

# Cardiac rehabilitation exercise programme

Including longer term physical  
activity and exercise goals

Patient information



Cardiothoracics  
Cardiac  
Rehabilitation



Patient Name: .....

Hospital No: .....

## Exercise or physical activity and your heart

Your heart is a muscle which pumps blood around your body. Exercise can help your heart muscle to become fitter so that it can pump blood more efficiently around your body.

The type of exercise that improves your hearts fitness the most is called **aerobic exercise**.

Examples of aerobic exercise are walking, cycling, swimming, or dancing. NICE (2007) recommend that we should aim to be physically active or exercise for 20-30 minutes daily to the point of breathlessness.

The aim of this programme is to help you work towards this. The British Heart Foundation recommend that exercise/activity is performed at a **moderate intensity**.

Exercising at a moderate intensity means that you should be working hard enough to be breathing more heavily and feeling warmer **but** not so hard that you are unable to talk and exercise at the same time.

**More information:** [www.nice.org.uk](http://www.nice.org.uk) and [www.bhf.org.uk](http://www.bhf.org.uk)

## The cardiac rehabilitation sessions

We run an eight week course of cardiac rehabilitation.

Each session lasts for two hours. The exercise component of the session is approximately 45 minutes followed by a relaxation session and a health education topic.

We will also help you to plan what activity/exercise is appropriate for you to do in between each of your sessions.

Your cardiac rehabilitation course will commence on:

Venue: .....

Date: .....

Time: .....

Tutor: .....

**The James Cook University Hospital**  
Cardiac Rehabilitation Gym  
1st Floor (next to ward 30)  
(Use bridge entrance)  
The James Cook University Hospital  
Middlesbrough  
TS4 3BW

**Redcar Primary Care Hospital**  
Crossley Unit (1st Floor)  
West Dyke Road  
Redcar TS10 4NW

**The Neptune Centre**  
Community Room (1st Floor)  
Ormesby Road  
Berwick Hills  
TS3 7RP

**The Friarage Hospital**  
Ambulatory Services  
1st Floor (next to Rutson Rehab)  
(use main entrance)  
The Friarage Hospital  
Northallerton  
North Yorkshire  
DL6 1JG

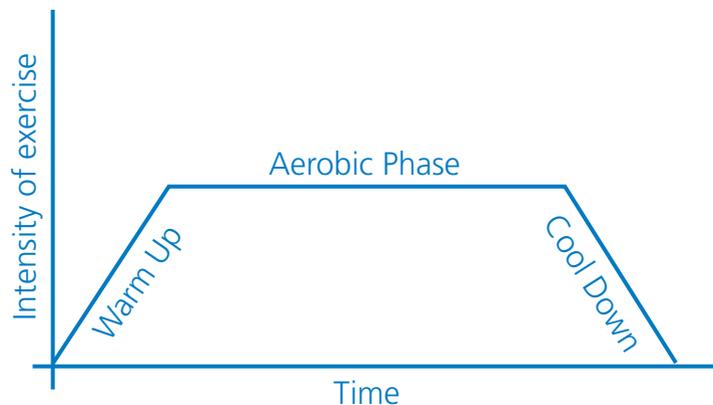
**The Friary Hospital**  
Multi purpose room  
Queens Road  
Richmond  
North Yorkshire  
DL10 4A

**Sunnyfield House**  
Westgate  
Guisborough  
TS14 6BA

**Each exercise session will include:**

- **Warm up** - To ensure your body, particularly your heart and muscles are ready for the aerobic exercise. This lasts approximately 15 minutes and comprises general mobility, pulse raising exercises and simple stretches.
- **Aerobic circuit** - This lasts approximately 20 minutes and comprises a circuit of aerobic exercise. The aim of this is to raise your heart rate to your individual goal. This will have been set up for you at your initial assessment appointment.
- **Cool down** - This lasts approximately 10 minutes and comprises walking, gentle mobility and simple stretches. This is important to allow your heart rate to gradually return to your resting level.

Exercise is done at your own pace and should be enjoyable. We will take your pulse and blood pressure in the class at every session and you will use a 'how it feels' scale known as the BORG scale to make sure you are exercising at the right level.



Your individual training heart rate goal during your cardiac rehabilitation sessions is:

.....

Your walk/step test today: .....

Date: .....

**Borg scale instructions**  
(Borg scale on the next page)

While exercising we want you to rate your perception of exertion, ie, how heavy and strenuous the exercise feels to you.

The perception of exertion depends mainly on the strain and fatigue in your muscles and on your feeling of breathlessness or aches in the chest. Look at this rating scale; we want you to use this scale from 6 to 20, where 6 means 'no exertion at all' and 20 means 'maximal exertion'.

Try to appraise your feeling of exertion as honestly as possible, without thinking about what the actual physical load is. Don't underestimate it, but don't overestimate it either. It's your own feeling of effort and exertion that's important, not how it compares to other people's. What other people think is not important either. Look at the scale and the expressions and then give a number.

## The Borg Scale:

6	No exertion at all	9	corresponds to 'very light' exercise. For a normal healthy person it is like walking slowly at his or her own pace for some minutes.
7	Extremely light		
8			
9	Very light		
10		13	on the scale is 'somewhat hard' exercise, but it still feels OK to continue.
11	Light		
12			
13	Somewhat hard	17	'very hard' is very strenuous. A healthy person can still go on, but he or she really has to push him/herself. It feels very heavy and the person is very tired.
14			
15	Hard (heavy)		
16			
17	Very hard	19	on the scale is an extremely strenuous exercise level. For most people this is the most strenuous exercise they have ever experienced.
18			
19	Extremely hard		
20	Maximal exertion		

Borg RPE scale

© Gunnar Borg, 1970, 1985, 1984, 1998

**At each session it is important for us to ensure that you are fit to exercise and we would ask that you let us know if you have experienced any of the following in between each session:**

- Illness or fever including coughs, colds and tummy upsets
- Increased breathlessness
- Angina symptoms coming and going at rest
- Palpitations or an irregular heart beat
- Dizzy spells
- Persistent back pain or chest pain
- Swollen ankles or feet
- Problems with your diabetes
- Joint and muscle problems likely to limit your exercise tolerance
- Any changes to your medication regime
- Any other issues you feel are important

Occasionally after discussing some of these issues with you we may advise that it is not appropriate for you to exercise on that day. If you experience any of these symptoms during your usual daily exercise and activity other than in the sessions you can ring the cardiac rehabilitation department or your GP or NHS Direct for further advice.

## General information

We look forward to you joining us. We hope that you enjoy your cardiac rehabilitation course. To ensure that you and the rest of the group get the most out of the programme we do have some ground rules.

- If you are unable to attend a session please let your tutor know either the week before or by telephone on 01642 854644 (James Cook/Redcar/Guisborough/Neptune centre classes) or 01609 764402 (Friarage Hospital, Northallerton or Friary Hospital Richmond classes). If you do not attend for 2 weeks running and you have not let us know you will automatically be discharged from the service.
- If you need to leave early please inform the class tutor at the beginning of the session.
- Unfortunately due to demand on the service if you miss sessions we are unable to add these onto the end of the programme.
- Remember to take your medication before you attend the session and remember to bring any medication with you that you may need to take during the session e.g GTN or inhalers.
- Please follow the exercise advice that is given to you by the class tutors.
- Try to respect and support others in the group and maintain confidentiality.
- Turn off your mobile phone or put it on silent during the class.

- Wear suitable loose fitting clothing and flat shoes (not flip flops) during the exercise. If you wear glasses or hearing aids bring them with you.
- Do not attend the session if you are unwell if you have angina type chest pain follow the advice on your GTN card.
- Do not bring valuable with you to the class, (South Tees NHS Foundation Trust can not take responsibility of loss or damage to property).
- If you are diabetic please ensure you check your blood sugar prior to attending your class and inform the tutor of the reading. If your blood sugar (BM) is above 15 you will not be able to participate in the exercise session.
- Partners are welcome to attend the sessions and join in with the health topic/discussions. Unfortunately partners cannot participate in the exercise session.

## The good news about physical activity

Increasing your levels of activity can make a big difference to the quality of your life

### You can experience:

- Better health
- More energy
- Reduced stress
- You may find it easier to relax and it may also help improve your sleep

- Stronger bones and muscles which can improve your balance, strength, suppleness and mobility
- More independence
- Easier to maintain a healthy weight
- Opportunities to meet other people
- Increased enjoyment of life

To get the most out of your exercise you should aim to exercise for at least 30 minutes on five occasions during the week. **Remember that you can get these benefits from being more active from all types of activities and not just from formal 'exercise'.**

## Managing your own activity/exercise plan at home

- Think of exercise or activity as a normal part of your everyday life
- Choose a variety of exercises and activities that you enjoy
- Start slowly and gradually build up the length of time that you spend on your chosen exercise or activity
- Try to do something everyday
- Set yourself realistic goals
- Wear loose comfortable clothes and appropriate footwear
- Remember the warm up and cool down are important part of your exercise sessions

- Simple stretches can help you to avoid injury and we have included some in this booklet similar to the ones that are used at your cardiac rehabilitation sessions. If there are any stretches that you have been advised not to perform during the rehabilitation class, please do not include them in your own exercise programme

## Some points to remember when you are undertaking any exercise or activity

- Wait at least two hours after a meal before exercising
- Do not exercise if you feel unwell - remember if you are unsure whether you should be exercising then seek advice
- Wrap up warmly on cold days and consider alternative forms of activity if the weather is too cold or windy to go out
- If you are out walking take a mobile phone with you and tell someone when you will be back
- Remember to take your GTN spray with you (if it has been prescribed for you)

Remember that changing a few of your daily habits can soon add up to you having a more active lifestyle. Every little helps!

At each of your sessions we will discuss with you an individual exercise plan for your use at home in between each of your cardiac rehabilitation sessions.

## Stretches to help you warm up and cool down

It is important that you do these stretches before and after every exercise session so that you don't damage your joints or muscles.

Do the stretches smoothly and hold for around 8-10 seconds during the warm up, and 15 seconds during the cool down.

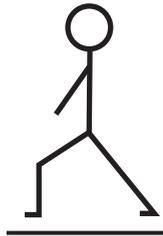
**Do not bounce or jerk.** If you feel unsteady hold onto a wall or sturdy chair for support. These stretches should not be painful or hurt, but you should feel a gentle stretch along the muscles indicated.

Some stretches have an alternative way of doing them. You only have to do one method (whichever is easiest for you).

### Calf stretch

Place one foot in front of the other with the front leg bent and the back leg straight. Keep the heel of the back leg on the floor, bend the front knee until you feel a stretch in you calf.

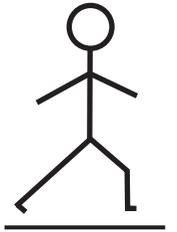
Repeat on the other leg.



### Split stretch

With your feet just over shoulder width apart and feet pointing forward, place your hands on your hips and bend one knee to take your weight over on one leg. Keep the other leg straight and both feet flat on the floor. Bend the knee until you feel a stretch in your inner thigh.

Repeat on both legs.



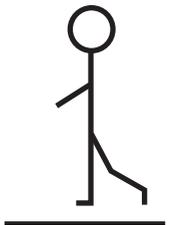
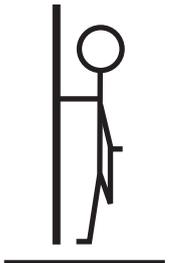
### Thigh stretch

Holding onto a wall or sturdy chair/table bend the leg furthest away from the wall, hold your ankle or trouser leg and gently pull your foot towards your bottom. Try to keep your knees together and body upright. You should feel a stretch in the front of your thigh.

Turn round and repeat on the other leg.

Or standing on one leg, stretch the other one out behind you with the tips of your toes on the floor.

Gently push your hips forward until you can feel a stretch over the front of your hip and down the front of your thigh.



## Hamstring stretch

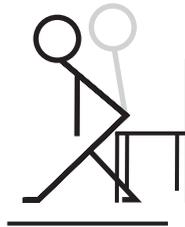
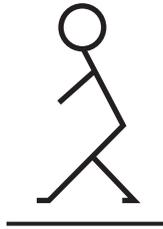
With both feet together, bend both knees. Slide one foot forward so that the front leg is straight, while the back leg remains bent.

Place your hands onto the bent knee for support. You should feel a stretch in the back of your thigh, if not lift the toes of your front foot off the floor so that you are resting on the heel.

Repeat on the other leg.

Or sitting on the edge of a chair, slide one foot forward so that the front leg is straight while the back leg remains bent with your foot flat on the floor.

Place your hands onto the bent leg for support. You should feel a stretch in the back of your thigh, if not lift your toes of your straight leg off the floor so that you are pushing on the heel.

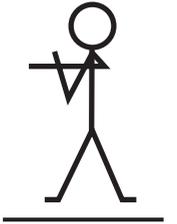
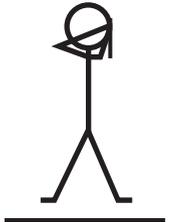


## Arm stretches

Bend your arm so that your hand is on your shoulder. Slide your hand over your shoulder towards your shoulder blade. With the opposite arm gently push the arm back until you feel a stretch down the back of your arm.

Repeat on the other arm.

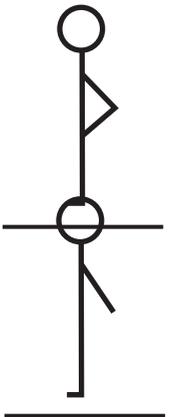
Also keeping your arm straight, take it across your body at shoulder height. Use the other arm to gently hug your arm into your body so that you feel a stretch along the back of your arm.



## Chest stretch

Place your hands on the small of your back and press your chest forward until you can feel a gentle stretch across the front of your chest.

Or hold your hands together behind your back. Keeping your arms straight, lift your arms away from you until you can feel a stretch across your chest.



## Individual exercise programme

Please bring this booklet along to each session with you. Your class tutor will discuss your progress so far and help you set individual goals each week, so that you can continue to build up your level of activity.

**Week 1:** Date: .....

This week I aim to ...  
(to be discussed with your class tutor)

This week I achieved ...

I found these activities:  
too easy, fairly easy, fairly hard, too hard

**Borg:**

Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6

**Week 2:** Date: .....

This week I aim to ...  
(to be discussed with your class tutor)

This week I achieved ...

I found these activities:  
too easy, fairly easy, fairly hard, too hard

**Borg:**

Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6

**Week 3:** Date: .....

This week I aim to ...  
(to be discussed with your class tutor)

This week I achieved ...

I found these activities:  
too easy, fairly easy, fairly hard, too hard

**Borg:**

Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6
-------	-------	-------	-------	-------	-------

**Week 4:** Date: .....

This week I aim to ...  
(to be discussed with your class tutor)

This week I achieved ...

I found these activities:  
too easy, fairly easy, fairly hard, too hard

**Borg:**

Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6
-------	-------	-------	-------	-------	-------

**Week 5:** Date: .....

This week I aim to ...  
(to be discussed with your class tutor)

This week I achieved ...

I found these activities:  
too easy, fairly easy, fairly hard, too hard

**Borg:**

Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6

**Week 6:** Date: .....

This week I aim to ...  
(to be discussed with your class tutor)

This week I achieved ...

I found these activities:  
too easy, fairly easy, fairly hard, too hard

**Borg:**

Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6

**Week 7:** Date: .....

This week I aim to ...  
(to be discussed with your class tutor)

This week I achieved ...

I found these activities:  
too easy, fairly easy, fairly hard, too hard

**Borg:**

Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6

**Week 8:** Date: .....

My future goals are ...  
(to be discussed with your class tutor)

Your walk / step test results: .....

### Useful contact numbers

#### Cardiac Rehabilitation Teams:

The James Cook University Hospital - 01642 854644

The Friarage Hospital - 01609 764402

#### My own GP:

Dr: .....

Number: .....

## Comments, compliments, concerns or complaints

South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust is concerned about the quality of care you receive and strives to maintain high standards of health care.

However we do appreciate that there may be an occasion where you, or your family, feel dissatisfied with the standard of service you receive. Please do not hesitate to tell us about your concerns as this helps us to learn from your experience and to improve services for future patients.

## Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

This service aims to advise and support patients, families and carers and help sort out problems quickly on your behalf.

This service is available, and based, at The James Cook University Hospital but also covers the Friarage Hospital in Northallerton, our community hospitals and community health services. Please ask a member of staff for further information.

Authors: Cardiac Rehabilitation Team

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**The James Cook University Hospital**  
**Marton Road, Middlesbrough, TS4 3BW. Tel: 01642 854644**

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