

Heart Failure Management

When to Carry On and When to Seek Care



Every Day

- Weigh yourself in the morning before breakfast and write your weight down
- Eat low-salt/low-sodium foods
- Balance activity and rest periods
- Check for swelling in your feet, ankles, legs, and stomach
- Take your medications as prescribed



Safe Zone | Carry On

You're in the safe zone if:

- Your weight is stable (no weight gain of more than two pounds in one day)
- You breathe easily
- You are sleeping well
- You are able to do all of your usual activities

The safe zone means your symptoms are under control and you should continue:

- Taking all medications as prescribed
- Following a healthy eating plan and activity routine
- Going to all your healthcare appointments



Warning Zone | Seek Additional Care

You're in the warning zone if:

- You're experiencing weight gain of three pounds in one day or five pounds or more in one week
- You have new or increased shortness of breath
- You are not sleeping well and have difficulty breathing when lying down
- You are so tired or weak that you can't do your usual activities
- You have increased swelling in your legs, ankles, or feet

The warning zone may indicate that you need to:

- Talk with your doctor about adjusting your medications
- Improve your eating habits
- Follow an activity routine with a goal of 30–45 minutes per day
- Work closely with your healthcare team to make other appropriate changes



Medical Alert Zone | Call 911

You're in the medical alert zone if:

- You are having trouble breathing
- You are experiencing chest pain or pressure, or a strange feeling in the chest
- You are experiencing episodes of confusion or an inability to think clearly

The medical alert zone is serious and you should call 911 immediately if you are experiencing any of the above symptoms.

<https://www.heart.org/en/health-topics/heart-failure/living-with-heart-failure-and-managing-advanced-hf/physical-changes-to-report-for-heart-failure>