

# Heart Care Instructions and Information

**1** Weigh yourself each morning after urinating and before breakfast. Record your weight in your diary. Your goal weight is \_\_\_\_\_ on your scale. If you gain \_\_\_\_pounds in \_\_\_\_\_days, take \_\_\_\_\_mg of \_\_\_\_\_ or contact your doctor's office.

**2** Follow the exercise recommendations from your doctor which are: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**3** Avoid salt (don't add salt to food and beware of prepared foods). Review the low-salt diet instructions from your doctor (usually 2000 mg sodium or less per day): \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**4** Take your medications as they are prescribed. Notify your doctor if you can't afford the medications.

**5** Follow all other instructions and recommendations from your doctor: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**6** Keep appointments at your doctor's office. Your next appointment is  
\_\_\_\_\_ with \_\_\_\_\_  
Day Date Time Name of provider

**7** Make appointments to have the following tests:  
blood test \_\_\_\_\_ with \_\_\_\_\_  
Day Date Time Name of provider  
echocardiogram \_\_\_\_\_ with \_\_\_\_\_  
Day Date Time Name of provider  
other test \_\_\_\_\_ with \_\_\_\_\_  
Day Date Time Name of provider

**8** Focus on one goal at a time. The goal you will work on between now and the next visit at the doctor's office is: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Name** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_  
Sign your name Write today's date

**If you have heart pain or chest discomfort that is not relieved by nitroglycerin or lasts longer than 20 minutes you may be having a heart attack. Call 911.**

## Call Your Doctor's Office If Any of the Following Occur:

- ✓ increasing shortness of breath
- ✓ lack of sleep due to shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- ✓ swelling or increased swelling in your legs and feet
- ✓ fainting or near blackouts
- ✓ chest discomfort (heart pain or angina) that is more frequent or more severe
- ✓ weight increase of \_\_\_\_\_ pounds in \_\_\_\_\_ days

## Information About Medications

Your doctor may have prescribed more than one medication to treat your heart failure. This section gives you information about the medications.

### Commonly Prescribed Heart Medications

Medication	Information
aspirin	Prevents heart attacks and strokes
diuretic	“Water pill” for managing excess fluid in ankles, lungs, and abdomen
digoxin	Decreases likelihood of needing treatment in a hospital
nitroglycerin	Used for chest discomfort (heart pain or angina) and sudden shortness of breath—increases the flow of blood to the heart
potassium	Replaces potassium lost from taking the diuretic or “water pill”
“statin”	Lowers cholesterol, prevents heart attacks and strokes
warfarin	Prevents strokes and other blood clots—most often used for patients with abnormal heart rhythm called atrial fibrillation

### People with Systolic Heart Failure (Weak Heart)

Medication	Information
angiotensin-converting enzyme (ACE) inhibitor	Improves heart muscle function, controls blood pressure, and contributes to a longer, healthier life
beta blocker	Improves heart muscle function, controls blood pressure, stabilizes heart rhythm, and contributes to a longer, healthier life
angiotensin II receptor blocker (ARB)	Used for people who experience side effects with ACE inhibitors
aldosterone antagonist	“Water pill” and hormone blocker used for some patients