



CARDIAC REHABILITATION AND EXERCISE

What is Cardiac Rehabilitation?

Cardiac rehabilitation is practiced by a multi-disciplinary team of health professionals who aim to guide cardiac patients through a process that will encourage positive lifestyle change, support improved physical fitness and psychological health.

Aim: 'restore and maintain optimum level of physical, mental and psychological well-being after cardiac illness' *1

Why Exercise?

Physical activity behaviour change is introduced at phase I of cardiac rehabilitation and is reinforced through to Phase IV.

Evidence suggests that in the first 3 months after heart attack, introducing exercise can improve physical fitness by 25-30%*2.

Exercise in cardiac rehabilitation is recommended because of the many positive benefits including:

- ♥ increased physical fitness profile
- ♥ improved cholesterol
- ♥ maintain weight
- ♥ enhanced coronary blood flow
- ♥ physiological benefit
- ♥ improved survival

Rehab Process for Exercise

- ♥ Phase IV of cardiac rehabilitation is a community-based exercise programme and should be available to all who need it
- ♥ Phase IV aims to provide people with supervised exercise based on BACR guidelines*3
- ♥ Participants should be risk-stratified at Phase III to decide if it is safe for referral into Phase IV exercise.

What Type of Exercise?

- ♥ Phase IV exercise should be delivered to participants at least 3 times per week.
- ♥ Exercise should include 20-60 minutes of cardiovascular conditioning (at an intensity of 60—80% of maximum heart rate). Muscular strength and flexibility exercise should also be included.
- ♥ A qualified exercise instructor will deliver and lead the Phase IV exercise programme, most commonly a circuit-based class.

*1, *2, *3 British Association of Cardiac Rehabilitation Phase IV Training Module, 2006)