

Managing Heart Failure: When to Take Action

A heart failure action plan can be used to help you manage heart failure and can be divided into three zones: green zone, yellow zone, and red zone.

Green Zone: (Good Control)	Actions
<p>Your heart failure is in good control if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> You are able to do your normal activities Your weight is stable/unchanged You do not have any new shortness of breath There is no increased or new swelling in the legs or bloating of the stomach You do not have trouble breathing when you sleep 	<p>Since your symptoms are under control:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep taking your medications as prescribed Weigh yourself every day Stay on a low-salt diet Restrict your fluids (as your healthcare provider told you) and limit alcohol intake Keep all appointments with your doctor / nurse practitioner (even if nothing has changed)

Yellow Zone: (Caution)	Actions
<p>Control of your heart failure is decreasing if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> You have less energy than normal You are more short of breath with activity You have new or increased shortness of breath at rest, or while sleeping There is increased swelling in the legs or bloating in the stomach You have increased cough Your weight increases by up to 2 lbs. (0.9 kg) overnight, or up to 5 lbs. (2.3 kg) in 3 days 	<p>Because of worsening HF symptoms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> You should contact your doctor or nurse practitioner in order to be seen in clinic or hospital, or to get advice on your medications You may need to adjust your medications, such as increasing dose of "water pills" (diuretic) Check your diet to lower salt intake Restrict your fluids – aim for 6 cups(8oz) daily Avoid alcohol intake

Red Zone: (Medical Emergency)	Actions
<p>Your heart failure needs attention right away if you have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yellow zone symptoms for more than 2 days Increasing shortness of breath, or new cough A new irregular or rapid heartbeat Light-headedness, chest pain or pressure Gained more than 2 lbs. (0.9 kg) weight overnight, or more than 5 lbs. (2.3 kg) in 3 days 	<p>You should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> contact your doctor or nurse practitioner IMMEDIATELY – you need to be seen OR go to the nearest hospital Emergency Department or call 911