

Care of the Heart

Issue 2, 2021

Daily Action Plan for Heart Failure

If you are living with heart failure, there are things you can do every day to feel better, stay healthy longer, and avoid the hospital. Good self-care means doing certain things every day, like taking your medicine properly. It's also about checking for symptoms such as weight gain and swelling. Tracking your symptoms every day will help you know which heart failure zone you're in. That can tell you when you need to get help.

- **Weigh yourself at the same time each day.** Keep a calendar by the scale and write your weight on it every day
- **Pay attention to symptoms** such as shortness of breath or swelling in your feet, ankles, or legs
- **Take your medicines as prescribed.** Try to take them at the same time every day
- **Limit sodium.** Your doctor may want you to eat less than 2,000 mg of sodium each day

and know when to stop and rest

More self-care tips for your body and your heart.

- Try to stay at a healthy weight. Eat a healthy diet with lots of fresh fruits, vegetables, and whole grains
 - If you smoke, quit
 - Limit the amount of alcohol you drink
 - Keep high blood pressure and diabetes under control. If you need help, talk with your doctor
 - Talk to your doctor if you feel sad and hopeless much of the time or if you are worried and anxious. These may be signs of depression or anxiety. Treatment with counseling and medicine can help

When you take charge of your health, you're more likely to feel better and keep your heart failure from getting worse.



Contact Us

1-866-942-7966
Monday–Friday,
8:30 am–5:00 pm
TTY: 1-800-662-1220

We Value Your Opinion

Please fill out a brief, anonymous survey at mvplistsens.com.

All responses are 100% confidential and help create a better experience.

MVP Health Care offers a health management program for members living with heart failure. For more information or to see if you qualify, call 1-866-942-7966. MVP's program is based on the American Heart Association (AHA) and the American College of Cardiology's Guidelines for Preventing a Heart Attack and Death in Patients with Atherosclerotic Cardiovascular Disease. This program must be coordinated with your physician.



Check Your **Heart Failure Zone** Daily

Green zone. You are doing well. This is where you want to be.

- Your weight is stable. This means it is not going up or down
- You breathe easily
- You are sleeping well. You can lie flat without shortness of breath
- You can do your usual activities

Yellow zone. Call your doctor. Your symptoms are changing.

- You have new or increased shortness of breath
- You are dizzy or lightheaded, or you feel like you may faint
- You have sudden weight gain, such as more than two pounds to three pounds in a day or five pounds in a week (your doctor may suggest a different range of weight gain)
- You have increased swelling in your legs, ankles, or feet
- You are so tired or weak that you cannot do your usual activities
- You are not sleeping well. Shortness of breath wakes you up at night. You need extra pillows

Your doctor's name: _____

Your doctor's contact information: _____

Red zone. Call 911. This is an emergency.

- You have symptoms of sudden heart failure, such as:
 - Severe trouble breathing
 - Coughing up pink, foamy mucus
 - A new irregular or fast heartbeat
- You have symptoms of a heart attack. These may include:
 - Chest pain or pressure, or a strange feeling in the chest
 - Sweating
 - Shortness of breath
 - Nausea or vomiting
 - Pain, pressure, or a strange feeling in the back, neck, jaw, or upper belly or in one or both shoulders or arms
 - Lightheadedness or sudden weakness
 - A fast or irregular heartbeat

If you have symptoms of a heart attack: After you call 911, the operator may tell you to chew one adult-strength or two to four low-dose aspirin. Wait for an ambulance. Do not try to drive yourself.

MVP can help you quit.

MVP has free support and resources available to help you quit smoking. An MVP Case Manager can provide one-on-one support and MVP may also pay for any prescribed or over-the-counter medicines that can help. Coverage may be subject to benefit limitations. For more information, call MVP Case Management at **1-866-942-7966**, Monday-Friday from 8:30 am–5 pm.

Free support is also available through New York State Smokers' Quitline at **1-866-NY-QUITS** (1-866-697-8487) or nysmokefree.com. In Vermont, get support through 802Quits by visiting 802Quits.org or calling **1-800-QUIT-NOW**.

Lower Your Risk of the Flu and Pneumonia

It is important to get vaccinated against the flu each year, and pneumonia as directed by your doctor. Pneumonia is a lung infection that can cause mild to severe illness in people of all ages. Signs of it include coughing, fever, fatigue, nausea, vomiting, rapid breathing or shortness of breath, chills, or chest pain. Many pneumonia-related deaths are preventable through vaccination and appropriate treatment.

Certain people are more likely to become ill with pneumonia:

- Adults age 65 or older
- Children younger than age five
- People under the age of 65 who have underlying medical conditions (like diabetes or HIV/AIDS)
- People ages 19–64 who smoke cigarettes
- People ages 19–64 who have asthma

Simple steps to preventing the flu and pneumonia:

- Wash your hands regularly
- Clean hard surfaces that are touched often (like doorknobs and countertops)
- Cough or sneeze into a tissue, your elbow, or sleeve
- Limit your exposure to cigarette smoke
- Take steps to treat, control, and prevent conditions like diabetes and HIV/AIDS

Get vaccinated. Several vaccines prevent infections that can cause pneumonia, including Pneumococcal, Haemophilus influenzae type b (Hib), Pertussis (whooping cough), and seasonal influenza (flu) vaccines. Talk to your doctor for more information.

24/7 Urgent Care With No Wait

Urgent care appointments can be tough to get lately. High demand and fewer workers mean wait times are long—so urgent needs aren't always getting urgent treatment. For you, there's a simple solution: 24/7 Virtual Urgent Care with Gia.

Gia connects you to urgent care fast. In most cases, there's no wait at all. On top of that, Gia is free for MVP Members.* That means no co-pay, no bills—nothing. Just quick, quality care from wherever you are.



To get started, use your smartphone camera to view the QR code and visit StartWithGia.com.



Virtual care services from MVP Health Care are provided by UCM Digital Health, Amwell, and Phylera at no cost-share for members. (Plan exceptions may apply.) Members' direct or digital provider visits may be subject to co-pay/cost-share per plan.

LivingWell



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Go online and take charge of your health.

The MVP Healthwise® Knowledgebase is your one-stop resource for the latest health information. Visit mvphealthcare.com and select *Members*, then *Health & Wellness*.

Information in this newsletter does not constitute medical advice. If you have questions about your health, talk to your doctor.

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Preventive care is the best care.

Health care screenings help prevent or find illnesses and diseases in their earlier stages when treatment is more effective. If you've put off your screenings, you're not alone, but now is the time to catch up. To find out if you are due for screenings, Sign In to your MVP online account at mvphealthcare.com/member and select *Preventive Care Reminders*, and talk to your doctor.

Living Well Programs

MVP offers a variety of classes and workshops—both in-person and virtual—to help you live well physically, emotionally, and otherwise! Find classes like chair moves, tai chi, meditation, or even quitting tobacco. To find a class that is right for you, visit mvphealthcare.com/LWCcalendar. Filter by county to find the programs nearest you.

