# Heart Failure Self-Care

This playbook provides a step-by-step guide to self-monitoring and managing heart failure, including tracking symptoms, fluid management, and understanding when to contact healthcare professionals.

### Step 1: Symptom Diary

Maintain a daily diary to record heart failure symptoms, including shortness of breath, fatigue, and swelling in the legs, ankles, and feet.

### Step 2: Weigh Regularly

Weigh yourself at the same time each day, preferably in the morning, using the same scale to monitor for sudden weight gain which may indicate fluid retention.

### Step 3: Fluid Intake

Manage your fluid intake according to your doctor's recommendations, which typically involve restricting the amount of fluids you consume to avoid fluid overload.

### Step 4: Salt Restriction

Adhere to a low-sodium diet by avoiding high-salt foods and not adding extra salt to meals to help prevent fluid retention.

### Step 5: Medication Adherence

Take prescribed heart failure medications regularly and as directed by your healthcare provider to manage your condition effectively.

### Step 6: Lifestyle Modifications

Incorporate lifestyle changes such as regular physical activity, quitting smoking, and managing stress to improve heart function and overall well-being.

### Step 7: Recognize Warning Signs

Be vigilant about new or worsening symptoms such as rapid weight gain, increased swelling, or shortness of breath, which may indicate your heart failure is worsening.

### Step 8: Seek Medical Help

Contact your healthcare provider or seek immediate medical attention if you experience severe symptoms or if your usual symptoms significantly worsen.

## General Notes

### Emergency Plan

Always have an emergency plan in place, including having contact information for your healthcare provider and knowing the location of the nearest hospital.

### Regular Check-ups

Schedule and attend regular check-ups with your healthcare provider to monitor the progression of your heart failure and adjust your treatment plan as needed.

### Support System

Establish a support system of family, friends, or support groups who understand your condition and can provide assistance and encouragement.