

# How to Handle a Heart Failure Flare-Up

Not every day is equal when it comes to heart failure.

On some days, even if you've been following your heart failure treatment plan carefully, you might experience new symptoms, or your existing symptoms might get worse.

This is sometimes called a "flare-up." It means your symptoms have returned and your condition is changing.

Flare-ups are common; however, many patients experience flare-ups and then return to their normal heart failure condition afterward.

*"The most typical symptoms that patients have with congestive heart failure are typically shortness of breath. Sometimes it's just fatigue. Sometimes it's a racing heart. It can be swelling in the legs or abdomen or other signs of volume overload are the more typical things, inability to lie down at night, those types of things."*

Other symptoms of a heart failure flare-up include coughing or wheezing, lack of appetite, nausea, rapid weight gain, and confusion.

Monitoring your symptoms every day can help identify a flare-up when it happens.

You shouldn't ignore a flare-up. If you don't take active steps to prevent flare-ups and get treatment when they occur, your condition could worsen and require a trip to the hospital.

*"My symptoms for heart failure show up in regard to fluid retention, being extremely tired, chest discomfort, and just basically just not feeling myself or not feeling well."*

If you notice an increase in any of your symptoms of heart failure, don't panic.

Call your healthcare provider and let them know what is going on as soon as possible. They can help you manage the flare-up.

If you have flare-ups often it may be a sign that your treatment plan needs to be adjusted. Make an appointment to see your healthcare provider and discuss possible medication changes or a further reduction in sodium or fluid intake.

A flare-up in your symptoms can be frustrating. Don't let this emotion get in the way of following your heart failure treatment plan.

Recognize the flare-up, get treatment and take steps to reduce them in the future. By continuing to follow your treatment plan, you can reduce the possibility of other flare-ups.

Be patient and take it one day at a time. Managing heart failure is an ongoing challenge that you can meet every day.