


Congestive Heart Failure (CHF) Patient Oriented Discharge Summary (PODS)

2025

 I came to the hospital on _____ and left on _____.

- ☐ I know why I was in the hospital.
- ☐ My essential care partner has a copy of this PODS.
- ☐ I have received a copy of the *Living with Heart Failure* pamphlet.
Scan the QR code or visit:
› www.nshealth.ca/patient-education-resources/0152
- ☐ I have a copy of my Patient Priorities and Goals of Care form.



Medications

- ☐ My list of medications was reviewed with me.
- ☐ My approval forms for medication coverage have been submitted.
- ☐ My prescriptions were faxed to my pharmacy at: _____
- ☐ My medications from home were returned to me.
- ☐ I will ask my primary health care provider (family doctor or nurse practitioner) or my pharmacist if it is safe to use over-the-counter medications or supplements (like vitamins, herbal products).

Before discharge, I received:



☐ My morning medications



☐ My midday medications



☐ My evening medications

Notes: _____



While I was in the hospital I received:

Flu vaccine

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ Not applicable

COVID vaccine

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ Not applicable

Pneumonia vaccine

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ Not applicable

- ☐ After I go home, I will talk to my primary health care provider or to my pharmacist about keeping my vaccines up to date.



Care at home

- It is very important to rest before and after any activities.
- Break large tasks into smaller steps. Take breaks often.
- What time of day are you at your best? Do your most demanding activities at that time.



Home care

☐ I have Continuing Care set up for when I go home.

- For more information:
 - › Phone (toll-free): 1-800-225-7225
- Scan the QR code or visit:
 - › www.nshealth.ca/continuing-care



Weighing yourself

- Use the same scale. Keep it on a flat surface.
- Wear clothes that weigh about the same each time.
- Weigh yourself when you first get up in the morning, after you urinate (pee), and before you get dressed or eat breakfast.
- Write down your weight each day.



Exercise

- You should feel recovered 1 hour after exercising. **Stop exercising if you feel:**
 - › More short of breath than usual
 - › Weak or tired
 - › Dizzy
 - › Pain or discomfort
 - › Tightness in your chest
 - › Palpitations (your heart is pounding or racing)



Eating and drinking

- Eating less salt (sodium) and drinking less fluids will lower the amount of fluid in your body. Salt makes your body retain (hold onto) fluid.
- Limit fluids to _____ ml a day.
- Prepare and cook all food without adding salt. **Do not** add salt to your meals at the table.
- Read food labels of packaged foods. Try to choose mostly foods with 5% or less DV (daily value) of sodium on the label. Limit prepared, processed, and convenience foods (like fast food).
- ☐ I was given a pamphlet on low sodium eating guidelines.
- ☐ I will follow the eating guidelines from my health care team.



Prevent infection

- **The best way to prevent the spread of infection is to wash your hands often with soap and water or use alcohol-based hand rub.**
- Stay home until you are well.
- Wear a face mask in public places.
- Try to avoid others who are sick.
- Keep your vaccines up to date.



Smoking

- **The best thing you can do for your health is to stop smoking and/or vaping.**
- When you are ready to quit, call 811 for information about resources to help you quit.



Sex

- If you have questions about going back to having sex, talk with your health care provider.



Mental health

- Practice habits to help your mental health (like lowering anxiety and stress) during and after your recovery. For ideas, scan the QR code or visit:
 › <https://mha.nshealth.ca>

If you are having trouble with your mental health, or alcohol or drug use:

- Mental Health and Addictions Services Intake Service
 › Phone (toll-free): 1-855-922-1122
- **If it is an emergency, call 911 or go to the nearest Emergency Department right away.**


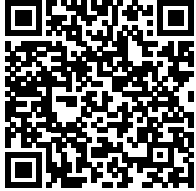

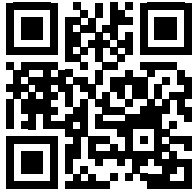

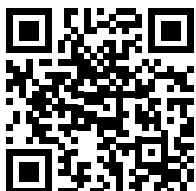





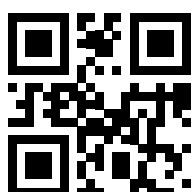




My appointments:

Who?	Why?	When?	Contact information
Primary health care provider			
Specialist			



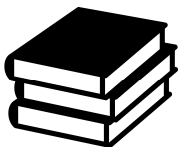

Resources

Scan the QR code

	<p>Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada: Heart Failure</p> <p>› www.heartandstroke.ca/heart-disease/conditions/heart-failure</p>	
	<p>Canadian Heart Failure Society</p> <p>› https://heartfailure.ca/</p>	
	<p>Personal Directives in Nova Scotia</p> <p>Have you created and discussed your personal directives and/or advanced care planning for your health goals? Learn more:</p> <p>› https://novascotia.ca/just/pda/</p>	
	<p>Need a Family Practice Registry</p> <p>If you do not have a primary health care provider, you can register to be added to the Need a Family Practice Registry:</p> <p>› https://needafamilypractice.nshealth.ca/</p> <p>› Phone: 811</p>	
	<p>Being on the Need a Family Practice Registry gives you access to VirtualCareNS. They can prescribe medications, order tests, and refer you to a specialist or in-person care as needed:</p> <p>› www.nshealth.ca/clinics-programs-and-services/virtual-care-ns</p>	
	<p>211 Nova Scotia is a free, confidential information and referral service that can connect you to programs and services offered by local community groups, nonprofits, and government departments across Nova Scotia, 24/7:</p> <p>› Phone: 211</p> <p>› https://211.ca</p>	
	<p>YourHealthNS</p> <p>YourHealthNS is a new app that helps you navigate health information, book services, and discover care options, right from your phone or computer:</p> <p>› https://yourhealthns.ca</p>	

Resources

Scan the QR code

	<p>HealthyNS Healthy NS provides free online health and wellness classes for people who live in Nova Scotia. You do not need a referral. To register for a class, use your Nova Scotia health card. For more information and to register for a class: › www.healthyns.ca</p>	
	<p>Patient Education Find easy to understand and trustworthy health information: › https://library.nshealth.ca/patienteducation</p>	

Notes:

[illegible]

What congestive heart failure zone are you in today?

Every day:

- › Weigh yourself in the morning before you eat breakfast.
- › Follow your fluid restrictions as told by your health care team.
- › Take your medications exactly as told by your health care team.
- › Check for swelling in your feet, ankles, legs, and arms.
- › Eat foods that are low in salt or salt-free.
- › Balance your activity and rest.

✓ Green Zone: All clear — This is your goal.	What to do:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No shortness of breath • Usual amount of swelling in your legs or arms • No weight gain • No chest pain, pressure, or discomfort • Able to do your usual activities • Symptoms are under control 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep appointments with your primary health care provider and the Heart Function Clinic.
⚠ Yellow Zone: Caution — This zone is a warning.	What to do:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weight gain of 2 to 3 pounds in 24 hours (1 day) or up to 5 pounds in 7 days or less • Wheezing sounds are getting worse • Cough that is getting worse • Changes in the amount, colour, or thickness of phlegm (sputum) • Shortness of breath that is getting worse for at least 48 hours (2 days) • More tired than usual 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Call your primary health care provider or the Heart Function Clinic to ask what to do. Your health care provider may need to change your medications. • If you do not have a primary health care provider, you can register to be added to the waitlist (see previous page).
🚨 Red Zone: Emergency — This means act fast!	What to do:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weight gain of more than 5 pounds in 7 days and not feeling well, like: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › More tired than usual › Dizziness, fainting, or falling › Shortness of breath, chest tightness, or wheezing at any time › Shortness of breath that wakes you up › Needing to sit up, go into a tripod position (lean forward and support the upper body with hands on the knees or on another surface), open a window, or use a fan to get your breath › Suddenly more confused or disoriented (not able to think clearly) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Call 911 or go to the nearest Emergency Department right away.

- ☐ *I acknowledge (accept) that Nova Scotia Health cannot be held responsible for the use, disclosure, storage, and destruction of this information once provided to me, my Substitute Decision Maker, or designate. I acknowledge Nova Scotia Health does not retain (keep) a copy of this form within my medical record and cannot be reissued (printed again) if lost.*

Signature (Patient/Family): _____

Health care provider: _____ (RN)

Date (YYYY/MM/DD): _____

This pamphlet is for educational purposes only. It is not intended to replace the advice or professional judgment of a health care provider. The information may not apply to all situations. If you have any questions, please ask your health care provider.

Find all patient education resources here:
www.nshealth.ca/patient-education-resources

Connect with a registered nurse in Nova Scotia any time:
Call 811 or visit: <https://811.novascotia.ca>

Prepared by: Integrated Acute and Episodic Care Network/Integrated Access and Flow Network
Designed and Managed by: Library Services