

Heart Failure: The Early Signs Plan

The five FACES warning signs, the everyday medicines that make fluid worse, and the numbers to bring to your next appointment.

✓ **Verified against published guidance** from NHLBI, Harvard Health & Cleveland Clinic · sources below

Cleveland Clinic says to call 911 or go to the emergency room if you have new chest pain, severe trouble breathing, or if your heart failure symptoms suddenly become much worse. Tell your provider about new or worsening shortness of breath at rest, swelling in your legs or belly, sudden weight gain, or constant tiredness. Harvard Health notes that people tend to ignore these symptoms and put them down to getting older.



Do This

Learn The Five FACES Signs

- Fatigue and activity limits
- One tool, five warnings
- Congestion, edema, breath

COACH'S TIP Harvard Health uses FACES.

Weigh Yourself Each Morning

- Same time, same scale
- Write the number down
- Watch for a sudden gain

COACH'S TIP Cleveland Clinic lists it.

Count Your Pillows At Night

- Note if lying flat is hard
- Tell your provider both
- Note what wakes you up

COACH'S TIP Harvard on fluid and gravity.

Cut The Salt You Add

- Limit sodium in your food
- Part of every care plan
- Check labels, not just salt

COACH'S TIP Cleveland Clinic daily habits.

Keep Moving, Regularly

- Regular physical activity
- Ask what is safe for you
- Listed in every plan

COACH'S TIP Cleveland Clinic daily habits.

Hand Over A Full Med List

- Every prescription you take
- Every shelf bought remedy
- Every supplement as well

COACH'S TIP Harvard Health says do this.



Do Not

Do Not Reach For NSAIDs

- Ibuprofen and naproxen
- Ask what to use instead
- They hold sodium and fluid

COACH'S TIP Harvard names this class.

Do Not Blame Your Age

- Fatigue is not just ageing
- Both are on the sign list
- Breathlessness is not either

COACH'S TIP Harvard Health warns of this.

Do Not Grab Cold Remedies

- Heartburn and cold aids
- Can trigger fluid overload
- Often high in sodium

COACH'S TIP Harvard Health names them.

Do Not Add Herbal Pills

- Ephedra, ginseng, hawthorn
- All can react with heart meds
- St John's wort, green tea

COACH'S TIP Harvard lists each one.

Do Not Ignore Night Breath

- Breathlessness that wakes you
- A listed symptom, not stress
- Or that starts lying flat

COACH'S TIP Cleveland Clinic and NHLBI.

Do Not Skip The Echo

- An ultrasound of the heart
- It shows how well it pumps
- Simple and non invasive

COACH'S TIP Harvard Health on testing.

THE NUMBERS BEHIND THIS SHEET

Three figures worth knowing

5 Warning signs in FACES

A to D The four heart failure stages

BNP Blood test that flags strain