

Patient information

Cardiac Rehabilitation Programme

Cardiology Speciality

The aim of cardiac rehabilitation is to help you to recover and return to as full a life as possible after a cardiac event. Research has shown that attending cardiac rehabilitation can slow or reverse the progression of cardiovascular disease, improve fitness, restore confidence and improve your quality of life. It is recommended by your consultant and is as important as the other treatments you have received. Our cardiac rehabilitation programme follows the standards set out by The British Association for Cardiovascular Prevention and Rehabilitation (BACPR 2017).

You will be offered a cardiac rehab programme if you have had:

- ❖ A heart attack (myocardial infarction).
- ❖ New diagnosis of angina.
- ❖ Following angioplasty (PCI) for either angina or heart attack.
- ❖ Following coronary artery bypass graft surgery.
- ❖ Following heart valve surgery (including transcatheter aortic valve implantation TAVI).
- ❖ If you have stable heart failure.
- ❖ Following insertion of implantable cardioverter defibrillator (ICD).
- ❖ Following pacemaker insertion.
- ❖ Following treatments for congenital heart disease.
- ❖ Following heart transplant.
- ❖ Following insertion of left ventricular assist device.
- ❖ Following other types of heart surgery.

The cardiac rehabilitation team includes cardiac rehabilitation specialist nurses and exercise physiologists who will support you throughout your programme. Other team members will provide specific education sessions such as the pharmacist, dietician, occupational therapist and speakers from community exercise programmes.

When will I start Cardiac Rehabilitation?

If referred to cardiac rehab during your inpatient admission, you will be visited by the cardiac rehabilitation nurse on the ward. The nurse will do an initial assessment and provide information, advice and education booklets relevant to your heart condition, risk factors for heart disease and recovery. A contact telephone number for the rehab team will also be provided.

After discharge from hospital a cardiac rehabilitation nurse will ring you at home within three to five working days. At this stage you will be asked about your progress and any symptoms you may be experiencing. Remember it is quite normal to feel anxious and emotional in the early days after diagnosis and discharge from hospital. The nurse will give any necessary advice to help with your recovery. Please be aware that when we call you the hospital telephone number usually displays as a withheld or private number. If we are unable to contact you after two attempted calls we will write to you and invite you to phone us regarding your programme.

Following your telephone consultation, you will be offered a date to attend the Cardiac Rehabilitation Assessment Clinic at either Broadgreen Hospital or the Royal Liverpool Hospital. This assessment will include a review of any symptoms, medications, past medical history, checking your pulse and blood pressure, recording your height and weight, checking your blood glucose level if you have diabetes.

The nurse / exercise physiologist will help you identify any risk factors that can be modified to reduce the risk of a further cardiac event. You will be encouraged to set realistic goals to help you make appropriate lifestyle changes. Some people have several goals they wish to achieve whilst other people may only have one.

A walking assessment will also be performed, if you are well enough on the day. This will enable the exercise physiologist to assess your current activity and fitness level and prescribe an individualised exercise programme. All of our programmes will take into account any other pre-existing conditions that you have and will be modified as required.

What happens after the assessment?

After completing your assessment you will be offered a choice of classes at either Broadgreen Hospital Cardiac Rehabilitation Department or Royal Liverpool Hospital physiotherapy gym.

Classes vary depending on your heart condition and fitness level. You will be offered a programme to attend either twice per week for five weeks or once per week for eight weeks.

If you have difficulty attending on particular days we will be as flexible as possible and offer an alternative where possible.

Each session will last two to two and a half hours. The first half will be the exercise session followed by a different educational talk each week. Each session the nurse will ensure you are well enough to exercise by checking your pulse and blood pressure and asking about symptoms. It is important to take any prescribed medication before your class. It is also essential to have a light diet and fluids approximately one hour before exercise.

If you are unwell on the day of your class please telephone us for advice or to cancel. We are unable to let you exercise if you have cold or flu like symptoms, a chest infection, a systemic infection requiring antibiotics, diarrhoea and vomiting.

The education sessions are a fantastic opportunity to learn more about your heart condition and how you can reduce the risk of further heart problems, cardio protective diet, the benefits and importance of your medications, how exercise can improve your health, coping emotionally with your heart condition and reducing stress.

A family member or friend is welcome to accompany you during the education talks but will need to wait in our reception while you exercise. If you have any particular needs to enable you to attend your programme such as an interpreter, sign language interpreter, guide dog, carer, please discuss with a member of staff.

Attendance at a full programme will offer you the most supervision and support. However if you are unable to attend the programme because you have returned to work, or have other commitments, we can also offer a home programme after completion of your assessment. This will involve guidance on independent exercise at home and information and booklets regarding all aspects of your heart condition and recovery. You will receive telephone follow up from the rehab team and will then be required to attend for a final assessment in approximately eight weeks' time.

What happens when I finish the rehabilitation programme?

At the end of your programme you will attend a final assessment. This will involve a review of any ongoing symptoms and appropriate advice will be given. The nurse will give you specific advice regarding ongoing monitoring of pulse, blood pressure, blood glucose levels and cholesterol. You will have the opportunity to review your risk factors and whether you have achieved or started to achieve the goals you set at the beginning of the programme. An appropriate ongoing plan of care will be agreed.

You will also complete a post programme walking assessment and be offered the opportunity to be referred to one of the many exercise programmes available in our local community venues.

Ongoing emotional support for people with a heart condition can also be offered via a referral to our colleagues at Talk Liverpool. This support can be accessed by a referral from your rehab team, family doctor (GP) or a self-referral via telephone or online.

Feedback

Your feedback is important to us and helps us influence care in the future.

Following your discharge from hospital or attendance at your outpatient appointment you will receive a text asking if you would recommend our service to others. Please take the time to text back, you will not be charged for the text and can opt out at any point. Your co-operation is greatly appreciated.

Further Information

If you need any further information please contact the Cardiac Rehabilitation Department - If nobody is available to take your call please leave your name and a telephone number and we will call you back as soon as possible. Please note this may be the next working day.

Contact details

Royal Liverpool Hospital

Tel: 0151 706 2278

Text phone number: 18001 0151 706 2278

Broadgreen Hospital

Tel 0151 600 1922

Text phone number: 18001 0151 600 1922

External Information

Although the internet can provide a lot of useful information please be aware that it is important to ensure the information is research based and up to date.

The British Heart Foundation is an excellent resource and can be accessed at bhf.org.uk. The website has up to date information and advice for a variety of cardiac conditions, risk factors for heart disease, lifestyle modification, travel insurance and driving guidelines.

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All Trust approved information is available on request in alternative formats, including other languages, easy read, large print, audio, Braille, moon and electronically.

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