

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
Your heart failure is in good control if: - 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	Since your symptoms are under control: - 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
Control of your heart failure is decreasing if: - 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	Because of worsening HF symptoms: 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
Your heart failure needs attention right away if you have: - 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	You should: contact your doctor or nurse practitioner IMMEDIATELY – you need to be seen OR go to the nearest hospital Emergency Department or call 911