

You have Congestive Heart Failure

What is Congestive Heart Failure (CHF)?

- ✦ CHF means your heart cannot pump enough blood to meet your body's needs.

Watch and report any of the following symptoms and tell your doctor:

- ✦ Record your weight daily: Any increase of 3 - 5 pounds (2 kg) in 2 days,
- ✦ Any increase in shortness of breath,
- ✦ A cough, with bubbly sputum,
- ✦ Increased swelling of the ankles and or legs,
- ✦ Abdominal swelling or bloating,
- ✦ Any waking up at night in order to sit up or to do deep breathing.

Medications

- ✦ Your doctor will decide which medications are best for you.
- ✦ It is important to take your medications as the doctor prescribes.
- ✦ Do not stop taking any medications or adjust doses unless told by doctor or healthcare providers.
- ✦ Report any over-the-counter medications to your healthcare providers.
- ✦ Use one pharmacy for all your medication needs.
- ✦ Refill your prescriptions when you have a week supply left to avoid running out.
- ✦ The nurse or pharmacist will review your medications before you leave the hospital.

Exercise

- ✦ Talk to your doctor about daily activities, work, leisure time and exercise.
- ✦ Do not lift more than 10 pounds.
- ✦ Change positions slowly to avoid drop in blood pressure and feeling light-headed.
- ✦ To manage shortness of breath: Pace yourself and your activities to avoid getting too tired.

Meals

- ✦ Follow a low salt/sodium diet (less than 2,000 mg/day): limit processed meats, canned foods, pickles, and other foods high in salt/sodium.
- ✦ Read labels for salt/sodium content.
- ✦ Do not cook with salt or add it at the table.
- ✦ Limit fluid intake to six cups or 1500 mL per day. This includes all liquids: water, juice, tea, coffee, Jell-O, soup, ice cream etc (1 cup = 250 mL or 8 ounces).
- ✦ Follow a Heart Healthy Diet: low in saturated fat, trans fat, cholesterol, salt and sugar.

You and your family member can receive more information about Congestive Heart Failure by attending the **Trillium Health Centre's Heart Failure Education Program**. Please talk to your nurse for more details or call the Heart Function Clinic 1-416-521-4085 to arrange for an appointment.

Nurse's Signature _____ Date _____

Patient's Signature _____