

Staff Education Tool:  
**Heart Failure: Cardio-Respiratory Assessment**

**Perform initial comprehensive assessment and reassess with each home visit, comparing findings with previous assessment(s). Pay attention to subtle changes in condition. Report significant changes and increase frequency of home visits/phone monitoring and implement orders as appropriate. (Use HF Decision Support Tool)**

- Weight: Current & trend
- Heart sounds, BP, pulse
- Respiratory rate, rhythm, depth
- Breath sounds: crackles, wheezes, rhonchi, pleural rub
- Level of dyspnea: at rest and with activity
- Presence of cough; changes in cough
- Presence of orthopnea, paroxysmal nocturnal dyspnea
- Edema: location and grade
- Presence of jugular venous distension
- Abdomen for pain, tenderness, changes in girth
- Mentation/orientation
- Activity and exercise level
- Urine output/voiding patterns
- Skin and nail color
- Capillary refill time
- Any episodes of chest pain and actions taken
- Zo measurement: measures intrathoracic fluid; low Zo reading is early sign of fluid retention
- Evidence of medication side effects and/or electrolyte imbalance