

Heart Failure: Living Better by Caring for Yourself

Taking good care of yourself can make a big difference to your heart failure.

Following your care plan every day can help you feel better and enjoy life.

But some days, your self-care to-do list can seem overwhelming.

If that happens, it may be helpful to think about why the things you do are so important.

So let's look at what you need to do and how that helps you.

Limit sodium to prevent fluid buildup in the body.

This makes your heart pump more easily.

Your doctor may also ask you to limit fluids.

Weigh yourself every day to watch for sudden weight gain.

This is a sign that your heart failure may be getting worse.

Keep track of your symptoms so you can see if they change.

And know when to call the doctor or when to get emergency help.

Take medications as directed.

Do not stop or change your medications, or take new medications, without first talking to your doctor.

And make sure you know which medications to avoid, because some medications can make your symptoms worse.

Avoid things that can suddenly make your heart failure worse, such as eating too much salt, exercising too hard, or skipping a dose of your medicine.

And get active.

Exercise strengthens your body and heart, and can help you feel better.

If you're having trouble managing all the things you need to do, talk to your doctor and ask friends and loved ones for help.