

The Benefits of Cardiac Rehabilitation

Cardiac rehabilitation, or cardiac rehab, is a medically supervised program designed specifically for you to improve the health of your heart.

If you have heart disease, have had a heart attack, angina, bypass surgery, angioplasty or have heart failure, cardiac rehab can give you the tools you need to take control of your heart health.

“I did four months of cardiac rehab that was the best thing that could happen to me because you start going back to exercise and you are monitored. They monitor your heart. They monitor your blood pressure. You feel safe in that environment.”

There are several benefits of cardiac rehab. One benefit is an improvement in your cardiovascular fitness through regular physical activity.

Starting with supervised physical activity, and eventually progressing to exercise you can do regularly at home, cardiac rehab will give you the confidence to get moving.

Physical activity improves cardiovascular health.

It strengthens the other muscles in your body too.

Eventually, both you and your heart can do more work with less effort. And over a period of time, your heart may be able to pump more blood with each beat, improving circulation.

Cardiovascular fitness is key to helping reduce your risk of having future heart problems or events. And cardiovascular fitness will help you recover from your cardiac event or procedure more quickly and may help to reduce symptoms such as chest pain, fatigue, and shortness of breath.

Another benefit of cardiac rehabilitation is a decrease in your risk of having future heart problems through lifestyle changes. Together, you and your cardiac rehab team will look at how your daily habits increase your risk of heart disease and find ways to improve them.

You may receive counseling or attend classes that can help you learn how to make heart healthy lifestyle changes that will benefit your heart and overall health.

These sessions may include information on how to choose heart healthy foods, including foods low in sodium, unhealthy fats and sugar, to help you lose weight and reduce the strain unhealthy food choices can put on your heart.

They may look at your stress levels; another serious risk factor for heart disease, and help you find a way to reduce or control your daily stress.

Sessions may outline the importance of taking all of your medications correctly. This is important to your recovery and ongoing heart health but can be confusing.

Your cardiac rehab team is there to help answer any questions you may have about what you are taking, and can help you find a way to keep track of your medications to ensure you are taking all of your medications in the right way and at the right time.

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And if you smoke, counseling sessions can help you find a method to quit that you can stick to for better heart health.

And finally, cardiac rehab can give you the emotional support you need while you live with heart disease. You do not have to go through this alone.

"It's a nice social event. I'm a very social person and I tell you, it's just kind of neat getting together with all these people who had been through something similar, not the same necessarily, but something similar to what I've done."

"One of the great benefits of the cardiac rehab program is the psychological part of it. Which is where you meet people, like yourself, who have had this problem. And-- but then, they teach you all about it."

Members of your cardiac rehab team; which may include a doctor, nurse, exercise physiologist and dietitian; are there to help every step of the way.

They are there to take exceptional care of you.

"Everything's going well."

"Am I at the level I'm supposed to be at?"

"Oh yeah you're at the level"

If you have had a heart event, or are living with heart disease, and haven't been prescribed cardiac rehabilitation talk to your healthcare provider about joining a cardiac rehab program today.

During cardiac rehab, you will benefit from the tools you develop and the emotional support you receive, to live a long, heart healthy future.