

# Managing Heart Failure: When to take action

A heart failure action plan can be used to help you manage heart failure and can be divided into three zones: green zone, yellow zone and red zone.

Green Zone: (Good Control)	Actions
<p><b>Your heart failure is in good control</b> if you <u>do not</u> have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>trouble doing your normal activities</li> <li>any new shortness of breath</li> <li>any new swelling in the legs or bloating of the stomach</li> <li>any change in your usual weight</li> </ul>	<p>Since your symptoms are under control:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>keep taking your medications as prescribed</li> <li>weigh yourself every day</li> <li>stay on a low-salt diet</li> <li>restrict your fluids (as your healthcare provider told you)</li> <li>keep all appointments with your doctor / nurse practitioner (even if nothing has changed)</li> </ul>

Yellow Zone: (Caution)	Actions
<p><b>Control of your heart failure is decreasing</b> if you have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>less energy than normal</li> <li>more shortness of breath with activity</li> <li>new or increased shortness of breath at rest</li> <li>more swelling in the legs or bloating in the stomach</li> <li>trouble breathing while laying flat</li> <li>to raise your head with more pillows when lying down</li> <li>increased cough</li> <li>weight gain/increase of up to 2 lbs. (0.9 kg) overnight, or up to 5 lbs. (2.3 kg) in 3 days</li> </ul>	<p>Because of worsening HF symptoms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>you should contact your doctor or nurse practitioner</b> in order to be seen in clinic or hospital, or to get advice on your medications</li> <li>you may need to adjust your medications, such as increasing dose of "water pills" (diuretic)</li> <li>check diet to lower salt intake</li> <li>restrict your fluids – aim for 6 cups(8oz) daily</li> <li>avoid alcohol intake</li> </ul>

Red Zone: (Medical Alert)	Actions
<p><b>Your heart failure needs attention right away</b> if you have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>yellow zone symptoms for more than 2 days</li> <li>shortness of breath that is not getting better</li> <li>shortness of breath at rest</li> <li>gained more than 2 lbs. (0.9 kg) weight overnight, or more than 5 lbs. (2.3 kg) in 3 days</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>contact your doctor or nurse practitioner IMMEDIATELY</b> – you need to be seen OR</li> <li><b>go to the nearest hospital Emergency Department or call 911</b></li> </ul>