

## Patient Information

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The Trust will not tolerate aggression, intimidation or violence directed towards its staff.

# Cardiac Rehabilitation Programme

## Benefits of Activity

Physical inactivity is one of the most common risk factors for heart disease in the UK. Only 3 or 4 in every 10 men and two or three in every 10 women in the UK are active enough to give themselves protection from heart disease.

Regular exercise has been found to halve the risk of developing heart disease and people who are physically fit are more likely to survive a heart attack. Regular exercise also reduces the risk of strokes, diabetes and cancer.

### Regular exercise:

- Improves the function of the heart
  - the heart becomes stronger and more efficient
  - blood supply to the heart improves enabling more activity before the risk of angina
  - heart rate (pulse) and blood pressure decrease
- Increases the amount of "good" cholesterol, which helps to prevent "bad" cholesterol collecting on the artery walls.
- Decreases the amount of stress chemicals, which reduces the physical stress the body is under.
- Improves general muscle strength and stamina making everyday activities easier. Muscle strength, efficiency and blood supply improve in the same way as the heart muscle.
- Improves suppleness, coordination and agility.
- Helps you lose or maintain weight when combined with a healthy diet.
- Increases the feeling of wellbeing, which lifts your mood and increases confidence.
- Decreases the risk of osteoporosis.
- Makes the blood less sticky and less likely to clot.

## Fitness for the Heart

To gain the benefits to your health you must exercise or keep active on a regular basis.

It is important to do the right type of exercise. This is exercise that mainly uses the leg muscles (aerobic exercise) for example walking, cycling and dancing. Don't forget to warm up before exercise and cool down afterwards (refer to the "Safe and Effective Exercise" handout you received when you started Cardiac Rehab).

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These are the current recommendations :

- 30 minutes of moderate activity (this can be divided into 15 minute time slots)
- at least five days of the week.
- Moderate exercise is:
  - breathing a little harder
  - feeling warm, perhaps a little 'pink and puffy'
  - slightly faster pulse
  - a Rating of Perceived Exertion (RPE) of 12 to 13 on the Borg scale  
(see the Borg RPE Scale leaflet)

You can maximise your fitness by including:

- 20 minutes of constant aerobic exercise (RPE of 13 - 14 on the Borg Scale)
- three days of the week (this would be instead of the 30 minutes of moderate activity on these days).

#### **Where can I get more information?**

**British Heart Foundation**

[www.bhf.org.uk](http://www.bhf.org.uk)

For further information please see the British Heart Foundation leaflet  
"Physical Activity and Your Heart" (available at the Rehabilitation Reception Desk).

