fluid can be bad for your health.

**YOUR GOAL is to stay at your Good Weight**

If you gain or lose 2 or more pounds in one day or 4 or more pounds in one week, Call Your Doctor.
3 Steps to Manage Your Health

1. EACH MORNING
   - Check for Swelling

2. Weigh Yourself

3. Take Your Fluid Pills As Directed
Swelling

Can mean you have more fluid.

To check for swelling:
- You only need to check one leg.
- Press firmly into the skin of your knee, shin, and ankle with your finger.
- If your finger makes a pit in your skin, you have swelling in that part of your leg.

Check for swelling each morning:

1) Check around your knee
2) Check around your shin
3) Check around your ankle
4) Check on your chart where swelling is.
5) If swelling reaches your knees, call your doctor.
YOUR WEIGHT CHANGES WITH HOW MUCH FLUID YOU HAVE

1) Weigh yourself each morning.

2) Write your weight on your chart.

3) Call your doctor if you gain or lose 2 or more pounds in one day or 4 or more pounds in one week.
Your “fluid pill” is called furosemide (Lasix).

Your fluid pill looks like 🕊

You control your swelling and body weight by your fluid pill dose.

Take your fluid pill every day as directed.
When to Call Us for Help

Call us if . . .

- You are **short of breath** while sitting still

- You have to **sleep upright or in a chair**

- You have **swelling to your knees**

- Your weight goes up or down by 2 or more pounds in one day or 4 or more pounds in one week

- You have questions about your pills
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Swelling</th>
<th>Weight</th>
<th>Number of Fluid Pills</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sunday</strong></td>
<td><img src="knee.png" alt="knee" /></td>
<td><img src="shin.png" alt="shin" /></td>
<td><img src="ankle.png" alt="ankle" /></td>
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<td><img src="knee.png" alt="knee" /></td>
<td><img src="shin.png" alt="shin" /></td>
<td><img src="ankle.png" alt="ankle" /></td>
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<td><strong>Tuesday</strong></td>
<td><img src="knee.png" alt="knee" /></td>
<td><img src="shin.png" alt="shin" /></td>
<td><img src="ankle.png" alt="ankle" /></td>
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<td><strong>Wednesday</strong></td>
<td><img src="knee.png" alt="knee" /></td>
<td><img src="shin.png" alt="shin" /></td>
<td><img src="ankle.png" alt="ankle" /></td>
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<td><strong>Thursday</strong></td>
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<td><img src="shin.png" alt="shin" /></td>
<td><img src="ankle.png" alt="ankle" /></td>
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<td><strong>Friday</strong></td>
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<td><img src="shin.png" alt="shin" /></td>
<td><img src="ankle.png" alt="ankle" /></td>
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<td><strong>Saturday</strong></td>
<td><img src="knee.png" alt="knee" /></td>
<td><img src="shin.png" alt="shin" /></td>
<td><img src="ankle.png" alt="ankle" /></td>
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</table>

If you weigh ____________ How many fluid pills? ____________

Call Your Doctor If You Have Any Questions.
Follow a Low Salt Diet

GOOD FOR YOU

Fresh fruits

Fresh/frozen vegetables

Meats - Chicken & Fish

Milk, low sodium cheese & yogurt
Follow a Low Salt Diet

BAD FOR YOU

- Fast food
- Foods in cans and jars
- Smoked meats
- Frozen/prepared foods
- Salty snacks
Physical Activity

1) Talk to your Doctor about what exercise is good for you.

2) Walking is a good exercise.

3) Do what you enjoy; like gardening, shopping, walking the dog and playing with kids.

4) If you feel tired stop and rest.

5) Schedule a nap or rest every afternoon.

6) When the weather is very hot or cold, do not go out as much.
Bad for you

1) Quit smoking

If you have tried to quit before: try again.

Avoid second hand smoke.

2) Alcohol is bad for you.

Alcohol makes the heart work harder.

This makes the heart weaker.
Valley Gateway to Health

Griffin Hospital

in collaboration with

Shady Knoll Health Center

Hilltop Health Center

Birmingham Health

Gardner Heights

Bishop Wicke

Visiting Nurse Service of Connecticut

New England Home Care

Masonicare Home Health & Hospice

Visiting Nurse Association of South Central Connecticut