

The GUARD Method™

CASE STUDY EXAMPLE

CASE STUDY



A 68-year-old man is admitted to the hospital with shortness of breath, fatigue, and swelling in his legs. He has a history of hypertension, coronary artery disease, and heart failure. His medications include furosemide, lisinopril, and metoprolol.

Current vital signs: BP 162/96 mm Hg, HR 104 beats/min, RR 24 breaths/min, SpO₂ 88% on room air, temperature 98.4 °F (36.9 °C).

Assessment: Bilateral crackles in the lungs, 2+ pitting edema in both legs, reports shortness of breath when lying flat.



GOAL

What are we trying to accomplish?

- What are the primary goals for this patient?
- What clinical improvements are we trying to achieve?
- What does success look like for this patient?
- How will we know the goals have been met?

KEY POINTS

- _____
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UNSAFE OUTCOMES

What could harm this patient?

- What are the most serious complications for this patient?
- What could cause this patient's condition to worsen?
- What findings are red flags or require immediate attention?
- What factors could put this patient at higher risk?

KEY POINTS

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AFFECTING FACTORS

What changes the situation?

- What patient-specific factors affect this patient's condition?
- What comorbidities are present?
- What medications or treatments could influence the outcome?
- What laboratory values, age, or lifestyle factors matter?
- What other factors (e.g., diet, activity, smoking) should be considered?

KEY POINTS

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- _____

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RESULTS

What tells us what is actually happening?

- What assessment findings support this patient's condition?
- Which vital signs are most concerning?
- What laboratory values are relevant?
- What diagnostic test results are important?
- What trends are we seeing over time?
- What tells us the treatment is working or not working?

KEY POINTS

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DO OR DON'T

What should the nurse do or not do?

- What are the priority nursing actions?
- What interventions should be implemented?
- What should the nurse avoid?
- When should the nurse notify the provider or escalate care?
- What patient education is needed?
- What follow-up or reassessment is required?

KEY POINTS

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OVERALL PLAN

- What are the priority nursing diagnoses for this patient?
- What are the short-term and long-term goals?
- What interventions and teaching are most important?
- What discharge planning or ongoing care will be needed?
