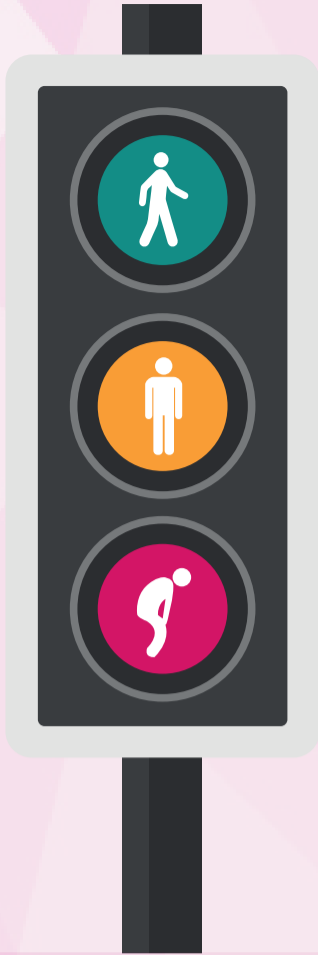


Traffic Lights for Heart Failure



NO LIFE HALF LIVED

About Heart Failure

Heart Failure is a rather alarming term but it is commonly used to describe the condition where the heart muscle has become weakened and is unable to pump blood around the body as efficiently as before. In other words the heart muscle fails to supply enough blood to the body, quickly enough, leading to different symptoms. These symptoms may become noticeable when doing something active but can progress to being noticeable even at rest.

Further support

Chest Heart & Stroke Scotland offers a range of support for people living with Heart Failure. This includes:

- The Cardiac and Respiratory Support Service reduces isolation and improves the quality of life for people living with heart failure in their local communities.
- The Voices Scotland programme provides people affected by chest, heart or stroke illness with the knowledge, skills and confidence to work with the NHS to help plan new and better services.
- The publications produced by CHSS offer easy to read information and guidance about chest, heart and stroke conditions.

To find out more: call the Advice Line practitioners on **0808 801 0899**, visit www.chss.org.uk/heart or email advice@chss.org.uk.

My information

My name: _____ Date: _____

My heart failure nurse

Name: _____

Number: _____

My GP

Name: _____

Number: _____

Emergency GP number: _____

NHS 24 number: 111

About this leaflet

This leaflet helps you to better understand your Heart Failure and know what to do if you become unwell. Discuss the traffic light system first with your GP or heart failure nurse before using it and make sure you know what to do if you feel unwell.

If you already have your own self-management plan, the traffic lights do not replace it and you should continue to use the plan.

I FEEL OK

There is no change to my being able to carry out my normal daily activities



When you are in the **Green Zone** your heart failure is stable:

- You are at your goal weight
- Your shortness of breath is no worse than usual
- Any swelling of the ankles and stomach is stable
- You do not have any chest pain

The **Green Zone** means that your symptoms are under control. You should:

- Continue taking your medication as prescribed
- Continue daily weights
- Follow fluid restriction as recommended
- Follow a low salt diet
- Keep all doctor appointments

My goal weight is

My normal level of activity is

I FEEL I AM GETTING WORSE

You are in the **Amber Zone** if you feel your symptoms are getting worse and you don't feel OK.



When you are in the **Amber Zone** you may feel like:

- Your weight has been increasing over the last 2-3 days or you have gained 3-4lbs (1.5-2kg) in the last week
- Your signs and symptoms are becoming '**worse**' such as:
 - Increasing shortness of breath
 - Increasing swelling of the ankles, feet or stomach
 - You develop a new or worsening cough, or a cough which is becoming a problem at night
 - You need more pillows to help you sleep
 - You notice some chest discomfort

OR

- You simply do not feel so well.

The **Amber Zone** means you need to take action. This may include:

- Adjusting your medication to help get rid of the extra fluid
- Adjusting the amount of fluid that you take in drinks and food
- Identifying other things which may be making you unwell, such as an infection

Ask your nurse or doctor to write down the actions you should take here.

I FEEL MUCH WORSE

I can't do my normal activities without symptoms or feeling extremely tired.



You are in the **Red Zone** if you have **any** of the following symptoms:

- Your weight has increased suddenly or has not improved after following the advice of your nurse or doctor
- You are short of breath even when you are resting
- You notice a wheeze when you are breathing
- You have chest pain
- You start to feel confused

The **Red Zone** means:

It is time to take **immediate action!** Speak to your nurse or doctor today.

Tel:

Working Hours:

After office hours call NHS 24 on 111

If you can't wait for the nurse or doctor to call you back or you think it is an emergency dial 999 for an ambulance.