

EMPOWER: A 12-week online wellness program for people 50+ who are living with heart failure

Location: Across Canada

Number of participants: Approximately 100

Recruitment period: Until July 2024

Description: Many individuals with heart failure experience mental health issues. Lifestyle interventions such as mental wellness programs can alleviate symptoms of anxiety and depression. Due to COVID-19, many of these programs have shifted to online delivery. However, there is limited data on whether such programs can positively impact the mental health of people with heart failure.

For the past two years, researchers at the University of Alberta have collaborated with patient partners to develop a 12-week online wellness program called EMPOWER. This program includes movement, breathwork, meditation, and a psychology-based coping skills program. By the end of 2024, researchers plan to conduct a study with approximately 100 people with heart failure to evaluate the impact of EMPOWER. The study will involve pre- and post-intervention questionnaires that assess mental health, symptom burden, and quality of life. Additionally, researchers will conduct end-of-study interviews with some participants to gain insights into their program experience.

Language: English-only.

Eligibility: (see some examples in yellow)

- Age 50 or over
- Living with heart failure
- English language proficiency
- Access to an internet connected device

Participant requirements: EMPOWER is a 12-week study. Participants will be randomly assigned to start right away or in 3 months' time. Before starting the program, participants will be asked to complete some baseline surveys that may take about 30 minutes to complete. The online program is self-guided, with new content unlocking each week. Participants can expect to spend 90-120 minutes engaging with the content each week. Given that the program involves light movement, participants are encouraged to discuss joining the study with their physician. We do offer four levels of movement programming: chair low intensity, chair, yoga standing, yoga standing/chair, and tai chi to accommodate a range of abilities.

Institution: University of Alberta

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