

Cardiac Rehabilitation Home Walking Program

Why Exercise?

It's a great way to feel and look good, but there are other benefits:

- improved circulation, lowered blood pressure and heart rate
- improved muscle tone and flexibility
- weight loss (when combined with proper diet)
- lowered triglyceride levels, increased "good" cholesterol, decreased "bad" cholesterol (when combined with proper diet)
- improved use of fats and sugars by the body
- stress reduction and feelings of well-being
- improved bowel function
- improved sexual function

What kind of exercise?

Aerobic exercise, the kind of exercise which raises your heart rate and challenges your circulation for an extended period of time, such as walking, jogging, biking, rowing or swimming are great. Your job is to choose the activity which is right for your needs.

GUIDELINES

HOW OFTEN? The best way to condition and protect your heart is to exercise regularly. At first it will be several times a day, every day. As you become conditioned, **at least 3-5 times a week.**

HOW LONG? The amount of time you spend each session will be short when you are getting started, but will increase as you become a regular exerciser, **30-40 minutes is optimal.** When you are exercising for 20 minutes, it is important to warm-up before and cool down after the activity, by doing 3-5 minutes of the same exercise slowly. This gives the body time to adjust to your changing activity levels.

HOW HARD? This is measured by taking your pulse, which you will learn while you are in the hospital and/or cardiac rehabilitation. Your pulse should not be more than 25 beats above your resting one minute pulse or 3-4 beats above you resting 10 second pulse.

EXAMPLE If your 10 second resting pulse is 12 beats, do not let your pulse rise above 15 beats during exercise.

If your pulse goes **ABOVE YOUR LIMIT** or you become **SHORT OF BREATH** to the point that you **CANNOT CARRY ON A CONVERSATION, SLOW DOWN.** If your pulse **DOES NOT RISE** above your resting rate when exercising, **PICK UP YOUR PACE.**

PRECAUTIONS: STOP AND REST if you have:

- Chest pressure or discomfort which may radiate to your neck, back, or jaw
- Shortness of breath, excessive
- Unusual sweating
- Dizziness or lightheadedness
- Nausea

**** IF SYMPTOMS ARE NOT RELIEVED IN 10-15 MINUTES, CALL YOUR DOCTOR OR 911**

If you develop a new or changing symptom, check with your doctor before returning to exercise.

DO NOT EXERCISE

- in extreme weather
- within 1 ½ hours of eating a meal
- if you have a fever, flu-like symptoms or other illness

WALKING SCHEDULE INSTRUCTIONS

WARM-UP by doing the stretching exercises and begin walking at a slow pace for the first few minutes.

It is usually less tiring to increase your exercise time by only 1 – 2 minutes a day or every couple of days.

WEEKLY

1. Walk **1-2 times per day, 30-60 minutes** without stopping.
2. Take resting pulse for 1 full minute.
3. ROM warm-up stretches (handout).
4. Walk slowly or use bike at 20 kph or TM at 1.5 mph for 2-5 minutes.
5. Calisthenics (hand out).
6. Walking program or HEP.
7. Take pulse after 5 minutes of exercise and every 10 minutes thereafter unless you are having symptoms, then check immediately and stop exercising.
8. Cool down walk for at least 5 minutes.
9. Calisthenics (leg stretches).
10. Post pulse count – for 1 minute, make sure pulse rate is within 10 beats of your resting pulse before exercise.
11. Keep in TTR (Target Training Rate).

Special instructions: (See precautions) _____

Balance exercises

Plantar flexion

Stand straight, holding on to a table or chair for balance. Slowly stand on tiptoe, as high as possible. Hold position. Slowly lower heels to the ground. Repeat 8 to 15 times. Rest a minute, then do another 8 to 15 repetitions. Add modifications as you progress. (Hold chair with one hand, then one fingertip, then no hands; then, if steady, do exercise with eyes closed.)



Knee flexion

Stand straight, holding on to a table or chair for balance. Slowly bend knee as much as possible so foot lifts up behind you. Hold position. Slowly lower foot all the way back down. Repeat 8 to 15 times on each leg. Rest a minute, then do another 8 to 15 repetitions. Add modifications as you progress (same as those for plantar flexion).



Side leg raise

Stand straight with feet slightly apart, holding on to a table or chair for balance. Slowly lift one leg to side, 6-12 inches. (Keep back and knees straight throughout the exercise.) Hold position. Slowly lower leg. Repeat 8 to 15 times on each leg. Rest a minute, then do another 8 to 15 repetitions. Add modifications as you progress (same as those for plantar flexion).



Hip flexion

Stand straight, holding on to a table or chair for balance. Slowly bend one knee toward chest, without bending waist or hips. Hold position. Slowly lower leg all the way down. Repeat 8 to 15 times on each leg. Rest a minute, then do another 8 to 15 repetitions. Add modifications as you progress (same as those for plantar flexion).



Hip extension

Stand 12-18 inches from table or chair. Bend at hips and hold on to chair. Slowly lift one leg straight behind you, keeping leg straight. Hold position. Slowly lower leg all the way down. Repeat 8 to 15 times on each leg. Rest a minute, then do another 8 to 15 repetitions. Add modifications as you progress (same as those for plantar flexion).



Anytime, anywhere

These types of exercises also improve your balance. You can do them almost anytime, anywhere, and as often as you like, as long as you have something sturdy nearby to hold on to if you become unsteady.

- Walk heel-to-toe. Position your heel just in front of the toes of the opposite foot each time you take a step. Your heel and toes should touch.
- Stand on one foot (while waiting in line at the grocery store or at the bus stop, for example). Alternate feet.
- Stand up and sit down without using your hands.

