

Greenwich Hospital

HEART FAILURE: PATIENT WEIGHT AND SYMPTOM LOG

What to do: Weigh yourself every day, at the same time wearing the same amount of clothing. Check any symptoms you have that day. **Notify your doctor or home care nurse** if you have a **3 pound weight gain in one day** or if you have more than a **5 pound weight gain in one week**, or if you: _____

Keeping this record will help you recognize early signs of trouble. By getting help early, you may avoid trips to the emergency room or admission to the hospital. **Complete and bring this record to your follow-up appointment with Dr. _____ on (date) _____ at (time) _____**

Date	Time	Weight	Short of Breath	# Pillows Needed to Sleep	Ankle Swelling	Socks/ Shoes Tighter	Limited Activity Tolerance	Comments

Patient Name: _____

Date: _____

H E A R T F A I L U R E

PATIENT/FAMILY INFORMATION SHEET

What is heart failure?

Heart failure is a condition that is characterized by the diminished ability of the heart to pump efficiently. As a result, the amount of blood that the heart pumps is not sufficient to meet the demands of the body.

What causes heart failure?

Heart failure may be caused by a heart attack, coronary artery disease (narrowing or obstruction of the blood vessels of the heart), high blood pressure, diseases of the valves of the heart or any other factor that puts a strain on the heart over a long period of time.

How is heart failure treated?

Treatment of heart failure focuses on the cause of the failure and the resulting symptoms. Generally medication is given to make the heart pump blood more effectively. In addition, life style changes are recommended to reduce the work load of the heart.

What can I do to manage my condition?

There are several things the patient can do to promote maximum cardiac functioning. These include:

- Keeping an accurate weight and symptom log.
- Taking medication as prescribed.
- Following a heart healthy diet; low in sodium, fats and cholesterol.
- Limiting caffeine and alcohol.
- Avoiding tobacco products – Smoking cessation
- Proper positioning in bed(sitting-up or propping-up with pillows) to make the heart's job easier.
- Pacing activities; develop a structured activity program.
- Keeping scheduled appointments with your nurse and physician for continued monitoring of your condition.

How long will I need to make these life style changes?

Heart failure is a chronic or life long condition. Therefore, permanent life style changes must be made to preserve and maintain cardiac function.

For more Patient Education Fact Sheets, see the Greenwich Hospital web site at www.greenhosp.org and click on Patients & Visitors, then Patient Education. Rev. 8/04