Dear Patient,

Following your hospital stay at Health Quest, we would like to provide you with this booklet, which is designed to help guide you through the days ahead. If you have questions that aren’t answered here, be sure to reach out to your doctor or another member of your healthcare team. They will be happy to help you. (See pg. 22 for a list of resources.)

We hope you have felt well cared for while you were with us. We pride ourselves on offering the very best in heart failure treatment in a warm and supportive environment. In fact, Vassar Brothers Medical Center has received both the Get with the Guidelines® – Gold Achievement Award for Heart Failure (April 2012–2013) and the IPRO Quality Award for Improved Transition of Care. But what matters most to us is the personal experience of each patient we are privileged to serve.

It’s been our pleasure to care for you. Be well.

www.health-quest.org
| 01. | WHAT IS HEART FAILURE? |
| 04. | WHAT TESTS AND TREATMENTS ARE THERE? |
| 06. | WHAT MEDICATIONS DO I TAKE? |
| 07. | HOW SHOULD I EAT? |
| 13. | HOW DO I STAY ACTIVE? |
| 16. | HOW DO I STAY SAFE? |
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| 20. | MY PERSONAL HEALTH RECORD |
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WHAT IS HEART FAILURE?

Heart failure doesn’t actually mean that your heart is failing. It just means that your heart isn’t working as well as it should.

A healthy heart is strong enough to pump blood out of the heart. A weakened heart provides a slower blood flow to the body, which can cause blood to back up into the lungs and veins. This is heart failure.

Heart failure can vary. When the heart can’t pump blood out, it’s called “systolic failure.” In other cases, the heart can’t relax properly to fill with blood. That’s called “diastolic failure.” Some people have both problems.

Heart failure isn’t just about the heart. It also affects the kidneys’ ability to get rid of sodium (salt) and water. The extra water can build up in your body and cause your feet, ankles and legs to swell. Water can build up in your lungs, too. “Congestive heart failure” means that your heart’s decreased ability to pump blood has led to excess fluid in the lungs.
HOW DID I GET HEART FAILURE?

Heart failure is not something that happens overnight. Usually, it develops slowly and over time. Many diseases and events can cause it. Here are a few:

- Coronary artery disease
- Past heart attack
- High blood pressure
- Lung disease
- Heart valve disease or infection
- Heart muscle disease
- Heart defects present at birth
- Heart damage from alcohol or drug abuse
- Heart damage due to diabetes
- Abnormal heart rhythms
- Thyroid disorders

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF HEART FAILURE?

Heart failure has many different symptoms. They might come and go. Here is a list of the most common symptoms:

- Shortness of breath during physical activity or even while lying in bed
- Waking up due to shortness of breath
- Frequent coughing or wheezing
- Bloating
- Swollen feet, legs and ankles
- The need to urinate more often during the night
- Sudden weight gain
- Nausea or loss of appetite
- Fatigue or weakness
- Confusion or decreased alertness
- Rapid or irregular heartbeat
- Swollen neck veins
CAN HEART FAILURE BE MANAGED?

Yes! You can manage your heart failure. In fact, there’s a lot you can do to control your health and how well you feel, even with heart failure. There are many medications and procedures that can help, too. The best way to start is by following these six steps:

1. Take the medications your doctor gives you
2. Go to your doctor appointments
3. Pay attention to how you feel and to your weight
4. Watch what you eat and drink
5. Get proper exercise
6. Limit alcohol and caffeine, and do not use tobacco
WHAT TESTS AND TREATMENTS ARE THERE?

There are several tests and treatments for people with heart failure. Four of the most common tests are listed here:

1. Echocardiogram (ECHO)
2. Stress Test
3. Cardiac Catheterization
4. CT Scans/MRI/Nuclear Scans

Your doctor might order one or more of these for you. They’re designed to assess the status of your heart failure. They may also help to identify treatments for you, or they might help to reduce your symptoms. You can read more about each of these tests below and on the next page.

1. THE ECHOCARDIOGRAM (ECHO)

An echocardiogram is a way for your doctor to get a good look at your heart. Sound waves are moved over the heart to create pictures that show how well the heart is pumping and how healthy it is.

Echocardiograms also measure the ejection fraction, or EF. This is the amount of blood your heart pumps with each beat. The normal EF of the pumping heart is 50% to 60%. An EF of less than 40% may indicate heart failure.
2. THE STRESS TEST

This test is used to measure how well your heart responds to stress. It compares how well your heart pumps when you’re resting with how well your heart pumps when you’re exercising. For the exercise part of the test, you might be asked to walk on a treadmill or pedal a stationary bicycle. If you can’t perform these exercises, a drug can be used to mimic the effects of exercise on your body.

3. CARDIAC CATHETERIZATION

Cardiac catheterization is a technique used to diagnose and treat some heart conditions. During a cardiac catheterization, a thin, flexible tube is inserted into one of your blood vessels and threaded into your heart. Your doctor then uses the tube to access your heart to do tests or provide treatment. For example, your doctor might take small samples of blood or heart muscle through the tube. Cardiac catheterization can also be used to take pictures of your heart.

4. CT SCANS/MRI/NUCLEAR SCANS

CT Scans, MRIs and nuclear scans are all different ways to take pictures of your heart and check on how well it’s working.

These are a few of the many treatments and devices that are often used in people with heart failure:

- **Biventricular pacemaker**: This device can be helpful for patients with an electrical delay in their heart muscle.
- **Internal Cardioverter Defibrillator**: This device is used in patients with life-threatening abnormal heart rhythms.
- **Coronary Bypass Surgery or Surgery on Heart Valves**: These are surgeries done to correct physical problems with your heart.
WHAT MEDICATIONS DO I TAKE?

There are many medications used to treat heart failure and its symptoms. The chart below lists some of the most common.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TYPE</th>
<th>HOW THEY WORK</th>
<th>GENERIC (BRAND) NAME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ace Inhibitor or ARB</td>
<td>Lowers blood pressure</td>
<td>• Ramipril (Altace)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Decreases workload of the heart</td>
<td>• Lisinopril (Prinivil, Zestril)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Valsartan (Diovan)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SLows the heart rate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beta Blocker</td>
<td>Lowers blood pressure</td>
<td>• Metroprolol Succinate CR/XL</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Makes it easier for the heart to pump</td>
<td>• (Toprol-XL)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Helps the heart pump hard</td>
<td>• Carvedilol (Corgard, Carvil)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digoxin</td>
<td>Improves blood flow</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diuretic (water pill)</td>
<td>Gets rid of excess water</td>
<td>• Furosemide (Lasix)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reduces swelling (edema)</td>
<td>• Torsemide (Demadex)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isosorbide Dinitrate/</td>
<td>Lowers blood pressure</td>
<td>• Isosorbide Dinitrate (Isordil, Titrados, Dilrattle-SR)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hydralazine</td>
<td>Makes it easier for the heart to pump</td>
<td>• Hydralazine (Apresoline)</td>
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</table>

Over-the-counter (OTC) medications: Ask your doctor how OTC medications mix with your prescriptions.

TIPS FOR TAKING WATER PILLS (DIURETICS)

Most heart failure patients take diuretics or water pills. These are used to clear out the extra water that the body retains because of heart failure. The potassium that is lost in the urine may have to be replaced. Your doctor may order a potassium prescription or have you eat foods high in potassium, such as:

- Raisins and dates
- Fish
- Orange juice
- Bananas
- Squash
- Spinach
- Potatoes
- Tomato products

DIURETICS AND SLEEP

Here’s a tip for reducing overnight trips to the bathroom due to diuretics:
If you’re taking two doses of a diuretic or water pill, take the last dose between 4 PM and 5 PM. That way you will be less likely to have to use the bathroom during the night.
HOW SHOULD I EAT?

Making healthy food choices is always important for everyone. But it’s even more important for someone living with heart failure. Following the rules for healthy eating can make a big difference in how well you do with heart failure.

LIMIT YOUR SALT INTAKE

Salt is not good for your heart or your heart failure. People with heart failure should try to eat as little salt as possible. The problem with salt is that it contains sodium and sodium makes your body hold onto water. Extra water makes your heart work harder, so a low-sodium diet should be your goal.

A low-sodium diet usually means you are taking in no more than 1,500–2,000 mg of sodium a day. That’s about one teaspoon.

One teaspoon of salt = 2,000 mg sodium.
READING NUTRITION LABELS

Nutrition Facts
Serving Size 1 cup (30g)
Servings Per Container 12

Amount Per Serving
Calories 90
Calories from Fat 10

% Daily Value
Total Fat 1g 2%
Cholesterol 0 mg 0%
Sodium 100 mg 8%
Total Carbohydrate 22g 7%
Protein 3g 8%

Reading food labels is a good idea if you’re trying to limit salt or just trying to eat healthy in general. Most foods in the grocery store have food labels. Take a minute to read them before you decide to buy.

These are the key parts of the food label to consider:

• **Serving size:** This tells you how much of the food makes up one serving for one person
• **Servings per container:** One package may have more than one serving
• **Amount per serving:** Calories and nutrients in one serving
• **Sodium:** How much sodium is in one serving (remember, if you eat a double portion, you will also be eating double the amount of salt)

**Note:** The daily values on food labels are based on a healthy adult’s diet. Because you have heart failure, your daily values may differ. Check with your doctor.
TIPS FOR LIMITING YOUR SALT INTAKE

- Take the salt shaker off the table
- Don’t add salt to food when you’re cooking
- Get a cookbook with low-salt recipes
- Buy and eat only low-salt foods and snack on fresh/frozen fruits and vegetables as much as possible
- When you eat out, ask that your food be cooked without salt
- Try cooking with herbs and spices like dried onion and lemon instead of salt
- Avoid processed food
- Ask your doctor about using salt substitutes

ADD A NEW SPICE TO YOUR LIFE

Mix up this blended spice for a healthy substitute for salt.

Spice blend recipe (makes about 1/3 cup):
- 5 tsp onion powder
- 2 ½ tsp garlic powder
- 2 ½ tsp paprika
- 2 ½ tsp dry mustard
- 1 ½ tsp crushed thyme leaves
- ½ tsp white pepper
- ¼ tsp celery seed
WHAT FOODS CAN I EAT ON A LOW-SODIUM DIET?

WHAT FOODS SHOULD I AVOID?

It is good to select foods with no more than 140 mg salt per serving. Check the chart below and on the next page for some common foods that are high and low in sodium (salt).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FOOD GROUPS</th>
<th>RECOMMENDED FOODS</th>
<th>FOODS TO LIMIT</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grains</td>
<td>• Cooked cereals&lt;br&gt;• Plain rice&lt;br&gt;• Pasta&lt;br&gt;• Yeast bread made without salt&lt;br&gt;• Shredded or puffed wheat&lt;br&gt;• Puffed rice&lt;br&gt;• Rolls, bread, crackers not topped with salt</td>
<td>• Quick breads prepared with baking powder and baking soda&lt;br&gt;• Instant hot cereal&lt;br&gt;• Breads or crackers topped with salt&lt;br&gt;• Packaged starchy foods rice dishes, stuffing mixes, mac and cheese dinner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fruits/Vegetables</td>
<td>• All unsalted fresh, frozen or canned vegetables&lt;br&gt;• Salt-free tomato or vegetable juice&lt;br&gt;• Tomato sauce canned without salt&lt;br&gt;• Fresh, frozen or canned fruits&lt;br&gt;• Fruit juices</td>
<td>• Sauerkraut&lt;br&gt;• Pickled vegetables&lt;br&gt;• Tomato juice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meat/Protein</td>
<td>• Plain chicken&lt;br&gt;• Plain fish&lt;br&gt;• Plain poultry&lt;br&gt;• Eggs</td>
<td>• Bacon&lt;br&gt;• Sausage&lt;br&gt;• Deli: ham, roast beef, turkey&lt;br&gt;• Hot dogs&lt;br&gt;• Corned beef&lt;br&gt;• Any cured, smoked or canned meats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FOOD GROUPS</td>
<td>RECOMMENDED FOODS</td>
<td>FOODS TO LIMIT</td>
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<tr>
<td>Milk/Dairy</td>
<td>• Milk</td>
<td>• Buttermilk</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Yogurt</td>
<td>• Cottage cheese</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Low-sodium cheese</td>
<td>• Cheese spread (wash under cold water in sieve to remove most of sodium)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Ice cream</td>
<td>• Processed cheese</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Hard cheese like cheddar, Swiss, Monterey Jack, mozzarella</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Ice cream</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Hard cheese like cheddar, Swiss, Monterey Jack, mozzarella</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fats/Desserts/</td>
<td>• Unsalted nuts</td>
<td>• Salted nuts, chips or pretzels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snacks</td>
<td>• Fruit</td>
<td>• Commercial dessert mixes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Homemade pies without added salt</td>
<td>• Instant pudding</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Homemade pudding</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Sherbet</td>
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<tr>
<td>Seasonings/Condiments</td>
<td>• Lime juice</td>
<td>• Bouillon cubes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Pepper sauce</td>
<td>• Soy sauce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Fresh herbs</td>
<td>• Teriyaki sauce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Dried herbs</td>
<td>• Steak sauce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Spices</td>
<td>• Worcestershire, BBQ sauce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Vinegar</td>
<td>• Ketchup, mustard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Monosodium glutamate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Any seasoning with “salt” in name or on label</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Pickles, olives</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
OTHER DIETARY CONCERNS

Salt isn’t the only dietary concern for someone with heart failure. Like most people, you should also try to avoid fat and cholesterol. When you read food labels for sodium, be sure to check for fat and cholesterol content, too. The lower, the better.

WHAT ABOUT EATING OUT?

Heart failure shouldn’t prevent you from going out to eat. But, you should watch what you eat, just as you do at home.

Here are some tips you should follow when you’re eating out:

• Find out **what types of food are served** at the restaurant and see if they fit your diet. If a restaurant serves mainly fried food, avoid it.
• **Ask the restaurant** if meals can be cooked to order to meet your dietary needs.
• **Choose low-sodium** foods and avoid dishes that are pickled, smoked, cured or prepared with soy sauce or broth. These will be high in salt.
• Order your salad dressing **“on the side”** to help you use less. Or ask for oil and vinegar dressing, which generally contains less sodium.
• Order your meal **without gravy or cream sauce**. They’re usually salty and fatty.
• Choose juice, fruit or vegetables for an appetizer instead of a baked, breaded or fried item.
• Select entrées that are roasted, broiled or grilled instead of fried.
• Stay away from bread and rolls with salty, buttery crusts—they may be high in sodium. If you eat them, skip the butter.

ASK FOR HELP IF YOU NEED IT

If you need help figuring out a good diet for yourself and sticking to it, let your doctor know. He or she can refer you to a dietitian or nutritionist.
**HOW DO I STAY ACTIVE?**

_Having heart failure doesn’t mean you can’t stay active._ In fact, it’s important to stay as active as possible. Without some exercise, your heart will get weaker, you can get short of breath faster and your swelling can get worse. But, be sure to always talk with your doctor before starting a new exercise routine.

Here are some types of exercise to consider:
- Walking
- Swimming
- Leg and/or arm raises while sitting

You'll get tired exercising, so take regular breaks. Don't overdo it. Pace yourself and rest often.

_Hate to exercise? Can’t find the time? Don’t give up. There are many ways to exercise. Almost everyone can find something that works for them._

**Start by trying to identify the reasons you don’t exercise. Make a list.** Then think about how you can work around these problems and start exercising. Use the chart below to get organized.

**REASONS I DON’T EXERCISE:**

**EXERCISES I AM GOING TO START DOING:**
SIMPLE EXERCISES TO TRY

Here are a few exercises that might help you get a routine started:

1. Breathing techniques: Pursed lip breathing

   Breathe slowly and gently let air in through your nose and out through pursed lips (as if making a candle flame flicker). Don’t force the air out. Breathe out for at least twice as long as you breathe in.
   
   Repeat ____ times, ____ times daily.

2. Energy conservation: Climbing stairs

   When climbing stairs, breathe in with the first step, then breathe out through pursed lips for two or three steps. If you are more short of breath than usual, breathe in while standing still.

   Breathe out through pursed lips while stepping up.
   Stop, then repeat with each step. Take only one step at a time.
   Do not hold your breath when climbing steps.
   
   Repeat ____ times, ____ times daily.

3. Strengthen: Shoulder press (arm/shoulder strength)

   Using ____ lb. weights, sit with elbows bent and arms out at sides, palms forward. Breathe in. Raise arms above head, breathing out through pursed lips. Return slowly, breathing in.

   Repeat ____ times per session. Do _____ sessions per _____.
   Variation: _____ Do without weights.
4. **Strengthen: Knee flexion (hamstring strength)**

Stand with support, using ____ lb. weights on ankles. Breathe in. Breathing out through pursed lips, raise one ankle until lower leg is parallel to floor. Keep foot flexed, knee pointed toward floor. Return foot slowly, breathing in.

Repeat ____ times. Repeat with other leg. Do _____ sessions per _____. Variation: _____ Do without weights.

5. **Strengthen: Leg extension — forward (quadriceps)**

Using _____ lb. ankle weights, sit with one foot flat, the other leg slightly straightened and only the heel touching floor. Raise the same foot a few inches from floor and hold _____ seconds, breathing out through pursed lips. Lower heel to floor, breathing in.

Repeat ____ times. Repeat with other leg. Do _____ sessions per _____. Variation: _____ Do without weights.

6. **Strengthen: Leg lift — sitting (quadriceps/abdominal strength)**

Sit with ____ lb. weights on ankles. Keep abdomen tight. Lift one leg, keeping knee bent, breathing out through pursed lips. Return slowly, breathing in.

Repeat ____ times. Repeat with other leg. Do _____ sessions per _____. Variation: _____ Do without weights.
STAYING SAFE

HOW DO I STAY SAFE?

WEIGH YOURSELF DAILY

Just keeping track of your weight can help you manage your heart failure. If you gain even a little weight over a few days, it can mean that your body is holding water, which makes your heart work harder.

HOW TO BEST KEEP TRACK OF YOUR WEIGHT

- **Weigh yourself in the morning.** Do it at the same time each day. Wear the same thing (or nothing). Always use the same scale.
- **Weigh yourself after you urinate.** Don’t eat or drink first.
- **Write down your weight.** Make copies of the form provided on the next page. Fill in your weight each day.
### MY DAILY WEIGHT:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Weight</th>
<th>Date</th>
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Call your doctor right away if:

- You gain 2 or more pounds in one day
- You gain 5 pounds or more in one week
In many ways, **how well you do is up to you. Make up your mind to live well despite your heart failure and you can do it. Avoid things that may cause problems** and you’ll be way ahead. Here are the things you most want to avoid:

- Illness
- Not following your diet
- Not taking your medication
- Not following your doctor’s orders
- Extreme changes in temperature
- Infection

**CONTROLLING YOUR HEART FAILURE HAS MANY BENEFITS**

For starters, it can help you avoid these problems:

- A weaker heart
- Decreased ability to be active
- The need for more oxygen
- Leg sores from swelling (edema)
- Difficulty breathing
WHAT SYMPTOMS DO YOU HAVE?

It’s a good idea to **make a list of them**. If they change or get worse, let your doctor know right away. It can mean that your heart failure is getting worse. See “Self-Management Guide” on page 24.

WRITE YOUR SYMPTOMS HERE:

REMEMBER, IT’S IMPORTANT TO . . .

- Take your **medicine as directed**, even if you’re feeling better
- **Weigh yourself daily** to see if you’re retaining water
- **Limit your sodium** (salt) intake to prevent excess fluid from building up in your body
- **Develop an exercise plan** with your healthcare provider to strengthen your heart, lungs and muscles
- **Keep your spirits up** by talking to friends and joining a support group
- **Visit your doctor** as recommended
- **Post your Self-Management Guide** where you can see it and call your doctor if you’re in the yellow or red zones
MY PERSONAL HEALTH RECORD

Name: ____________________________
Date of birth: ____________________
Home phone: ______________________
Cell phone: _______________________  
Email: ____________________________

EMERGENCY CONTACT(S)
Name: ____________________________
Phone: ____________________________
Name: ____________________________
Phone: ____________________________

ADVANCE DIRECTIVES I HAVE
☐ Health Care Proxy
  Proxy’s name: ____________________
  Telephone number(s): ______________________

☐ Other: ____________________________
  ____________________________
  ____________________________

MY HEALTH CONDITIONS
☐ Arthritis
☐ Diabetes
☐ Cancer
☐ Stroke
☐ Seizures
☐ Lung problems
☐ Heart problems
☐ High blood pressure
☐ Kidney problems
☐ Liver problems
☐ Joint replacement
☐ Contact lenses
☐ Dentures/partials
☐ Lens implant (eye)
☐ Pacemaker (heart)
☐ Defibrillator (heart)
☐ Hearing aid
☐ Other: ____________________________

PAST SURGERIES (OPERATIONS)  YEAR

ALLERGIES  REACTION

HEALTH RECORD
# Health Record

## My Doctor and Pharmacy

**Doctor’s name:**

________________________________________

**Doctor’s phone number:**

________________________________________

**Pharmacy’s name:**

________________________________________

**Pharmacy’s phone number:**

________________________________________

**Other doctors (specialists):**

________________________________________

### Vaccination Dates

- **Flu:** _________________________________
- **Pneumonia:** ___________________________
- **MMR:** ________________________________
- **Tetanus/diphtheria:** ____________________

### Always:

- ✔ Keep this copy with you
- ✔ Keep insurance cards with this copy
- ✔ Give this copy to your doctor to be checked and updated
- ✔ Use the same pharmacy if you can

## Medication Record

- Use a pencil
- Do not list medicines you will take for less than two weeks (example: antibiotics)
- List all medicines you take, including prescriptions, eye drops, inhalers/nebulizers, oxygen, creams and ointments, birth control pills, etc.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE ADDED OR CHANGED</th>
<th>MEDICINE</th>
<th>HOW MUCH? (STRENGTH/DOSAGE)</th>
<th>HOW OFTEN DO YOU TAKE IT?</th>
<th>WHAT IS IT FOR?</th>
<th>DOCTOR WHO PRESCRIBED IT</th>
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21.
RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO ME

American Diabetes Association: ............................................................... (845) 473-4523
American Heart Association: ................................................................. (845) 485-4703
Center for Healthy Aging (NDH): .......................................................... (845) 876-4745

Dutchess County Resources:

Dutchess County Association of Senior Citizens: ......................... Poughkeepsie (845) 486-2804 Rhinebeck (845) 876-8134
Dutchess County Division of Aging Services: ......................... (845) 473-1265
Dutchess Lighthouse (for the blind and visually impaired): ...... (845) 473-2660
Dutchess Outreach (emergency food): ........................................... (845) 454-3792

Family Partnership Center: ................................................................. (845) 452-1110

Health Quest Cardiac Rehabilitation: ........................................ NDH (845) 871-4301 PHC (845) 279-5711 (ext. 5620) VBMC (845) 471-4643

Health Quest Home Care/Hudson Valley Home Care: ................ (845) 471-4243
Heart Failure Program (VBMC): ....................................................... (845) 483-6015
Heart Failure Society of America: ....................................................... www.heartfailure.org

Home Delivered Meals: ................................................................. (866) 486-2555

Home Matters (continue to live at home): ................................. (845) 452-4846
info@hvhomematters.org
Hospice and Heart Disease “Heart-to-Heart”: ........................................1 (800) 522-9132
www.hospice.org

Medicaid Information: ..................................................................................... (845) 486-3340

Medicare Information: ...................................................................................... (845) 442-8430

Mended Hearts: .............................................................................................. (845) 471-4643

Mental Health Association: ........................................................................ (845) 473-2500

Post Cardiac Unit (VBMC): ......................................................................... (845) 431-5672

Putnam County Resources:

PHC Mended Hearts Group: ............................................................. (845) 279-5711 ext.5620

Putnam County Meals on Wheels and Senior Meals: ....................... (845) 808-1700

Putnam County Mental Health Association: .......................................... (845) 278-7600

Putnam County Office for the Disabled: .................................................... (845) 808-1641
OPD@putnamcountyny.gov

Putnam County Office of the Aging: ............................................................ (845) 808-1700

Putnam Family and Community Services: ................................................ (845) 225-2700

Tobacco Cessation — NYS Smokers’ Quit-Line: ...................................... (866) 697-8487

Transportation (volunteers): ..................................................................... NDH (845) 876-5693
VBMC (845) 485-1277
## Keeping Track of My Health

### Green Zone

**Green zone: Great control**

- Your goal weight: __________
- No shortness of breath
- No ankle swelling
- No weight gain
- No chest pain
- No decrease in your activity level (such as walking to the bathroom, preparing meals or dressing)
- Your symptoms are under control
- Continue taking your medications as ordered
- Weigh yourself daily
- Follow low-salt diet
- Keep all physician appointments

### Yellow Zone

**Yellow zone: Caution**

If you have any of the following signs and symptoms:
- Weight gain of 2 pounds in 24 hours or 5 pounds in 3 days
- Increased coughing
- Increased swelling
- Increase in shortness of breath with activity
- Increase in the number of pillows needed to sleep
- Anything else unusual that bothers you

- Your symptoms may indicate that you need an adjustment of your medications. Please bring your medications whenever you go to your doctor or to the hospital.
- Please call your:
  - Home healthcare nurse
  - Physician name __________
  - Number __________
  - Appointment __________
  - Instructions __________

### Red Zone

**Red zone: Medical emergency**

- Unrelieved shortness of breath; shortness of breath at rest
- Unrelieved chest pain
- Wheezing or chest tightness at rest
- Need to sit in a chair to sleep
- Weight gain or loss of more than 5 pounds
- Confusion

- You need to be evaluated by a physician right away. Please bring your medications whenever you go to your doctor or to the hospital.
- If you cannot contact your physician, call 911.
  - Physician __________
  - Number __________

### If You Cannot Reach Your Physician, Call 911.
• Your symptoms are under control
• Continue taking your medications as ordered
• Weigh yourself daily
• Follow low-salt diet
• Keep all physician appointments