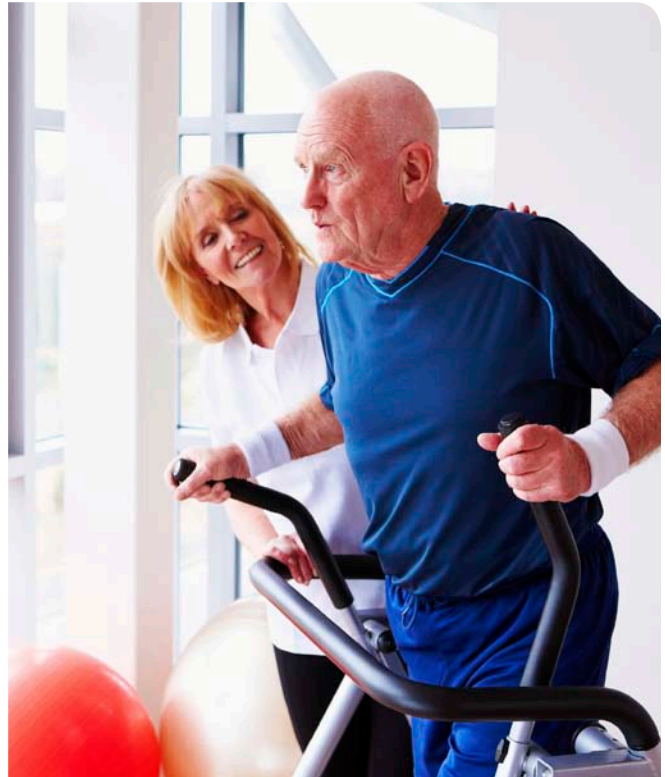




What Is Cardiac Rehabilitation?

A cardiac rehabilitation (rehab) program takes place in a hospital or in the community. Cardiac rehab is for patients who are getting better after heart problems or surgery.

One of the best things you can do for yourself is to talk to your healthcare provider about how to get in a rehab program. Everything you need to get and stay healthy is in one place, and medical staff is on hand at all times. Rehab can do a lot to speed your recovery and reduce your chances of future heart problems.



Who needs a cardiac rehab program?

Many people of all ages who have heart conditions can benefit from a cardiac rehab program. You may benefit if you have or have had:

- A heart attack.
- A heart condition, such as coronary artery disease (CAD), angina or heart failure.
- Heart procedures or surgeries, including coronary artery bypass graft (CABG) surgery, angioplasty, stenting, valve replacement, or a pacemaker or implantable cardioverter defibrillator (ICD).

What happens in a rehab program?

- Rehab programs can help you change your lifestyle habits. These programs often take place at a hospital with a rehab team or with the help of your doctor, nurse or other healthcare providers.
- Many people find that rehab programs are very helpful after getting out of a hospital. They allow

people to join a group to exercise and to get special help in making lifestyle changes.

During your rehabilitation program you'll...

- Have a medical evaluation to figure out your needs and limitations. The medical staff uses this information to tailor a program to your needs.
- Exercise using a treadmill, bike, rowing machine or walking/jogging track.
- Be monitored for a change in symptoms by a nurse or another healthcare professional.
- Start slowly, following a safe physical activity program that gradually helps you become stronger.
- Slowly move into a more intensive program that lets you work longer and harder.
- Possibly begin strength training, if your doctor says you can.
- Have your heart rate, blood pressure and EKG monitored.

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- After you've completed the program, you may feel better than ever. It is important to make these lifestyle changes a part of your everyday life!

How else does it help me?

- You may go to classes or get personal help to quit smoking and stay smoke-free.
- A nutritionist will help you create a healthy eating plan so you'll know how to eat less of foods high in saturated fat, trans fat and cholesterol.
- You'll improve your fitness level.
- You'll be weighed and how to lose weight if you need to.
- You can learn relaxation skills to help manage and reduce your stress.
- You may meet others who've just been through a similar event.



HOW CAN I LEARN MORE?

- 1** Talk to your doctor, nurse or other healthcare professionals. If you have heart disease or have had a stroke, members of your family also may be at higher risk. It's very important for them to make changes now to lower their risk.
- 2** Call **1-800-AHA-USA1** (1-800-242-8721), or visit **heart.org** to learn more about heart disease.
- 3** For information on stroke, call **1-888-4-STROKE** (1-888-478-7653) or visit us at **StrokeAssociation.org**.

Do you have questions for the doctor or nurse?

Take a few minutes to write your questions for the next time you see your healthcare provider.

For example:

How often and how long should I go to rehab?

Is it covered by my health insurance?

My Questions:

We have many other fact sheets to help you make healthier choices to reduce your risk, manage disease or care for a loved one. Visit **heart.org/answersbyheart** to learn more.

Knowledge is power, so Learn and Live!

