\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_’s **Care Guide**

I came to hospital on \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and left on \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

I came in because I have Heart Failure

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My medications, their purpose and possible side effects, have been explained to me

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| **STATUS** | **HOW I’M FEELING** | **WHAT TO DO** |
| **Expected** | I may feel tired or weaker than usual when I first leave the hospital. It will take time to return to my normal activities.  Overall:   * I am able to do most of my normal activities but they may take more time * I am able to breathe normally * my cough is not worse than usual * my feet, legs, or stomach are not swollen more than usual | I should:   * take lots of short rest breaks throughout the day * not wait until I feel exhausted to rest * not do activities in the extreme heat or cold, or when I do not feel well * avoid heavy lifting * consume fluids in recommended amounts * avoid increasing the salt in my diet |
| **Worrisome** | I have:   * gained **3 to 4 pounds (2 kilograms)** in **2 days**   *OR*  **5 pounds** in **1 week (2.5 kilograms)**   * more shortness of breath than usual, even when resting * swollen legs, feet, or stomach more than usual * been feeling very tired and not able to do my normal activities * a cough that is getting worse * been feeling dizzy or lightheaded * vomiting or diarrhea that lasts more than 2 days * less appetite * I have more trouble breathing when I lie flat and need to raise myself up in order to breathe better. | I should:   * call my primary care providerfor an appointment the same day or next day * adjust my **Furosemide (Lasix),** but onlyif I have been instructed on how to do so by my health care team |
| **Emergency** | I feel:   * very short of breath * like I am going to faint * my heart beating irregularly or very fast, which makes me feel dizzy * chest pain or heaviness that does not go away * unusually sleepy or confused * sudden loss of strength or numbness in the face, arms or legs, or trouble with vision or speech | Call 911  **Do not drive yourself to the hospital.**   * **Rest** – stop what you are doing right away * Sit upright. Try to take slow, deep breaths. * **Take** nitroglycerin, as prescribed |

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| **ACTIVITY** | **WHAT TO DO** |
| Medication and Puffers | Make sure you understand any medication changes that were made in hospital. If you have questions talk to your pharmacist or primary care provider. |
| Fluid Intake | Do not drink more than 1.5 litres (6 cups) of ANY fluid each day.  This includes ANY liquid, even ice cream, yogurt, soup, juice, milk, or coffee. |
| Weight | 1. Weigh yourself each morning before you eat breakfast or drink any liquids. 2. Write down or record your weight. 3. Compare your weight each day to the day before.   To be sure your weight is accurate:   * Use the same scale each day * Go to the washroom and empty your bladder before taking your weight * Wear similar (or no clothing) each day when you weigh yourself * Do not eat before taking your weight |
| Swelling | Check for swelling in your feet, ankles, legs, and stomach |
| Blood Sugar  (glucose) | If you have diabetes, your blood sugar levels may be higher or lower than usual after being in hospital. Your diabetes medicine or insulin may have been changed during your admission. Make sure you understand these changes and what you should be doing to manage your diabetes. Connect with your primary care provider or diabetes education team as soon as possible |
| Driving | Do not drive if you feel short of breath or if you have fainted recently. Ask your primary care provider when it is safe to for you to start driving again. |
| Hand Washing and Staying Well | To protect yourself and others from germs wash your hands often with warm soapy water for fifteen seconds, rinse well.  If you have friends or relatives who have had a cough, cold or fever in the last few days, ask them to refrain from visiting until they are well. |
| Nutrition | Eat a low-sodium (salt) diet. Have no more than 2000 milligrams (about 1 teaspoon) of salt a day.  Check the labels on your foods to see how much sodium is in each serving.  Don’t add salt during or after cooking. |
| Exercise  and Physical Activity | When you start to exercise again, start at a slower pace until you feel back to normal.  Balance activity and rest. Stop any activity if you feel pain, become very tired, or have trouble breathing. |
| Return to Work | Ask your primary care provider about when it is ok for you to return to work or if you will need a modified work schedule. |
| Sexual activity | Sex is best when you are well rested and relaxed. Choose positions that put less stress or strain on your body. If you have questions, talk to your health care provider. |
| Smoking | Quitting smoking will improve your heart disease, breathing and overall health. If you want to learn more about quitting, talk to your primary care provider and local pharmacist about your options or call your local public health department to attend a workshop. |
| Immunization | Ask your primary care provider about vaccines that may be right for you, such as the annual flu shot and vaccines to prevent chest infections. |

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Go see \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Location: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Booked

Go see \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Location: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Booked

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| **Topic** | **Organization/Person** | **Contact Information** |
| Worrisome symptoms and general follow up | Primary care provider |  |
| Questions about your medications | Your pharmacist |  |
| Heart Failure information | Ted Rogers Heart Function | Website: [www.tedrogersheartfunction.ca](http://www.tedrogersheartfunction.ca) |
| Heart Failure information | Heart and Stroke Foundation | Phone: 416-489-7111  Website: [www.heartandstroke.ca/heart/conditions/heart-failure](http://www.heartandstroke.ca/heart/conditions/heart-failure) |
| Questions about your diet | Dieticians of Canada | For services: <https://www.dietitians.ca/Your-Health/Find-A-Dietitian/Find-a-Dietitian.aspx>  Or search for specific information on their website: [www.unlockfood.ca](http://www.unlockfood.ca) |
| Healthy Eating | Heart & Stroke Foundation | [www.heartandstroke.ca/get-healthy/healthy-eating](http://www.heartandstroke.ca/get-healthy/healthy-eating) |