

EAST COAST COMMUNITY HEALTHCARE
HEART FAILURE SERVICE



YOUR SELF-CARE PASSPORT

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Use these charts to record your daily weight, blood pressure and heart rate.
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Our service

Our aim is to support you in managing your condition effectively, ensuring you are at the centre of what we do.

Our specialist team brings together an abundance of skills and knowledge to support you from diagnosis to treatment, assisting in managing symptom relief, seeking to enhance quality of life and ultimately improve end-of-life outcomes.

We work actively with a wide variety of healthcare professionals to provide seamless care.



Our promise to you is that we shall:

- ✓ Optimise your medication using evidence-based research
- ✓ Provide the education you need to make informed choices

Your role in the team

This personalised self-care passport will help you to self-manage your heart failure, with support from the Heart Failure Team.

We ask that you use this booklet to monitor and record your **weight, heart rate and blood pressure** daily. We understand that not everyone is able to do so; don't worry, we are here to support you. We can assist you in completing this booklet so that you can accurately track your signs and symptoms.

With daily weight and blood pressure readings, you will have a three-monthly record of your personal results.

This information will enable us to offer bespoke suggestions to optimise your heart health and quality of life, enabling you to live your life alongside heart failure.

Self-management

Everyday:



Weigh yourself in the morning before breakfast. Write down and compare to yesterday's weight.



Take your medicine as prescribed.



Check for swelling in your feet, ankles, legs and stomach.



Avoid foods high in salt.



Balance activity and rest periods.






Use the traffic light system explained in this booklet to identify which 'heart failure zone' your symptoms fall into.

Heart failure zones

Use this guide daily to monitor which heart failure zone your symptoms fall into.

Which heart failure zone are you in today?

-  Green
-  Amber
-  Red

Your usual symptoms are under control. You have:

- No increased breathlessness
- No extra swelling of your feet, ankles, legs or stomach
- No significant weight gain (it may change by 1-2lbs some days)
- If weight increases by 3lbs and continues to increase the next day, move to Amber Zone

Symptoms are well controlled

Your usual symptoms have changed. You have:

- Rapid weight gain of more than 4-5lbs (2-2.5kg) over 2 consecutive days or weeks
- Increased breathlessness and tolerating less activity
- Increased swelling of feet, ankles, legs or stomach
- Loss of appetite/nausea different to usual
- Worsening dry cough
- Dizziness or different to usual
- More difficulty breathing when lying down
- You need to sleep sitting up in the chair
- You have become confused about your medications
- You have had vomiting or diarrhoea for over 24 hours
- You have worsening or new angina

Contact your GP or Nurse ASAP

Call 999 if you have any of the following symptoms:

- Struggling to breathe
- Severe and persistent breathlessness whilst sitting up
- Chest pain not relieved by GTN spray
- Fainting

Call for help IMMEDIATELY Dial 999

Target weight:

Date	Weight	Blood pressure/ heart rate	Comments

Target weight:

Date	Weight	Blood pressure/ heart rate	Comments

Target weight:

Date	Weight	Blood pressure/ heart rate	Comments

Target weight:

Date	Weight	Blood pressure/ heart rate	Comments

Target weight:

Date	Weight	Blood pressure/ heart rate	Comments

Target weight:

Date	Weight	Blood pressure/ heart rate	Comments

Target weight:

Date	Weight	Blood pressure/ heart rate	Comments

Target weight:

Date	Weight	Blood pressure/ heart rate	Comments

Target weight:

Date	Weight	Blood pressure/ heart rate	Comments

Target weight:

Date	Weight	Blood pressure/ heart rate	Comments

Intervention notes

Date	Comments

Date	Comments

Date	Comments

What is heart failure?

Heart failure is when the heart becomes less efficient at pumping blood around the body.

The outlook is generally improved once a patient receives treatment. The long-term outlook is variable and depends on the individual. In most cases, heart failure cannot be cured, but it can be managed through:

- Medication
- Lifestyle changes
- Devices (pacemakers)

How is heart failure diagnosed?

ECG

A trace of your heart rate and rhythm.

Chest X-ray

Looks at the heart and lungs.

Echocardiogram (Echo)

An ultrasound to assess the efficiency of your heart to pump blood around the body, giving important information about the cause and severity of your heart failure.

Blood tests

To check kidney function, anaemia and thyroid function.

What causes heart failure?

Some of the common causes are:

- **Heart attack** – myocardial infarction
- **High blood pressure** – hypertension
- **Heart valves** that either leak or are too narrow
- **Alcohol** – drinking too much over a long period
- **Cardiomyopathy** - diseases of the heart muscle

Signs and symptoms of heart failure

Breathlessness

This is more evident when exercising or exerting yourself. This may affect your sleeping pattern, causing you to wake. You may also develop a cough and a wheeze.

Swelling of ankles and feet (oedema)

This may extend to the legs, thighs, groin and abdomen and is due to the body retaining salt and water.

Tiredness/loss of energy

This is a common problem and can happen even when you are resting or not being very active. This is partly due to the reduction in blood flow to the muscles.

*These symptoms are not always exclusive to heart failure. If you experience any of them, please contact your GP/healthcare professional.

A guide to medications

The following medications are commonly used to treat heart failure:

Type	Examples	How they work
Ace Inhibitors (ACEI)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ramipril• Lisinopril• Perindopril	Ease the workload of the heart by relaxing blood vessels, thus reducing the workload of the heart. Evidence has shown they can make you live longer, improve your quality of life and stop your heart failure from getting worse.
Angiotensin Receptor Blockers (ARB)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Candesartan• Losartan	These work similar to Ace Inhibitors and are an alternative if Ace Inhibitors are not tolerated.
Angiotensin Receptor Neprilysin Inhibitors (ARNI)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sacubitril Valsartan (Entresto)	Work by relaxing the blood vessels and getting rid of excess salt and fluid to reduce the workload on the heart.
Beta-Blockers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bisoprolol• Carvedilol• Nebivolol	These make the heart beat slower but stronger.

Digoxin		Slows the heart rate and helps to increase the contractility of the heart.
Ivabradine (also known as Procoralan)		Works by slowing the heart rate, does not affect blood pressure, makes the heart beat slower and stronger, thus reducing the workload of the heart.
Mineralocorticoids Receptor Antagonists (MRAs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spironolactone • Eplerenone 	They help prevent water and salt building up in the body and lower the blood pressure.
Diuretics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Furosemide • Bumetanide • Bendroflumethazide • Metolazone • Amiloride 	These are water tablets. They help your kidneys to get rid of excess fluid, can reduce swelling, make you less breathless and lower blood pressure.

Your Heart Failure Nurse will discuss medications with you in more detail.

Managing heart failure

In addition to support from your GP/healthcare professional, there are a number of ways that you can help yourself to manage your condition.



Medication

Ensure you always take your medication as prescribed.



Weight

Weigh yourself every morning and keep a record in this booklet. This will help to indicate if you are retaining fluid.

If your weight increases by more than 4-5lbs or 2-2.5kg over two consecutive days or weeks, you should contact your GP or heart failure nurse for a review.



Diet

Reducing fat and increasing fibre in your diet will help to control cholesterol and prevent constipation.

Eat as healthily as possible and maintain a healthy weight. Reduce your salt intake; too much salt can increase your blood pressure. Avoid salt replacements and be aware that many ready meals are high in salt. Your daily intake of salt should be 6 grams/one teaspoon. Herbs and spices are good alternatives.



Fluid

To reduce the pressure on the heart, you may be asked to restrict your fluid intake to between 1.5-2 litres a day. This includes all fluids such as milk on cereal, jelly and other liquid foods.



Smoking

Try to stop. If you need advice to do this, speak to your healthcare professional.



Exercise and relaxation

Keep as active as you can within your own limitations.

Listen to your body, take regular rest periods, relax and unwind; this can improve your mental wellbeing.

Gentle exercise such as walking can be beneficial and help improve your exercise tolerance, but avoid hard exercise and lifting heavy objects.



Vaccinations

It is recommended to have the annual flu vaccine and one-off pneumococcal vaccine if over 65 years.

Helpful organisations

East Coast Community Healthcare

Telephone: 01493 809977

Website: www.ecch.org

British Heart Foundation - Heart Information Line

Telephone: 0300 3303 311

Website: www.bhf.org.uk

Pumping Marvellous

Telephone: 01772 796542

Website: www.pumpingmarvellous.org

Facebook: www.facebook.com/heartfailureaware

Heart Failure Matters

Website: www.heartfailurematters.org

Facebook: www.facebook.com/heartfailurematters

NICE (National Institute for Health and Care Excellence)

Website: www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng106

Tel: 01493 809977

Email: ecch.enquiry@nhs.net

Service hours: 08:30am - 4:30pm Mon-Fri



Adapted with kind permission from In-patient Heart Failure Team,
Norfolk & Norwich University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust.