



CHF SELF CARE PLAN FOR: _____

What is Congestive Heart Failure (CHF)?

Congestive Heart Failure occurs when the muscle of the heart cannot pump enough blood to provide the body with the food and oxygen that it needs. As a result, some fluid does not travel through the body as completely as it should. Some fluid pools or “backs up” and can cause extra fluid to build up in your system. You may feel short of breath because of the extra fluid in your lungs and your ankles may also swell due to extra fluid.

What causes CHF?

High blood pressure, heart valve damage, infections of the heart and other chronic diseases such as diabetes and coronary artery disease can cause CHF. There is no cure for CHF, but with proper management your symptoms can be controlled.

What are the signs and symptoms that I should report to my nurse?

1. Feeling much more tired than usual.
2. Increased shortness of breath with or without activity.
3. Swelling of abdomen, legs, ankles, or feet.
4. Dry cough or chest congestion (especially at night when you lie down).
5. Loss of appetite.
6. Nausea.
7. A decrease in urination during the day but an increase at night.
8. A feeling of chest tightness or a feeling that your heart is skipping beats.
9. Leg cramps or muscle weakness.
10. Inability to think clearly.
11. Anytime you just feel that your condition is starting to worsen.

What can I do to stay healthy?

1. Follow your low sodium diet. Your diet is _____.
2. Exercise regularly if you are able.
3. Get adequate rest and relaxation.
4. Avoid smoking and alcohol consumption.
5. Keep all doctor appointments.
6. Take your medications every day as prescribed by your doctor.
7. Learn all about the medications you are taking and what they do.
8. Use your HomMed® monitor everyday at the same time. Your monitor time is _____.

The more you know about your heart failure, the better you can manage it. The better you manage your heart failure, the better your chances are for living a longer fuller life.

Call (724) 431-3289 (Monday - Friday 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.) **or**
1-800-245-3042 (**after** 4:30 p.m. and weekends) if you have any questions or problems.