

**The expected hospital stay for patients with Congestive Heart Failure (CHF) is 6 days. You may be ready for discharge sooner depending on your condition.**

## DAY 1

- When you arrive on the unit, you will meet members of your care team. They are available to answer questions or address any concerns throughout your stay.
- Be prepared to discuss your medical history with members of your care team and provide a list of your current medications.
- Fluid build-up is a symptom of heart failure and causes shortness of breath. We will work together to reduce and control the amount of extra fluid in your body.
- Monitoring your weight every day helps track the amount of fluid in your system. You will learn how to do this in the hospital and at home.
- Limit the amount of salt and liquid in your diet. Your care team will talk to you about monitoring your diet now and at home.
- You may need to use an oxygen mask or nasal prongs to help you breathe easier.
- Medications may result in frequent bathroom trips. If you are unable to go to the bathroom, a catheter may be inserted.

- Start thinking about next steps. During your stay, members of your care team will work with you to help you learn how to manage your health at home after you are discharged.

## DAY 2

- The dosages and types of medication you receive will be based on your individual needs. They may change often while you are in hospital.
- Learn to measure the amount of fluid going in and out of your body with the help of your care team.
- You will be on a heart healthy diet. This includes reducing your salt and fat intake.
- Physical activity is an important part of your recovery and you are encouraged to participate in as much activity as possible. This might include having meals in a chair or walking around your room. Work with your care team to determine your safest activity level.
- If possible, identify a family member or caregiver who can support you throughout your care journey and help you with next steps after you are discharged from the hospital.

## DAY 3

- Talk to a member of your care team if you are feeling anxious or depressed. Significant changes to your health can feel overwhelming. Emotional supports are available in hospital and in the community.
- Work with your care team to build your physical strength and safely increase your activity level. This might include increasing the walking distance in your room or around the unit, independently or with assistance.
- Work with a member of your team on a discharge plan. This should include medications, services available in the community and any equipment required to help with your daily activities at home.

## DAY 4

- Move around safely as much as possible. Ask your care team if it safe to try walking down the hall or up and down stairs.
- Read through the patient education booklet about Congestive Heart Failure. This is for you to take home and includes information to help you and your family learn how to manage your health.
- Before you leave, make sure you understand how to:
  - Identify and manage signs and symptoms of heart failure;
  - Weigh yourself every day and monitor fluid levels;
  - Limit salt and fat in your diet; and
  - Take your medication (even if you are feeling better).

## DAYS 5 & 6 – DISCHARGE

- Review your discharge plan with a member of your care team. Make sure you understand next steps and discuss any concerns or questions.
- Before you leave, make sure you know how to manage your symptoms, recognize when things are getting worse and understand what to do if this happens.
- Your care team will discuss additional home or community supports that are available to help you manage your health and remain independent.
- Book an appointment to see your family doctor soon after you are discharged.

**If you have questions during your journey, ask!**

