

# Heart Failure: Warning Signs of a Flare-Up

Once you have heart failure, flare-ups can happen. Gaining weight is often the first warning sign of trouble. That's why you need to weigh yourself each day. But there are other signs of trouble, too. Here are some things to watch for:



## Swelling

- You get puffy in the ankles or lower legs.
- Your shoes feel too tight.
- Your clothes are too tight in the waist.
- You have trouble getting rings on or off your fingers.



## Shortness of Breath

- You have to breathe harder even when you're doing your normal activities or when you're resting.

- You wake up at night short of breath or coughing.
- You need to use more pillows or sit up to sleep.

### **Other Warning Signs**

- You feel weaker, dizzy, or more tired.
- You have chest pain or changes in your heartbeat.
- You can't remember things or don't feel like eating.

**Call your doctor right away** if you notice any of the signs listed above or you have any other unusual symptoms.

### **Tracking Your Weight**

Gaining even a few pounds can be a sign that your body is retaining excess water and salt. This could mean your heart failure is getting worse. Weighing yourself each day is the best way to know if you're retaining water. Your health care provider will show you how to track your weight. Call your doctor if you gain more than 2 pounds in a day.