

## ***Kristin's story***

For Kristin Breese, it took riding in an ambulance and going into cardiac arrest to make her take fainting to heart. Though she experienced her first episode of unexplained fainting at age 8, Kristin did not have an explanation until 10 years later. “I just assumed my fainting happened because I was dehydrated, that there wasn’t anything seriously wrong,” Kristin says. “I thought I should be able to prevent it. “

Kristin fainted ten times from the time she was 20 to 28 years old. She didn’t see a specialist until a relative witnessed her loss of consciousness and called an ambulance. At the hospital, Kristin was referred to a cardiologist who ordered several diagnostic tests, including a stress test, cardiac monitor, EKG, EEG and MRI. While undergoing a tilt table test, Kristin went into cardiac arrest and had to be resuscitated.

When her cardiologist diagnosed her unexplained fainting as cardiogenic syncope, Kristin was comforted to finally know what was wrong and that there were ways she could manage it. Her cardiologist fitted her for a pacemaker and it has successfully kept Kristin’s syncope in check. At 47-years old and as a mother of two, Kristin is appreciative of her good health and relieved that neither she nor her family has to worry about the next time syncope will strike. “Early on, one of my fainting spells occurred while I was driving with one of my children in the car,” Kristin recalls. “It is terrifying to think about what could have happened.” Kristin’s diagnosis and discovery of an underlying heart condition has taught her to listen to her body and take better care of herself so that she can continue her active lifestyle without reservation.

