

## Heart Disease: Cardiac Rehab



Cardiac rehabilitation is a program for people who have a heart problem or have had a heart attack, heart surgery, or angioplasty. You may start cardiac rehab to prevent future problems. Or you may start it while you are in the hospital.

A team will design a cardiac rehab program to fit your needs.

The team may include your doctor, a nurse specialist, a dietitian, an exercise therapist, and a physical therapist.

You may be part of a group, but each person will follow his or her own plan.

You will learn how to:

- Reduce your risk for more heart problems.
- Exercise safely.
- Manage stress.
- Eat heart-healthy foods.
- Quit smoking.

By the end of the program, you will be ready to do these things on your own.

### Who should enroll in cardiac rehab?

Your doctor may suggest cardiac rehab if:

- You have had a heart attack.
- You have angina (chest pain or discomfort).
- You have heart failure, coronary artery disease (CAD), or major risk factors for CAD.
- You have had heart surgery, such as coronary artery bypass, heart valve replacement, or heart transplant.
- You have an uneven heartbeat (arrhythmia) or other heart problems.
- You have had angioplasty or a stent.
- You have had peripheral arterial disease of the legs.

You need your doctor's approval to start cardiac rehab. Some form of cardiac rehab can help almost anyone who has heart disease or is at risk for heart disease. Ask your doctor whether cardiac rehab is right for you.

### What are the benefits?

Cardiac rehab has many benefits:

- You may have better overall health.
- You may lose weight.
- You may feel less depressed, stressed, and worried.
- You may feel better about yourself.
- You may have more energy and feel more hopeful.
- You may go back to work safely, with less time off.

One of the benefits may be getting to know other people in cardiac rehab. It can help to have the support of others who have had a similar experience and to know that you are not alone.

**Do you have any questions or concerns after reading this information?** It's a good idea to write them down and take them to your next doctor visit.

