

Discharge instructions for heart failure or other heart conditions

Have you recently experienced any of the following symptoms:

- breathlessness
- reduced exercise tolerance
- fatigue
- fluid retention (swelling of feet or legs)

This could be related to your heart and how it is currently working. The hospital doctor or nurse will discuss your specific concerns with you. This general information leaflet has been written to help you manage your health and help relieve your symptoms, once you have been discharged from hospital.

Follow-up

Arrangements for your care to be reviewed after discharge are:

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Medication

You may have been started on medication for your heart. Your nurse will go through this with you before your discharge. Please ask if you have any questions about your medications, as it is important that you continue to take them following discharge unless instructed otherwise by your medical team.

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Diet

Eating a balanced diet is important for your health; cut down on saturated fats and eat at least five portions of fruit and vegetables a day. It is also important not to use too much salt as it can raise your blood pressure and your body may retain water. The current daily allowance for salt is 6g = a teaspoonful. If you are overweight your heart has to work harder. Healthy eating will help you feel better and lose weight.

Alcohol

Drinking too much alcohol may damage the heart muscle. It is advised that you drink no more than:
1-2 units per day (female) 2-3 units per day (male)

(1 unit = small glass (100ml) of wine or half a pint of bitter/lager/cider)

Smoking

Stopping smoking is the single most important thing a smoker can do to live longer. Smoking can deprive the heart of vital oxygen, make the heart beat faster and raise the blood pressure for a short time after each cigarette. Support and nicotine replacement therapy are available to help you stop smoking. Please ask your nurse or doctor for further information.

Activity Level

Moderate exercise and activity can be beneficial to your heart. Try to continue your usual activity, building this up gradually, and balance it with rest. Remember exercise doesn't have to be strenuous to be beneficial.

Weight Monitoring

A common symptom of heart problems is fluid build-up in the body. An increase in weight is an early sign that fluid is building up. Monitor your weight at the same time every day. If you see an increase of 2.5kg (6lbs) over 2-3 days, or if you notice any ankle, leg or stomach swelling, seek medical advice.

Symptoms Worsening

If your symptoms get worse or you experience new symptoms such as:

- increasing shortness of breath and reduced tolerance of activity
- consistently awakening in the night, short of breath
- needing more pillows to sleep comfortably
- increasing swelling of legs or ankles
- worsening cough
- worsening dizziness

Seek medical advice.

Discharge information for heart failure and other heart conditions

Patient details (affix hospital label within patient medical record)

Name	Heart failure discharge instructions for patients with heart failure, or other heart conditions, given and discussed, addressing activity level, diet/ fluid intake, discharge medications, weight monitoring and worsening symptoms			<input type="checkbox"/>
DOB				
Hospital number				
Smoking history within last twelve months	YES/NO	Referred to Heart Failure Specialist Nurse	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
Smoking cessation advice given	YES/NO	Referred to Cardiac Rehab	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
Date:	Signed:	Echo within 48 hrs	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
Print:		ACE/ARB	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
		BB	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
		RENAL	<input type="checkbox"/>	MRA
		BP	<input type="checkbox"/>	RENAL
				BP <input type="checkbox"/>