There is very little that can prepare someone for the long and difficult path that comes with the diagnosis of heart failure, and in some cases the number of medications and procedures can be quite staggering. Sagar sums up his heart failure history with a series of “2’s”. He was just 52 years old when he had his first heart attack, and a second just a few years later. He had two open-heart surgeries to try to repair the damage the heart attacks had caused. His cardiologist managed his condition with medications and eventually an Implantable Cardiac Defibrillator (ICD) was connected to monitor his heart and shock his heart to treat life-threatening arrhythmias. When it was found that the first ICD was faulty, a second was implanted. Two heart attacks, two surgeries, two ICDs.

But Sagar is a positive person and all the while, he and his wife Kunti carried on with their life. Sagar needed to stop working and took up gardening as a hobby. He discovered that even though his heart was not performing up to par, he had a wonderful talent for producing some of the finest fruits and vegetables he’d ever tasted. He’s most proud of the numerous ways he’s discovered to prepare both okra and guacamole.

However, as his heart failure continued to get worse, Sagar’s energy declined rapidly and the once active father and grandfather with the garden of abundance that provided so many meals and treats for the family, barely had the breath to make it to the front yard to cut flowers for his wife.

He needed something more, and his cardiologist sent him to University of Florida Shands Hospital where he was evaluated and determined to be a good candidate for an LVAD, a miniature heart pump designed to assist the heart in pumping oxygen-rich blood. In May 2013, Sagar received his HeartMate II® LVAD and immediately felt the difference. His love of gardening and his jovial attitude returned as quickly as his energy.

Today, Sagar can be found at the YMCA working out or in his garden picking the right mix of fruits and vegetables to create heart healthy recipes for his family. He also enjoys paying it forward by meeting and sharing his positivity with other heart failure patients who would like to know more about how it is to live with the HeartMate II, and also being a featured speaker about HeartMate II to audiences of medical professionals. Sagar has found that the HeartMate II is a perfect complement to his green thumb and zest for life.

This information is provided for educational purposes. Individual experiences, symptoms, situations, and circumstances may vary. Please consult your doctor or qualified health provider regarding your condition and appropriate medical treatment.

Indications: The HeartMate II LVAS is intended for use as a bridge to transplantation in cardiac transplant candidates at risk of imminent death from non-reversible left ventricular failure. The HeartMate II LVAS is also indicated for use in patients with New York Heart Association (NYHA) Class IIIB or IV end-stage left ventricular failure who have received optimal medical therapy for at least 45 of the last 60 days, and who are not candidates for cardiac transplantation. The HeartMate II LVAS is intended for use both inside and outside the hospital.

Contra-Indications: The HeartMate II LVAS is contraindicated in patients who cannot tolerate or are allergic to anticoagulation therapy.

Common Side Effects: Death, bleeding, cardiac arrhythmia, infection, respiratory failure, device malfunction, sepsis, right heart failure, renal failure, stroke, neurologic dysfunction, psychiatric episode, peripheral or device-related thromboembolic event, hemolysis, hepatic dysfunction, myocardial infarction.