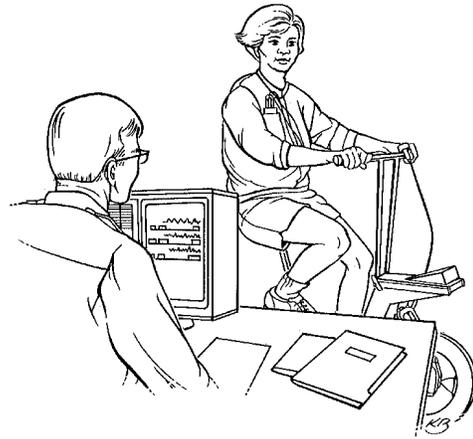




What Is Cardiac Rehabilitation?

A cardiac rehabilitation program takes place in a hospital or in the community. “Rehab” is for patients who are getting better after heart problems or surgery.

One of the best things you can do for yourself is to get in a rehab program. Everything you need to get and stay healthy is in one place, and medical staff is on hand at all times. Rehabilitation can do a lot to speed your recovery and reduce your chances of future heart problems.



What happens in a rehabilitation program?

- Rehabilitation programs can help you change your lifestyle habits. These programs often take place at a hospital with a rehabilitation team or with the help of your doctor, nurse or other healthcare professionals.
- Many people find that rehab programs are very helpful after getting out of a hospital. They allow people to join a group to exercise and to get special help in making lifestyle changes.
- Start slowly, following a safe physical activity program that gradually helps you become stronger.
- Gradually move into a more intensive program that lets you work longer and harder.
- Possibly begin strength training, if your doctor says you can.
- Have your heart rate, blood pressure and EKG monitored.

During your rehabilitation program you'll...

- Exercise using a treadmill, bike, rowing machine or walking/jogging track.
- Be monitored for a change in symptoms by a nurse or another healthcare professional.

After you've completed the program, you may feel better than ever. Make these lifestyle changes a part of your everyday life!

How else does it help me?

- You may go to classes or get personal help to quit smoking and stay smoke-free.
- A nutritionist will help you create a healthy eating plan so you'll eat less of foods high in saturated fat, trans fat and cholesterol.
- You'll be weighed and taught ways to lose weight if you need to.
- You can learn relaxation skills to help manage and reduce your stress.
- You'll improve your cardiovascular fitness.
- You may meet others who've just been through a similar event.

How can I learn more?

1. Talk to your doctor, nurse or other health-care professionals. If you have heart disease or have had a stroke, members of your family also may be at higher risk. It's very important for them to make changes now to lower their risk.
2. Call 1-800-AHA-USA1 (1-800-242-8721) or visit americanheart.org to learn more about heart disease.

3. For information on stroke, call 1-888-4-STROKE (1-888-478-7653) or visit StrokeAssociation.org.

We have many other fact sheets and educational booklets to help you make healthier choices to reduce your risk, manage disease or care for a loved one.

Knowledge is power, so *Learn and Live!*

What are the warning signs of heart attack and stroke?

Warning Signs of Heart Attack

Some heart attacks are sudden and intense, but most of them start slowly with mild pain or discomfort with one or more of these symptoms:

- Chest discomfort
- Discomfort in other areas of the upper body
- Shortness of breath with or without chest discomfort
- Other signs including breaking out in a cold sweat, nausea or lightheadedness

Warning Signs of Stroke

- Sudden weakness or numbness of the face, arm or leg, especially on one side of the body
- Sudden confusion, trouble speaking or understanding
- Sudden trouble seeing in one or both eyes
- Sudden trouble walking, dizziness, loss of balance or coordination
- Sudden, severe headache with no known cause

Learn to recognize a stroke. Time lost is brain lost.

Call 9-1-1 ... Get to a hospital immediately if you experience signs of a heart attack or stroke!

Do you have questions or comments for your doctor?

Take a few minutes to write your own questions for the next time you see your healthcare provider. For example:

How often should I go to rehab?

Is it covered by my health insurance?