

# Exercise Your Heart



## Introduction:

- Exercise should be an important part of everyone's life; exercise is very important for people with heart disease.
- Exercise reduces your risk of getting heart disease, and it can reduce your symptoms if you already have heart disease.
- Exercise does not have to be hard; it can be easily built into your daily routine.

Please visit the UHN Patient Education website for more health information:

[www.uhnpatienteducation.ca](http://www.uhnpatienteducation.ca)

© 2011 University Health Network. All rights reserved.

This information is to be used for informational purposes only and is not intended as a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis or treatment. Please consult your health care provider for advice about a specific medical condition. A single copy of these materials may be reprinted for non-commercial personal use only.

Author: Pam St-John-Allen, Vicki Hernandez, Walter Jurkiewicz

Created: 01/2011

Form: D-5742



University Health Network

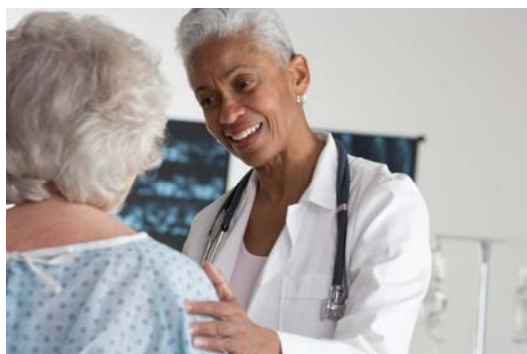
Toronto General Hospital Toronto Western Hospital Princess Margaret Hospital

## Why should I exercise?

- To improve your overall health
- To improve your fitness level
- To control your weight
- To build stronger muscles
- To lower your blood pressure
- To help you feel more energetic
- To control and prevent onset of diabetes
- To raise your good cholesterol (HDL)
- To lower your bad cholesterol (LDL)
- To lower your stress
- To improve your sleep

## Getting Started

- **When you go home, follow the instructions given to you by your health care team.**
- It is important to balance your rest times with your activity times.
- The most important thing for you to do is to continue walking and to increase the distance that you walk as you feel you are able to.
- As you recover, begin exercising in 10 minute periods, 3 times a day and increase the time as you feel able to.
- Listen to your body!



## Cardiac Rehabilitation Program

- Your health care team may recommend that you join a cardiac rehabilitation program close to you.
- The Cardiac Rehabilitation program is a group of healthcare professionals who will help you to improve your physical and emotional health.
- The team may include a doctor, nurse, exercise physiologist, occupational therapist, physical therapist, nutritionist and psychologist.
- The Rehabilitation team will make sure that the program you take part in will meet your needs.
- Each program may be a bit different depending on where you live.
- For more information about a Cardiac Rehabilitation program near you, please speak to your nurse or doctor.



## Exercise & Activity Guidelines:

### What should I do?

- Wear loose, comfortable clothing
- Wear good walking shoes
- Wait about one (1) hour after meals before exercising (to allow your food to be digested)
- Take frequent breaks to bring back your energy
- Set some daily or weekly personal goals
- Plan your activity or exercise and write a list of priorities (do one task at a time)
- Do things that you enjoy and have fun!



- Listen to your body: STOP ACTIVITY or EXERCISE if you feel:
  - pain, tired, dizzy, faint, nauseous, short of breath, or feel like your heart is racing
  - call your doctor as soon as possible
  - go to your nearest Emergency room if you continue to feel unwell

## **What should I avoid?**

- Do not do activities that strain or tense all of your muscles at the same time
- Do not exercise outside when the weather is very cold such as when the temperature is less than 8°C
- Do not exercise outside when the weather is hot and humid such as:
  - When the temperature is greater than 27 °C
  - When the humidex records are above 39°C
  - Do not drink alcoholic or caffeinated beverages before you exercise
- Do not exercise right after meals
- Do not hold your breath during exercise (make sure you breathe in and out)
- Do not take very hot baths or showers
- Do not lift anything heavier than 20 lbs
- Do not push or pull anything heavy
- Do not strain during a bowel movement
- Do not try to open a stuck window or jar lid



**For you to stay healthy the goal is to do 30-60 minutes of physical activity each day**

1.) 30-60 minutes each day in periods of at least 10 minutes each

2.) You will need to use exercises that build your:

- Endurance (E)
- Flexibility (F)
- Strength (S)

as part of your 30-60 minutes each day

3.) Start slowly . . . and build up

<b>Light Effort</b>	<b>Moderate Effort</b>	<b>Vigorous Effort</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Light walking (E)</li> <li>• Easy gardening (E)</li> <li>• Stretching (F)</li> <li>• Vacuuming (F)</li> <li>• Mopping (F)</li> <li>• Kiegels (S)</li> <li>• Abdominal tightening (S)</li> </ul> <p>Effect: You are feeling warm with increased breathing.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brisk walking (E,S)</li> <li>• Biking (E,S)</li> <li>• Raking Leaves (E)</li> <li>• Swimming (F,S)</li> <li>• Dancing (E,F,S)</li> <li>• Water aerobics (E,F,S)</li> <li>• Cutting grass (E,S)</li> <li>• Golfing (E,S)</li> <li>• Skating (E,S)</li> <li>• Carrying groceries (S)</li> <li>• Climbing stairs (E,S)</li> <li>• Push-ups (S)</li> </ul> <p>Effect: You are feeling warmer. Your breathing rate has increased a little more.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aerobics (E,F)</li> <li>• Jogging (E)</li> <li>• Hockey (E,F,S)</li> <li>• Basketball (E,F,S)</li> <li>• Fast Swimming (E,S)</li> <li>• Tennis (E,F,S)</li> <li>• Weight training (F,S)</li> </ul> <p>Effect: You are feeling quite warm. You are feeling out of breath.</p>

## Examples of 30-60 minutes of Exercises I can do



10 min.



+ 20 min.

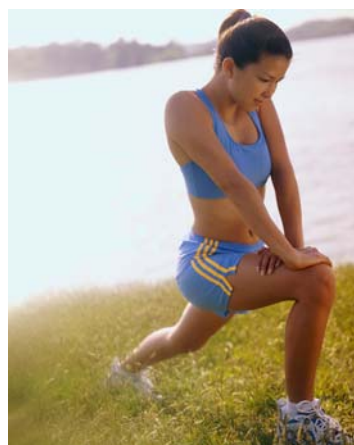


= 30 min.



20 min. + 10 min. + 20 min. + 10 min. =

60 min.



## Guide to increasing your physical activity

The table compares walking or running speed to activities that require the same or similar effort or energy level. You can match your walking speed to different walking or running categories:

1. Look across the top row marked “At Home” and find the time you are at since your procedure – for example 1-3 weeks
2. Then, look down the far left hand column for the activity you wish to do – for example “Walking/Running”
3. Where these 2 columns meet, you will find an activity that you can manage at this point in your recovery

<b>At Home</b>	<b>1-3 Weeks Very Light</b>	<b>3-6 Weeks Light</b>	<b>Later Moderate</b>
<b>Walking/ Running</b>	Walk at a slow pace	Walk at a moderate pace	Walk at a brisk pace
<b>Self-Care or Home</b>	Wash, shave, shower, stairs one at a time	Prepare meals, washing dishes, carry light objects, shopping	Carry light objects, weeding, stair climbing
<b>Work</b>	Desk work, standing	Stock shelves, light carpentry	Moving furniture, carrying boxes
<b>Leisure</b>	Stationary bike, playing cards, reading, fishing, gardening	Stationary bike, dancing, golf putting only	Bicycling, swimming, golf, tennis, skiing

## **You can start driving again:**

- 24 - 48 hours after your procedure unless your Doctor or Advanced Practice Nurse has told you not to drive.
- 4 weeks after a heart attack.
- If you drive a commercial vehicle, such as a transport truck, ask your Doctor when you can start to drive again.

**Note: If you have a pacemaker or defibrillator, there are specific instructions you should follow. Talk to your care provider about what you should do before you go home.**

