

Redesigning Heart Failure Materials

Rosemary Gill, RN, MS
Veterans Health Education Coordinator
VA Palo Alto HealthCare System

VA Palo Alto CHF Process Improvement Team

Interdisciplinary team with staff from:

- Office of Process Improvement
- Inpatient Medicine
- Primary Care
- Nursing
- Pharmacy
- Patient Education

Project Aim :

Reduce CHF
readmission rates for
the VA Palo Alto HCS

Sub-Project:
Inpatient and Outpatient
Education Project

...

EPRP

Indicator statement: HF patients discharged home with written instructions or educational material given to patient or caregiver at discharge or during the hospital stay addressing all of the following:

- activity level
- diet
- discharge medications
- follow-up appointment
- weight monitoring
- what to do if symptoms worsen

Previously: too much information all
at once



Inpatient Education

- Created “survival skills” folder with 5 pages of critical education materials
- Given to the patient on admission
- Reviewed over the course of the admission
- Teaching checklist for what has been covered



Heart Failure Patient Teaching Checklist

Part 1: Admission and Duration of Hospitalization

Your provider has documented that you have heart failure. This maybe one of the reasons you came to the hospital. It is important to know your symptoms and how to manage yourself. We'd like to go over some important information.

Date Initials

- _____ _____ 1. Daily weights (Do you have a VA scale at home?)
- _____ _____ 2. What to do if symptoms worsen:
- Weight gain of more than 2 or 3 pounds in one day.
 - Increase in shortness of breath.
 - Increase in leg swelling.
- _____ _____ 3. Diet/fluid restriction (review and provide a copy of the Sodium and Fluid Restrictions for Heart failure handout)
- _____ _____ 4. Activity level (Do you have any questions about your activity level?)
- _____ _____ 5. Review medications related to heart failure

Additional references can be found on
Krames on Demand

Part 2: Upon Discharge

Date Initials

- _____ _____ 1. Home Telehealth referral: 650-493-5000 ext: 62258
- _____ _____ 2. Your follow up appointment:
- An appointment has been made for you on _____
 - If you do not hear about your appointment within 3 days, please call the Discharge Planner at 650-493-5000 ext: 69238
- _____ _____ 3. Place medicine discharge instructions in packet.

Unit

Initials

Signature/Title

Unit

Initials

Signature/Title

Unit

Initials

Signature/Title

Unit

Initials

Signature/Title

PATIENT EDUCATION



**Bring this folder to your
discharge follow-up
appointment on:**

Admission – Heart Failure

Your Self-Management Tool for Hospital Stay

Instructions to the Patient: Tracking weight daily is important. Use this flow sheet to work with your team to stay informed and to prepare for discharge.

Your weight at admission is _____ pounds. *Not sure? Ask your nurse or doctor. We are happy to help.*
Daily weights are an excellent way to track control of heart failure.

Step 1: Get Informed

Areas that I would like further education about include (check all that apply):

- Daily Weights Low Salt Diet
 Warning Signs/Symptoms Medications

Step 2: Chart Your Progress

Write in your weight daily. If your weight changes by more than 2-3 pounds/day or 5 pounds/week at home, call your doctor.

Date						
Weight (lbs)						

Step 3: Prepare for Discharge

Answer these questions prior to leaving:

- 1) What is my new target weight? _____ (lbs)
- 2) Do I have a VA scale at home? Yes No (circle one)
If not, ask your doctor to order one.
- 3) What is my water pill and what dose should I take? _____
Discuss this with your doctor before discharge.

Patient Name

Heart Failure (HF)

What is HF?

If you have been diagnosed with “heart failure”, it means your heart is not pumping as well as it should. It does NOT mean your heart has failed or that it has stopped beating.

What are the signs and symptoms of HF?

- Weight gain
- Low energy
- Swelling in ankles, feet or legs
- Shortness of breath
- Confusion

Call the Advice Nurse at the Telephone Care Program (TCP) at 1-800-455-0057 if:

- You have more trouble breathing
- You gain more than 2 pounds in one day or 5 pounds in one week
- Your feet or ankles swell more than usual

If you have these other symptoms, notify your provider:

- You pass water less
- You get tired faster
- You begin to cough at night
- You think you are having side effects from your medications
- You faint or become dizzy
- You have pain or tightness in your chest

Activity

HF may prevent you from being as active as you once were.

The following is a list of some general guidelines for physical activity:

- Avoid over exertion, especially activity that causes dizziness, moderate shortness of breath, or chest discomfort.
- Avoid physical activity in extreme temperatures or when you do not feel well
- Avoid physical activity 1-2 hours after eating.
- Avoid tasks that require lifting heavy objects.
- If it hurts or causes pain, it is wrong! Avoid activities that cause you pain.
- Short walks are a good way to begin your physical activity.

Don't exercise beyond outlined recommendations from your provider.

Remember, “More is not always better.” It's important to pace your activity. Talk to your Health Care Provider if you would like a formal exercise program.

Rest

Planning rest periods throughout the day allows for your heart muscle to regain its strength. You may feel better if you take periodic naps. Be sure to put your feet up.

Special thanks to our colleagues at the Louis Stokes Cleveland VA for sharing their educational materials.



Sodium and Fluid Restrictions for Heart Failure

Limit sodium to 2000 milligrams per day

This is about the amount of sodium in 1 teaspoon of salt, or about the size of your fingertip.

Even if you don't add salt to the foods you eat or when you cook, you may still be getting a lot of sodium in your diet. Most foods that are canned or processed have a lot of sodium. Frozen dinners are also very high in sodium. Almost all restaurant meals (especially fast food places) have a lot of sodium.

Use less added salt



High in Sodium

Salt	Onion salt
Seasoned salt	Garlic Salt
Soy sauce	MSG
Baking soda	Bouillon cubes
Baking powder	Tenderizers
Fish sauce	Teriyaki sauce
Worcestershire sauce	

Use these instead

Lemon juice	Low sodium broth
Fresh garlic	Vinegar
Fresh onion	Black pepper
Fresh or dried herbs	Hot peppers
Salt-free herb and spice mixes (like Mrs. Dash®)	Hot pepper sauce (like Tabasco®)

Limit canned foods



High in sodium

Canned soup
Canned vegetables
Canned meats
Canned fish (tuna, sardines, anchovies)
Canned vegetable juices (tomato or V8® juice)

Try this instead:

- Buy fresh or frozen vegetables
- Rinse and drain canned foods, do not use the liquid in the can
- Look for "no salt added" canned foods. Be careful, though! Some things labeled "reduced salt" still have a lot of sodium or salt.

Limit processed foods



High in sodium

American cheese
Processed cheese spread
Packaged dinner mixes (like Hamburger Helper®)
Instant noodle lunches
Ramen noodles
Lunch meat (bologna, salami)

Cottage cheese
Frozen dinners
Instant hot cereal
Flavored rice/pasta mixes (like macaroni and cheese, Rice-a-Roni®)

Sodium and Fluid Restrictions for Heart failure

Limit salted foods



High in sodium

Salted crackers
Salted popcorn
Salted chips
Salted pretzels
Salted nuts and seeds

Try this instead:

- Unsalted chips, pretzels or crackers
- Unsalted nuts
- Sprinkle popcorn with dried herbs

Limit cured foods



High in sodium

Ham
Hot dogs
Sausage
Koshered meat
Smoked fish

Pickles
Sauerkraut

Pastrami
Corned beef
Bacon
Smoked meat
Olives
Kim Chee

Try this instead:

- Turkey, chicken or roast beef in sandwiches
- Turkey bacon, turkey sausage, turkey or chicken hot dogs are usually lower in fat. However, many still have a lot of sodium.

Fluid Restriction



Use these Measurements to help you track your fluid intake:

1 cup = 8 ounces
(oz)=240 cc

4 cups = 32 ounces (oz)
= 1 quart (qt) = 1000 cc
= 1 liter (l)

1 milliliter (ml) = 1 cc

1 ounces (Oz) = 30 cc

Your provider may limit the amount of liquid you drink each day, including any liquids taken with medications. Drinking too many liquids may force your heart to work harder. Fluids are foods that are liquid at room temperature. All of the items listed below count towards your fluid intake.

Fluids: Water; Juice; Ice cubes; Coffee; Milk; Cream; Popsicle; Soup; Tea; Soups

Foods: Yogurt; Pudding; Ice Cream; Sherbet; Gelatin (Jell-O);

Suggestions to help with Thirst

To keep your mouth from getting dry: suck on hard candies, lemon slices; use a humidifier; and chewing gum.

Common Medications for Heart Failure

Type	How it Works	Important Information	Report to Your Provider
Digoxin (Heart Pill)	Helps your heart pump stronger	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not skip doses 	Loss of appetite, nausea, vomiting, yellow vision, blurred vision, heart skipping beats, heart beating faster or slower than usual.
Diuretics (Water Pill)	Water pills help rid your body of excess water in your lungs or feet and ankles.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take early in the day. • Stand up slowly to avoid dizziness. 	Dizziness, weakness, skin rash, sudden weight changes, abdominal or muscle cramps, swelling of feet or legs.
Potassium	Replaces minerals which may be lost through diuretics.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take with meals to lessen stomach distress. • Dizziness, light headedness can occur until you adjust to the dosage. 	Nausea, vomiting, confusion, leg cramps, numbness or tingling in hands, feet, or lips, irregular heartbeat, weakness or heaviness in legs.
Ace Inhibitors (Blood Pressure/ Heart Pill)	Lowers the blood pressure and slows your heart rate. This lessens the work your heart has to do.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not take other medicines unless discussed with your provider. • Have blood pressure checked regularly. 	Headache, rash, racing heartbeat, dizziness that does not go away, swelling of face, mouth, hands, feet, trouble breathing or swallowing.
Beta Blockers (Blood Pressure/ Heart Pill)	Lowers the blood pressure and slows your heart rate. This lessens the work your heart has to do.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drowsiness, dizziness, light headedness can occur until you adjust to the dosage. • Do not stop abruptly. 	Dizziness that does not go away, swelling of face, mouth, hands, feet, trouble breathing or swallowing.

Discharge Home – Heart Failure

Your Self-Management Tool for Home

Instructions to the Patient: Self care for heart failure is important to keep you out of the hospital. This sheet will help you manage your care.

Step 1: Weigh Daily

My Discharge Weight _____ (lbs) on _____ (date)

 <i>Date</i> <i>Weight (lbs)</i>						
--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Step 2: Take Your Pills

My Water Pills:

<i>Name</i>	<i>Dose</i>	<i>Time of Day</i>
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Step 3: Know Your Warning Signs

If you have any of these warning signs, call the Advice Nurse at the Telephone Care Program (TCP) at 800-455-0057.

- 1) Weight gain of more than 2 or 3 pounds in one day, or 5 pounds in one week.
- 2) Increase in shortness of breath.
- 3) Increase in leg swelling.

Bring this sheet to your appointment.

Follow up appointment: _____

Patient Name: _____

Outpatient Booklet

- Revised from Huntington, West Virginia VA booklet with sections from Cleveland VA
- PACT RN Care Manager works with the patient over time – either in person or by phone





Living with Heart Failure

A Patient's Guidebook



Contents

- What is heart failure?
- Energy tips
- Diet, salt and fluid
- Dry weight
- Meds
- Exercises
- Sexual relations
- Stress

Design

- Easy to read
- Lots of white space
- Nice graphics

Food	Choose	Limit
<p>Vegetables</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♥ Any fresh or frozen vegetable ♥ Low-sodium canned vegetables, low sodium tomato or V8™ juice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♥ Regular canned vegetables ♥ Regular canned vegetable juices such as tomato juice or V-8™ juice ♥ Sauerkraut ♥ Pickles and pickled vegetables, such as relish, sauerkraut, kim chee ♥ Frozen vegetables prepared in sauces

Milk & Milk Products



- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♥ 1% milk, fat free milk ♥ low fat yogurt | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♥ Buttermilk ♥ Milkshakes |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♥ Substitute 8 oz. milk for one of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 4 oz. evaporated milk - 4 oz. condensed milk - 1/3 cup dry milk powder | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♥ Malted milk ♥ Natural cheese ♥ Processed cheese ♥ Processed cheese food |

Limiting Fluid

Healthy kidneys balance the amount of fluid that enters and leaves the body. If your kidneys cannot maintain this fluid balance, you may need to limit your fluid intake. Some people with heart failure may need to limit the amount of fluids they take in to prevent fluid build up in the lungs, stomach and legs. Ask your provider if you need to limit your fluids and what that fluid limit should be. You can write that amount here:

What Counts as a Fluid?

Fluids are foods that are liquid at room temperature. All of the foods listed below count toward your fluid intake.

- ♥ Water for drinking and taking medications
- ♥ Ice cubes and ice chips (size varies)
- ♥ Coffee and tea
- ♥ Soda pops and other soft drinks
- ♥ Milk, cream, & liquid creamer
- ♥ Juices, both fruit and vegetable
- ♥ Soups, both cream and clear
- ♥ Popsicle™ (1 double = 1/3 cup fluid = 3 ounces = 80 milliliters)
- ♥ Ice Cream, sherbets, & sorbets . cup = 4 ounces = 120 milliliters
- ♥ Gelatin (Jell-O™) . cup = 4 ounces = 120 milliliters

Figuring Fluid Amounts

Fluids can be measured in different ways. The chart below can help you convert among units of measure. For ease of use, numbers have been rounded off.

1 liter	4 cups	34 ounces	1,000 milliliters
1 quart	4 cups	32 ounces	1,000 milliliters
1 pint	2 cups	16 ounces	500 milliliters
1/2 pint	1 cup	8 ounces	250 milliliters
	1/2 cup	4 ounces	125 milliliters
	1/3 cup	3 ounces	80 milliliters
	1/4 cup	2 ounces	60 milliliters
2 Tbsp	1/8 cup	1 ounce	30 milliliters



Hints to Control Thirst

If you are limiting liquids, you may have a problem controlling thirst. The tips below can help you feel less thirsty without drinking extra fluids.

- ♥ Suck on a lemon wedge when you're thirsty. Try freezing it first too.
- ♥ Eat sour candy or chew gum to moisten your mouth. Choose sugar-free types if you have diabetes.

Diuretics (Water Pill)

Other Names

- ♥ Furosemide (Lasix)
- ♥ Ethacrynic acid (Edecrin)
- ♥ Bumetanide (Bumex)
- ♥ Metolazone (Zaroxolyn)
- ♥ Torsemide (Demadex)

Purpose

Diuretics are given to help reduce the amount of water in the body. They work by acting on the kidneys to increase the flow of urine. You have been instructed to take this medication because of fluid retention, which is a symptom of heart failure.

Administration/Dosage

- ♥ Furosemide is available in 20mg, 40mg and 80mg.
- ♥ Edecrin is available in 25mg and 50mg.
- ♥ Bumex is available in 0.5mg, 1mg and 2mg.
- ♥ Metolazone is available in 2.5mg and 5.0mg.
- ♥ Torsemide is available in 5mg, 10mg, 20mg and 100mg.

You may be instructed to take these in small or large amounts, one to four times a day. Take as directed by your doctor. If this medicine upsets your stomach, it may be taken with meals or milk.

If you miss a dose, take it as soon as possible. Do not double dose, unless told to do so by your provider.

Possible Side Effects

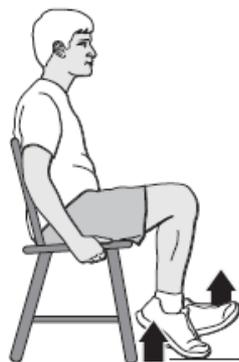
Dry mouth, increased thirst, dizziness or light-headedness, dehydration, transient deafness, muscle cramps or pain and unusual tiredness or weakness.

Though side effects can occasionally occur, it is rare to have all the listed side effects at once. These medicines are usually well-tolerated.

Special Instructions

If you have diabetes, diuretics may increase the amount of sugar in your blood, so monitor your blood levels regularly. Furosemide may cause your skin to be more sensitive to sunlight. Exposure may cause a skin rash, itching, redness or other discoloration of the skin or a severe sunburn.

Exercises You Can Do While Sitting



Ankle Pumps (Goal: Repeat 10 times)

1. Sit on the edge of your bed or a chair
2. Keep your back straight and feet flat on the floor
3. Push down on your toes as you lift your heels off the floor as far as you can
4. Return your feet to the starting position and lift your toes off the floor



Knee Extensions (Goal: Repeat 10 times)

1. Sit on the edge of your bed or a chair
2. Keep your back straight and feet flat on the floor
3. Straighten your leg without lifting your thigh on the surface and let your breath out (exhale)
4. Return your leg to the starting position as you take in a breath (inhale)
5. Do the same exercise with the other leg



Lower Flexion (Goal: Repeat 10 times)

1. Sit on the edge of your bed or a chair
2. Keep your back straight and feet flat on the floor
3. Raise your knee up towards your chest as you let your breath out (exhale)
4. Lower your leg back to the starting position as you take a breath (inhale)
5. Do the same exercise with the other leg

Materials Review

- All materials were carefully reviewed by a wide variety of content experts
- HF cardiologists reviewed all final drafts
- Materials updated again late 2013

Contact info:
Rosemary.Gill @ va.gov

...