



MDwise

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Heart Failure: Checking Your Weight Daily

When you have heart failure, you need to watch for changes in your weight. A sudden weight gain can mean more fluid is building up in your body and your heart failure is getting worse.

Learn to weigh yourself and keep a record of changes. This way, you can tell your doctor as soon as you notice any problems.

Weigh yourself daily

Weigh yourself at the same time each day, using the same scale. Do not wear shoes. Wear the same thing each time you weigh yourself, or wear nothing at all. The best time is in the morning after you go to the bathroom. Weigh yourself before breakfast. Do not have anything to drink first.

Learn what your "dry weight" is. This is how much you weigh without extra fluids. Talk with your doctor about how to find your dry weight. Write down your dry weight here:

_____.

Compare your daily weight to your dry weight. This will help you see if you have suddenly gained weight.

Keep a calendar next to your scale. Write your weight on it each day, and take it with you when you see your doctor. Use the same scale each time, and make sure that it is on a hard, flat surface.

Keep notes on how you feel each day so that your doctor can compare it with your weight. Write down whether you are having more



shortness of breath. Did your feet and ankles swell? Did you notice any puffiness in your legs?

Call your doctor if you notice a sudden weight gain, such as more than 2 to 3 pounds in a day or 5 pounds in a week. (Your doctor may suggest a different range of weight gain.) A sudden weight gain may mean that your heart failure is getting worse. Also tell your doctor about any slower weight gain you may have.

Watch your sodium and fluids

Your doctor may recommend that you limit sodium. Your doctor can tell you how much

sodium is right for you. Limiting sodium can help prevent fluid build-up in your body. This fluid build-up causes you to gain weight suddenly.

Your doctor may also ask you to limit how much fluid you drink. This also helps prevent fluid build-up.



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