



South Warwickshire
NHS Foundation Trust

**Cardiology / Community Heart
Failure Service**

Top ten tips for heart failure patients

Patient Information Leaflet

1. An increase of more than 2 kgs (4 pounds) may mean that you are retaining fluid. Weigh yourself at the same time every morning, on the same set of scales. This should be on a flat surface, not carpet, wearing minimal clothes and write it down.

2. Seek advice from your Heart Failure Nurse Specialist, Community Nurse or GP if:

- Your weight increases by 3-4 pounds or 2 kgs over 3-4 days
- You have new, increased or unusual swelling in your feet, ankles, legs or abdomen.
- You are waking at night coughing or feeling breathless.
- You are needing more pillows at night to help your breathing
- You are getting short of breath doing things that do not normally make you breathless

3. Drink enough fluid, ideally between 1.5 and 2 litres a day (3-4 pints) unless you have been told to restrict your intake. This is about 7-8 mugs of fluid a day.

4. Do not add salt to your food and avoid foods that have a high salt content. Do not use low salt or salt substitutes.

5. Never stop your tablets unless you are told to do so by your Nurse or Doctor.
Do not run out of tablets.

6. Please bring all of your tablets with you to **every** clinic visit or hospital admission.

7. Have a **blood test** for kidney function a week after any dose or strength increases of your heart failure tablets. This does not apply to changes in dose of beta-blockers. If you are not sure how to organise this, contact your Heart Failure Nurse Specialist, Community Nurse or GP.

8. Please arrange an annual flu vaccine with your Practice Nurse. We would also suggest a pneumococcal vaccine which can be arranged with your Practice Nurse.

9. Please advise your Heart Failure Nurse Specialist or Community Nurse if you are admitted to hospital.

10. If you are suffering from diarrhoea and/or vomiting, please inform your GP, occasionally you will need a blood test and medication altering.

If you require any further information, please contact your Community Nurse on

Equality Statement

At South Warwickshire NHS Foundation Trust we are fully committed to quality and diversity, both as an employer and as a service provider. We have a policy statement in our Equality Strategy that clearly outlines our commitment to equality for service users, patients and staff:

- You and your family have the right to be treated fairly and be routinely involved in decisions about your treatment and care. You can expect to be treated with dignity and respect. You will not be discriminated against on any grounds including age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation
- You have a responsibility to treat other service users, patients and or staff with dignity and respect

Our information for patients can also be made available in other languages, Braille, audio tape, disc or in large print.

PALS

We offer a Patient Advice Liaison Service (PALS). This is a confidential service for families to help with any questions or concerns about local health services.

You can contact the service by the direct telephone line on 01926 600054, by email: Pals@swft.nhs.uk or by calling in person to the PALS office which is located in the Lakin Road entrance to the hospital.

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If you require any further information, please contact: The Heart Failure Specialist Nurses, Telephone 01926 495321 ext 3017



Approved by
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