

# Heart Failure: When to Act on Your Symptoms

[Host] Sometimes a change in your heart failure symptoms means you need to get help.

And sometimes how you're feeling is just a normal part of having heart failure.

And other times, the change is a sign that your heart failure may be getting worse.

This can be confusing for anyone.

And because of this, some people may wait to get help because they don't want to bother the doctor or someone they care about.

So maybe hearing how other people deal with this can make you feel more confident about what you would do.

[Edward] "My wife and I had been walking every day.

But then, the other day, she said I was breathing hard.

But I hadn't noticed.

It seems like most days I have a little trouble breathing.

So I didn't think I needed to do anything.

But a couple of days later it got so bad that I had to go to the hospital.

So, now, I'm trying to start every day by weighing myself and writing down how I'm feeling.

And then I look over my heart failure plan.

It helps me think about if it's been harder to breathe than usual or to see if I've gained weight.

And if I see changes, my plan tells me exactly what to do."

[Enna] "I was doing pretty well, checking my heart failure action plan every day to make sure my symptoms were not getting worse.

Then one day, I felt dizzy when I got up.

I wasn't sure what to do, so I called my daughter, and they were really worried.

They took me to the doctor's office right away.

Well, after that scare the nurse talked to me about calling her when I notice those kind of changes.

That way we could go over my plan and decide what to do.

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So I'm going to start trusting my heart failure action plan more."

[Sylvia] "I kinda knew things were getting worse, but I just kept telling myself the swelling would get better tomorrow, and if I skipped lunch and drank less water, my weight would go down.

I kept it to myself, though.

I didn't want my friends or coworkers to find out.

Well, one of my friends noticed that I wasn't myself.

I wasn't feeling good, either.

But my friends and my doctor helped me get through it.

So now when my friends ask me every day how I'm doing, I give them my honest answer.

Because I know that they do want to help.

Because they care.

My friends and my heart failure action plan are there to help."

[Edward] "Now I know when something's wrong."

[Enna] "Now I know who I should call."

[Sylvia] "Now I know that I can count on my friends because they care."

[Host] So you can see how a few people learned to pay attention to their symptoms and feel more confident about getting help when they needed it.

Follow your heart failure action plan, and remember that you know yourself best.

If you have questions or concerns, you can always call your doctor.