

Managing Heart Failure



Learn more about heart failure at
heartandstroke.ca/heartfailure

Heart Failure Zones

EVERY DAY

EVERY DAY

- Weigh yourself in the morning before breakfast. Write it down. Compare your weight today to your weight yesterday.
- Keep the total amount of fluids you drink to only 6 to 8 glasses each day. (6-8 glasses equals 1500-2000 mL or 48-64 oz)
- Take your medicine exactly how your doctor said.
- Check for swelling in your feet, ankles, legs, and stomach.
- Eat foods that are low in salt or salt-free.
- Balance activity and rest periods.



Which zone are you in today?

GREEN SAFE ZONE

ALL CLEAR – This zone is your goal!

Your symptoms are under control. You have:

- No shortness of breath.
- No chest discomfort, pressure, or pain.
- No swelling or increase in swelling of your feet, ankles, legs, or stomach.
- No weight gain of more than 4 lbs (2 kg) over 2 days in a row or 5 lbs (2.5 kg) in 1 week.



YELLOW CAUTION ZONE

CAUTION – This zone is a warning

Call your Health Care provider (eg. Doctor, nurse) if you have any of the following:

- You gain more than 4 lbs (2 kg) over 2 days in a row or 5 lbs (2.5 kg) in 1 week.
- You have vomiting and/or diarrhea that lasts more than 2 days.
- You feel more short of breath than usual.
- You have increased swelling in your feet, ankles, legs, or stomach.
- You have a dry hacking cough.
- You feel more tired and don't have the energy to do daily activities.
- You feel lightheaded or dizzy, and this is new for you.
- You feel uneasy, like something does not feel right.
- You find it harder for you to breathe when you are lying down.
- You find it easier to sleep by adding pillows or sitting up in a chair.



Healthcare Provider: _____ Phone Number: _____

RED DANGER ZONE

EMERGENCY – This zone means act fast!

Go to emergency room or call 9-1-1 if you have any of the following:

- You are struggling to breathe.
- Your shortness of breath does not go away while sitting still.
- You have a fast heartbeat that does not slow down when you rest.
- You have chest pain that does not go away with rest or with medicine.
- You are having trouble thinking clearly or are feeling confused.
- You have fainted.



Self-Monitoring Sheet

Patient's Name: _____

SELF-MONITORING: Record your findings below						
Days	Changes in Your Breathing Pattern	Weight	Swelling	Fatigue	Side Effects of Medication	Action Taken and Your Results
Day 1						
Day 2						
Day 3						
Day 4						
Day 5						
Day 6						
Day 7						

Questions to ask yourself:

1. What was I doing when the change was noticed? _____
2. What time of day did the change happen? _____
3. How did I decide to report or not to report it? _____
4. To whom did I report the change? _____

Daily Weight Information

Patient Name: _____

Heart Function Clinic or Physician's office: _____

Health Care Provider: _____ Contact phone number: _____

Check your weight every day

Why?

- Checking your weight every day lets you know if your body is retaining fluid.
- Excess fluid build up in your body makes your heart work harder.
- When you report weight gain early to your health care provider, they can help you prevent your heart failure from getting worse. This can help prevent a hospital admission.



If your weight increases by:

- More than 2 kg (4 lb) in two days, or
 - More than 2.5 kg (5 lb) in 1 week.
- 
- You are retaining fluid.
 - You should call your health care provider.

For further directions, please refer to 'Heart Failure Zones' information sheet.

When?

- Same time every day
- Preferably before breakfast

How?

- After you have emptied your bladder (gone 'pee')
- Wear the same amount of clothing

Record your weight on the calendar below.
 (You may prefer to use your own method such as a notebook, a computer.)
Remember to bring your record to your doctor or clinic appointment.

Your 'Dry Weight' (when you don't have excess fluid in your body): _____

Write down your weight each day compare today's weight to yesterdays weight.

Month _____						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday

Limiting Sodium (Salt) When You Have Heart Failure

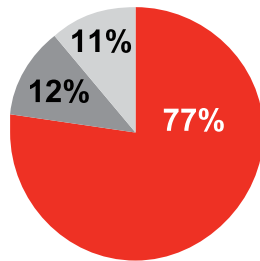
Sodium is a mineral found in food, table salt, and sea salt. Your body needs some sodium, but too much sodium causes your body to hold on to (or retain) fluid. This fluid build-up makes your heart work harder. The fluid build-up can cause swelling in your feet, legs, or belly. Fluid can also build up in your lungs, making it hard for you to breathe.

If your weight increases more than 4 lbs (2 kg) over 2 days in a row or 5 lbs (2.5 kg) in 1 week, you are retaining fluid. If this happens, you should call your health care provider right away.

You should restrict the amount of sodium you eat to 2000mg or less each day.

In the average Canadian diet, where does sodium come from?

- In ready-made processed foods and restaurant meals (77%)
- Naturally occurring in food (12%)
- Added to food in cooking and at the table (11%)



How to avoid salt (sodium)?

- Eat fresh foods most of the time and prepare home-cooked, low sodium meals.
- Frozen foods are acceptable if they do not have added salt or sodium additives (which are used as preservatives).
- Remove the salt shaker from the table. Don't add salt, flavoured salts or seasonings high in salt to your foods. **One teaspoon of salt contains 2300mg of sodium!**

- Season your food with herbs, spices, lemon juice, dry mustard, and garlic. Try one of the many seasoning blends which contain no salt such as Mrs. Dash.

- Stay away from eating:

- Processed foods
- Deli meats
- Pickled foods
- Salted snack foods such as potato chips, pretzels, dips, and salted nuts



- Limit the amount of canned foods you eat. Choose products labeled '**low sodium**'. Foods labeled 'lower', 'less' or 'reduced in salt or sodium' may still be high in sodium (including soups and meats).

- Eat out less often.

- Ask restaurants to provide information on low sodium choices.
- Restaurant meals and fast foods are always higher in salt than home cooked low sodium meals.

Can I use salt substitutes?

Some salt substitutes use potassium instead of sodium. Check with your doctor or dietitian before using a salt substitute because some people need to limit how much potassium they have each day.

Keep your sodium intake to less than 2000mg each day.

As you gradually reduce the amount of salt you are eating, your taste buds will adjust!

How do I know how much sodium is in food?

Here are some helpful tips when reading the nutrition label:

- Look at the serving size – the amount of sodium listed is **per serving** (not the whole package).
- Keep track of the total amount of sodium you eat. Remember: Your maximum recommended daily amount of sodium is **no more than 2000mg per day from all sources**.
- Keep the sodium content of each meal below 650mg – this helps spread out your sodium intake over the day preventing excessive thirst and/or fluid retention.
- By law, foods labelled 'low sodium' must contain 140mg or less per serving.

Other ingredients high in sodium include:

baking soda, brine, monosodium glutamate (MSG), soy sauce, fish sauce, garlic salt, celery salt, or any ingredient with 'sodium' as part of its name.

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size: Per ½ cup (125ml)

Amount	% Daily Value	
Calories 140		
Total Fat 0.5g	1%	
Saturated Fat 0.2g		
+ Trans Fat 0g	1%	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%	
Sodium 390mg	16%	
Total Carbohydrate 28g	9%	
Dietary Fibre 5g	20%	
Sugars 9g		
Protein 7g		
Vitamin A 2%	Vitamin C	0%
Calcium 8%	Iron	15%

Look what happens to the sodium content of foods when they are processed

Unprocessed	Processed
Cucumber 7 slices = 2mg	Dill pickle 1 medium = 569mg
Chicken Breast 3oz = 74mg	Chicken Pie 1 serving frozen = 889mg
Tomato 1 small = 14mg	Tomato Soup 1 cup = 960mg
Pork Tenderloin 3 oz = 58mg	Ham 3oz = 1095mg

Limiting Fluid When You Have Heart Failure

What is a fluid?

Any food or drink that is liquid at room temperature. This includes water, ice, milk, juices, soft drinks, hot drinks, alcohol, soups, gelatin desserts, ice cream, popsicles, and liquid nutrition supplements (such as Ensure or Boost).

Why do you have to limit fluid?

When you have heart failure, fluid can build up causing swelling in your feet, legs or belly making your heart work harder. Fluid can also build up in your lungs, which may cause you to have trouble breathing.

How much fluid can you have in a day?

You should have **no more than 1.5 to 2 litres of fluid in a day**. You may find you are thirsty to begin with. As you gradually reduce your fluid intake, your body will adjust!

Guide to fluid measures

2 tablespoons	=	30 ml	=	1 ounce
1 glass	=	250 ml	=	8 ounce
1 pint	=	500ml	=	16 ounce
1 litre or 1 quart	=	1000 ml	=	32 ounce
2 litres	=	2000 ml	=	64 ounce

Total amount of fluid per day
1.5-2 litres = 48-64 ounces = 6-8 glasses

How do you know when you have too much fluid?

To keep track of whether your body is holding on to too much fluid, weigh yourself daily.



Here is how to weigh yourself:

- Weigh yourself at the same time every day. The best time is first thing in the morning.
- Weigh yourself after emptying your bladder (gone pee).
- Wear the same amount of clothing each time.

You are holding on to too much fluid when:

Your weight increases by more than 2 kg or 4 lb in two days. **or** Your weight increases by more than 2.5 kg or 5 lb in a week.

Contact your health care provider right away if you are holding too much fluid.

Tips for reducing your fluid intake

- Use smaller cups and glasses.
- Measure the amount of fluid your mugs and glasses hold. They may measure more than 250 ml or 8 ounces.
- Sip your fluids slowly.
- Write down the amount you drink each day until limiting your fluid becomes a habit.

More tips for reducing your fluid intake

- Sip your fluids throughout the day. Keeping track of fluids is the only way to learn how to make the 1.5 to 2 litres of fluid last you through the day.
- You may find it easier to use a reusable water bottle. Measure how much the bottle holds so you know exactly how much water you are drinking.
- Drain the fluid from canned fruit.
- Be aware of foods with high water content like watermelon, yogurt, and pudding.
- If you can, swallow your pills with soft food like yogurt or porridge.



- Limit the amount of sodium you eat to 2000mg or less each day. Salt will make you thirsty. For more information, refer to the handout *Limiting salt (sodium) when you have heart failure*.



- Try not to eat sweet foods. They can make you thirsty. If you have diabetes, controlling your blood sugar also helps control your thirst.
- Try not to drink alcohol. Alcohol dehydrates your body and makes you thirsty.

Tips to deal with thirst

- Rinse your mouth with water often, but do not swallow.
- Brush your teeth often.
- Use a mouth wash. However, do not use a mouth wash that contains alcohol. They tend to dry out your mouth.
- Snack on a small piece of cold or frozen fruit such as a frozen grape or cold orange slice. Try cold crisp vegetables too.
- Chew sugar-free gum.
- Suck on a lemon wedge, lemon candy, or sour candy.
- Use lip balm to keep your lips from drying out.
- Don't overheat your home. Consider using a humidifier to increase the moisture in the air.
- Ask your pharmacist about gels or sprays that can add moisture to your mouth.

Foods High in Potassium

Foods with more than 200mg per serving. Based on 1/2 cup servings, unless otherwise specified.
One serving = 1/2 cup (unless indicated)

Fruits	Vegetables	Other foods
Apricots Avocado Banana Breadfruit Cantaloupe Dried fruits (all types) Durian Guava Honeydew Jack fruit Kiwi Nectarines (whole) Orange (whole) Passion fruit Peach (whole) Persimmon, Japanese (whole) Plantain Pomegranate Pummelo	Acorn squash Artichoke (cooked) Asparagus (boiled) Beets Beet greens (boiled) Bitter melon Bok choy (cooked) Broccoli (cooked) Brussels sprouts Butternut squash Carrot (raw) Cassava Celery (cooked) Corn (cooked) Fennel bulb (cooked) Hubbard squash Kohlrabi Mushrooms - white and portobello (cooked) Parsnips Peas, green (cooked) Potatoes Pumpkin	Rutabaga Spinach (cooked) Sweet potato Swiss chard (cooked) Tomatoes - paste, sauce, juice or crushed Yams Zucchini (cooked)
		Black licorice Bran muffin Bran cereal Chocolate Coconut (dried, desiccated) Coconut milk (canned) Coconut water Dried Beans Dried Peas Edamame Lentils Hemp seeds (2 tablespoons) Nuts and seeds Maple Syrup Molasses Soya flour Milk and Dairy products Meal replacements** (e.g. Boost, Ensure) **Ask your registered dietitian for low potassium options.
		Juices Carrot Orange Passion fruit Pomegranate Prune Tomato Vegetable

Avoid: **Grapefruit and grapefruit juice** – they can interfere with your heart medicines.
Salt substitute (e.g. No Salt or Half Salt) – they are very high in potassium.

What should your blood potassium level be?

- Danger too Low >>>>>> Lower than 3 mmol/L**
- Safe or Normal >>>>>> 3.5 – 5.0 mmol/L**
- Caution >>>>>>>>>>> 5.0 – 6.0 mmol/L**
- Danger too High >>>>>> Higher than 6.0 mmol/L**

References: Health Canada. Canadian Nutrient File, and USDA National Nutrient Database for Standard Reference

Foods with Less Potassium – Better Food Choices

Enjoy up to 5 servings per day. One serving = 1/2 cup (unless indicated).

- All foods contain some potassium. A larger serving of low potassium food can make it a high potassium food.
- Watch your serving size – no more than 5 servings a day.
- To check the amount of potassium in food not on this list, please speak to a dietitian.

Fruits

Apples
 Applesauce
 Asian pear
 Berries (blackberries, blueberries, cranberries, gooseberries, strawberries)
 Casaba melon
 Cherries (10)
 Coconut meal (raw)
 Crabapple
 Currants (fresh)
 Figs (fresh)
 Fruit cocktail (canned)
 Grapes (16)
 Kumquat (5)
 Lemon /Lime
 Longan (15)
 Lychee (10)
 Mandarin orange
 Mango
 Nectarine (1/2 only)
 Orange (1/3 small only)
 Papaya
 Peach (1/2 only)
 Pear
 Pineapple
 Plum
 Rhubarb (cooked)
 Tangerine
 Watermelon (1 cup)



Vegetables

Alfalfa sprouts
 Asparagus (4 spears)
 Bamboo shoots (canned)
 Bean sprouts
 Beets greens (raw)
 Bokchoy (raw)
 Broccoli (raw)
 Cabbage
 Collards
 Carrots (cooked)
 Cauliflower
 Celery (raw)
 Cilantro
 Corn (canned)
 Corn on the cob (1/2 small)
 Cucumber
 Eggplant
 Fennel bulb (raw)
 Gai lan/Chinese broccoli (cooked)
 Green beans
 Green onions
 Jicama
 Kale
 Leeks
 Lettuce (1 cup)
 Mushrooms, Shiitake (cooked), white (raw)

Mustard greens
 Okra
 Onions
 Parsley
 Peas, green (raw, canned)
 Peppers (all colours)
 Potato (double boil)
 Radicchio (1 cup)
 Radish
 Seaweed
 Shallots (1/4 cup)
 Snap peas
 Snow peas
 Spinach (raw)
 Spagetti squash
 Swiss chard (raw)
 Tomato (1/2 medium, 1/2 cup Cherry, 1 Plum)
 Turnip
 Water chestnuts (canned)
 Zucchini (raw)



Double boiling root vegetables lowers the amount of potassium

- Peel, cube or slice vegetables.
- Add double the amount of water.
- Bring to a boil, then drain the water.
- Add fresh water, finish cooking and drain again.



Limit servings of root vegetables to 1/2 cup per day or as discussed with your dietitian.

References: Pennington, J.A.t, Spungen, J. (2012). Bowes & Church's food Values of Portions Commonly Used. 19th Edition. USDA National Nutrient Database for Standard Reference (Release 25) website: <http://ndb.nal.usda.gov/ndb/foods/list>