



## Speaking from Experience *Cardiomyopathy/Heart Failure*

### Transcript for chapter 5 of 10: Management: Diet & Exercise

**Kathy, 55 (2 years since diagnosis):** My diet has had to change only a small amount, and it's low salt, but I never really ate a lot of salt anyway. And there's fluid restrictions, so that's the... And it's more difficult to eat out now. So you can go somewhere and suddenly realise that the food did have a lot of salt in it. So I don't eat out as often as I may have.

**Alistair & Joan, 66 (13 years since Joan's diagnosis):** If we go out and have a meal, a heavy meal, just walking back to the car, I can get out of breath. So, it's a case of... And see, now, especially being diabetic, they're all very big on the portions, so in some ways, diabetes has given me a new outlook and has done me a favour, because I had started to put weight on – probably because I'm not as active as what I was. And so, you know, the first thing I did when I was diagnosed with diabetes was lose 15 kilo. Worked with a dietician and found that that generally helped me all over.

**Victor, 72 (18 years since diagnosis):** My wife is a wonderful cook. And most of the ingredients we have from the garden. Because we grow a lot of things – and a lot of fruit trees and a lot of vegetables.

**Jerome, 60 (13 years since diagnosis):** I think diet's very important. And it was not difficult to work out what's bad for you. Like, you know, salt intake, fat foods, fried foods. But I think for me, in my mind, my worst enemy has been processed foods. It's quite unnerving sometimes if you think about even what's supposed to be fresh vegetables and fresh food – well, it's not fresh vegetables and fresh food at all. So it leads me – of it led me at that particular time, and I still practice it now – to search for the highest-quality foods I can find. On the rare occasion – uh, twice a year or three times a year – I might have some real bad food. But I forgive myself for that.

**Victor:** I do a lot of gardening. And some work, but not as much as I used to.

**Hylton, 69, & Eileen (10 years since Hylton's diagnosis):** I've constantly had weight problems. Been too high, then I'll lose a lot... You know, I guess I've gone, through Eileen, eight or nine or ten times in my life, spans where I've lost 30 k's and then, over the next two or three years, put them back on again. I'm at a high point at the moment and I've just started the long haul of losing 30, 35 k's. But...I guess... No, from the food point of view, the intake hasn't changed as much as it probably should have. The alcohol definitely has.

**Hylton & Eileen:** And lack of exercise. But Hylton, he uses a treadmill regularly, every morning. But it's probably not enough.

**Hylton & Eileen:** Well, it's enough to... It's as much as I *need*, I think. You know, you walk at a good clip for 4 k's in the morning... say six days a week. In fact, I'm pretty sure... I was doing that before the event, and I'd have to think that helped me through it.



**Kathryn, 41 (7 years since diagnosis):** I was very good and very conscientious for a while, and lost a fair amount of weight and was very good and health and everything. It's hard though, when you can't exercise easily. I know everybody's got excuses, but it is hard to find ways to exercise. Just walking... I did, for a while, do water aerobics. I found that really good, because you're not carrying all that weight around as much. That was helpful.

**Kathy, 55 (2 years since diagnosis):** I go to a hospital and do rehab once a week whereby we do 10-minute sessions on various stations. It's bike-riding, it's on a treadmill, and weights and arm exercises. And that's really enjoyable and it's a good guide to know where you are from week to week, that if you're not feeling great, you're not pushed into doing more than you should be.

**Jerome:** Being active actually gives you better body function, I find. After a bout of exercise, well, then you feel better and you enjoy your food a lot more. And it's just an incredible feeling.