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HEART FAILURE

AWARENESS WEEK MAY 2-8, 2022

TIME TO TAKE ACTION

in partnership with



Time to take action: What you need to know!

- Heart failure is on the rise. In Canada there are 750,000 people living with heart failure which affects people of all ages.¹
- Over 100,000 people are diagnosed with heart failure each year in Canada.²
- One in three Canadians has been touched by heart failure, either because they have it themselves, or a family member or close friend has been diagnosed with heart failure.³
- Surprisingly, many people in Canada do not understand heart failure. Four in ten Canadians do not know what heart failure is, and two thirds do not know there is no cure for heart failure.³
- The time to **take action** is now and there is a lot you can do to reduce the impact of heart failure.



750,000 Canadians live with **heart failure**.

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What is heart failure?

Heart failure is a chronic condition caused by the heart not functioning as it should, or by a problem with its structure. It can happen if the heart is too weak or too stiff, or both. This can lead to fatigue, swelling in the legs and abdomen, and shortness of breath which can be from fluid in the lungs. There are many reasons why someone may develop heart failure. The most common causes of heart failure include coronary artery disease and high blood pressure.⁴

Self-care and self-management: What can I commit to?

- Understand your chronic condition, know your symptoms and ask your healthcare provider (HCP)
- Follow up regularly with your HCP
- Advocate for your own care
- Involve caregivers and peer support
- Monitor your blood pressure, heart rate, and weight
- Take your medications as prescribed
- Reduce salt in your diet
- Stop unhealthy habits like smoking
- Increase your daily activity
- Update yearly vaccinations

Managing heart failure during COVID-19: Making the best of telemedicine

Now more than ever, it is important to take care of your heart with virtual support:

- It is safe to seek care and do tests
- Attend your medical appointments
- Call your HCP when you experience new or worsening symptoms
- Attend recommended rehabilitation online programs to stay active
- Take your medications as prescribed and stay on top of refills
- Seek support for your mental health issues

Work with your healthcare team to learn if you are at risk of worsening heart failure and what **actions** you can do to prevent it.

Self-management is a team effort: Share in the responsibility

Even though heart failure cannot be cured, there are treatments that can help you feel better and live longer. You will often need help from a number of healthcare providers, family members, and you also need to be active partners in your care. Together you can build a plan that supports your needs and goals.

Become an active partner in your care

- Learn about your symptoms of heart failure – they may not be the same as someone else with heart failure. Ask your healthcare team what you can do to help prevent your heart failure symptoms from getting worse.
- Be patient with yourself – learning to live with heart failure takes time. Share your feelings and talk about your concerns with your healthcare team.
- Join support groups and share your experience. Talking with your peers can help relieve some of the stress, pressure, and anxiety.



General tips to prepare for a virtual healthcare session

- Plan your meeting space. Consider technology, privacy and confidentiality, good lighting, minimal background noise and distractions.
- Ensure that the space is clear for you to safely move around for assessments and rehabilitation.
- Have someone else available to participate in the session with you if possible (e.g., family member, caregiver, trusted friend).
- Have your health data ready: health card, current medication list, pharmacy name, recent blood pressure readings or glucose levels.
- Write down your list of concerns and questions, and have a pen and paper to make notes.
- Ask about reliable online resources and applications to help you manage your recovery and your daily activities.

For more information and a guide to virtual healthcare sessions visit:

www.heartandstroke.ca/virtualchecklist

Where to find Heart Failure resources?

Together we can provide support for those affected by heart failure. The Canadian Heart Failure Society, Canadian Cardiovascular Society, Quebec Heart Failure Society, HeartLife Foundation, Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada, Canadian Council of Cardiovascular Nurses, and Canadian Association of Cardiovascular Prevention and Rehabilitation, are coming together to raise awareness and provide support for those affected by heart failure.

Patient Education and Support Resources

heartfailure.ca

heartlife.ca

heartandstroke.ca/heartfailure

cacpr.ca

Professional Education Resources

heartfailure.ca

sqic.org

ccs.ca/guideline-resources

My HeartLife Peer Support App visit: apps.apple.com/ca/app/my-heartlife/id1585192239

HeartLife Heart Academy visit: heartlife.academy

Heart and Stroke Community Support visit: heartandstroke.ca/connect



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1. Canadian Chronic Disease Surveillance System (CCDSS), Public Health Agency of Canada, 2017 data, age 40 yrs +, released Dec 2021 <https://health-infobase.canada.ca/ccdss/data-tool/Comp?G=00&V=11&M=5>
2. Canadian Chronic Disease Surveillance System (CCDSS), Public Health Agency of Canada, 2017 data, age 40 yrs +, released Dec 2021 <https://health-infobase.canada.ca/ccdss/data-tool/Comp?G=00&V=11&M=4&Y=2017>
3. Heart & Stroke poll of Canadians. The national, bilingual online poll was conducted by Environics Research Group, with 2,257 Canadian residents 18 years and older, Nov. 8-13, 2021.
4. Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada. Falling Short. How Canada Is Failing People with Heart Failure — and How We Can Change That. 2022 Spotlight on Heart Failure. 2022. <https://www.heartandstroke.ca/heart-disease/conditions/heart-failure>