

# HEART FAILURE AWARENESS WEEK

#HeartFailureWeekCan



## It's not normal to be breathless

## Know the Signs and Symptoms of Heart Failure. **Act Now. Get It Checked.**

### 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<sup>1</sup>

## Tips to manage existing heart failure



Understand your risk or chronic condition, know your symptoms and ask your healthcare provider (HCP).



Follow up regularly with your team managing your heart failure and understand who to call and when to call your healthcare provider.



Involve caregivers and seek out peer support .



Advocate for your own care.



Keep physically active. Aim to get 150 min/week of moderate intensity activity.



Monitor your blood pressure, heart rate, and weight.



Ask for support to quit smoking.



Take your medications as prescribed.



Seek support for your mental health.



Attend recommended rehabilitation programs.



Have your vaccinations up to date.

## Become an advocate for your care



Learn about the symptoms of heart failure, write down your questions and ask your healthcare team what you can do to help prevent your heart failure symptoms from getting worse.



Be patient with yourself, 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.

# Tips to prepare for your healthcare visit



Consider having someone you trust participate in the visit with you if possible.



Come prepared with your health card, current medication list, pharmacy name, recent blood pressure readings and if applicable, glucose levels and weight records.



Write down your list of concerns and questions and bring a pen and paper or electronic device to take notes.

## When should you go to the emergency department or call 9-1-1?



You are struggling to breathe



Your shortness of breath does not go away while sitting still



You have a fast heartbeat that does not slow down when you rest



You have chest pain that does not go away with rest or with medicine



You are having trouble thinking clearly or are feeling confused

### Get more information

Visit [HeartFailure.ca](https://HeartFailure.ca) or scan the QR code to learn more and access patient education and support resources.



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References  
(1) 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>



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