**HOW AM I DOING TODAY? A GUIDE FOR CHF PATIENTS.**

**EVERYDAY**
- Weigh yourself in the morning before breakfast and write it down
- Take your medicine the way you should
- Check for swelling in your feet, ankles, legs and stomach
- Eat low salt foods
- Balance activity and rest periods
- Which Heart Failure Zone are you today...Green, Yellow or Red?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GREEN ZONE</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Doing well</td>
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<tr>
<td>Managing normal activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No change in symptoms</td>
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<tr>
<td>No weight gain or swelling</td>
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<tr>
<td>Usual medications are controlling symptoms</td>
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</tbody>
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**YELLOW ZONE**
- Gain more than 3 pounds over 1 day or 5 pounds in a week OR a gain of less weight than above AND also have any of the **symptoms below:**
  - New **swelling** in feet or ankles
  - **Bloating** abdomen
  - Dry, harsh **cough or wheezing** that will not go away
  - **Side effects** from medications
  - More **tired** than usual and/or less energy than usual
  - The need to use **2 or more pillows** or sleep in recliner to breathe comfortably
  - More **shortness of breath** than usual with routine activity
  - Just don’t feel well – unusually **restless/ anxious/uneasy**
  - **Dizzy or light-headed**
  - **Chest discomfort**
  - **Loss of appetite**

**WHAT TO DO**
- Continue taking medications as prescribed
- Continue to follow prescribed diet
- Keep all doctor appointments
- Continue to check and record weight every day
- Maintain routine activity

**RED ZONE**
- **Severe shortness of breath** – symptoms are VERY different than usual
- **Chest pain** that does not go away even after taking 3 nitroglycerin doses
- **Heart racing**
- Feeling like you are going to faint
- A feeling of **impending doom** – something is very wrong

**WHAT TO DO**
- Call 911 NOW!

**EVERYDAY**
- Write down (or have someone write for you) what your concerns are and why you think something is wrong
  - Be VERY SPECIFIC – write down:
    - Exactly what your symptoms are, how long you have had them and how they are different than usual (ie. I gained ____ pounds in ____ days or I am more short of breath than usual)
    - Anything that may have changed since your last visit (ie. My family doctor discontinued my lasix last week)

- Call your cardiologist. If you don’t have a cardiologist, call your primary care provider. Tell them:
  - Your name
  - Your doctor’s name
  - Your history (ie. I have a history of heart failure)
  - Any measurements you may have taken (weight, blood pressure, pulse)
  - What your symptoms are and how they have changed (ie. For 2 days now, I have been so tired it’s hard to get out of bed)
  - Anything that you have written down about your concerns
  - You need an appointment today (or tomorrow at the latest)

- If you cannot get an appointment today or tomorrow, contact the Ellis Medicine Community Wellness program at 518.243.3333 for an immediate appointment. Tell them you need the cardiac-CHF program.
- Emphasize that your goal is to stay out of the hospital