

# My Heart Failure Checklist

Here are steps that I can take to best manage my heart failure:



- Listen to my body and check for signs that my heart failure might be getting worse:

[How Heart Failure Affects My Life.](#)

- Swelling in my feet, legs, ankles or stomach
- Sudden weight gain
- Needing to sit in a chair or to prop myself up with pillows to be able to sleep, breathe more easily
- Feeling winded even with small bouts of activity



- Weigh myself on the same scale every morning before breakfast and write it down in [My Daily Heart Failure Tracker.](#)



- Eat foods low in salt (sodium) [CardioSmart.org/Salt.](#)



- Take my medications as directed, set up reminders and consider using a pill box to pre-sort medications; Remember that many medications need to be adjusted over time, and sometimes when I'm doing and feeling well. Always report any side effects or other concerns, including how to best juggle multiple medications and the cost. [CardioSmart.org/Meds.](#)



- Adopt heart healthy habits such as getting regular exercise, eating well, not smoking, and lowering stress.



- Know my heart failure triggers by being familiar with what makes my symptoms worse (for example, periods of stress, eating out, travel, alcohol, etc.) [How Heart Failure Affects My Life.](#)



- Accept the need for frequent breaks because of the added strain on my heart, I may tire easily after periods of activity, travel, etc.



- Stay connected to the things I love to do, even if it means I need to participate in a different way or cut back a bit. It's OK if daily tasks seem to take longer.



- Manage my other conditions, including telling my care team about any feelings of continued sadness or anxiety and trouble sleeping or focusing.



- Get a flu shot every year to prevent illness and avoid complications. Ask if you need a pneumonia vaccine too.



- Find my village, those positive people who will help to buoy my spirits and support and advocate for me when needed.

**"Remember, heart failure is not something that gets treated and then fixed and part of your past. It's a day-to-day, ongoing journey." — Person living with heart failure**