

Dear Patient,

The doctor who cared for you in hospital strongly recommends that you take part in a cardiac rehabilitation program to help you recover. People who participate in a cardiac rehabilitation program reduce their chances of future hospitalizations and emergency room visits, often return to their daily activities and work sooner, and have improved quality of life.

Each year, the TotalCardiology cardiac rehabilitation program helps thousands of people make long-lasting changes that improve their heart health and reduce their risk of future heart problems. This handout explains more about the program that your doctor referred has referred you to.

What is cardiac rehabilitation?

It is an exercise and education program for people who had a heart event, heart surgery or have been diagnosed with a heart condition.

The program will help you to regain strength, improve your cardiovascular fitness, and start you on the road to recovery. It will provide you with information, support, and tools to help you manage your risk factors and maintain heart healthy changes once you have completed the program. Participating can help you:



- Reduce your risk of future heart problems and hospital visits.
- Decrease or alleviate symptoms brought on by activity.



- Improve your ability to perform daily activities.
- Regain strength and improve overall fitness

During the cardiac rehabilitation program, you will work with a team of doctors, cardiologists, registered nurses, and clinical exercise physiologists. Through onsite exercise, virtual classes, and doctor's appointments, you will be supported in managing your condition.

How do I join the cardiac rehabilitation program?

Your doctor referred sent a referral while you were in hospital. Our office will contact you to set up your first appointments when you return home. These include:



- A doctor's appointment (phone or in-person) to see how you have been feeling since coming home from hospital, to review your medical history, medications, and risk factors, and see if the program is right for you.



- An exercise stress test will be scheduled for you when it is safe to do so. This test provides a measure of your fitness so that a safe exercise program can be developed to fit your abilities. This test involves walking on a treadmill at different speeds and incline levels. You will be monitored by a doctor throughout the test.



- If you have recently had surgery, a recovery period will be necessary before we can schedule this test. You may attend virtual education classes during this time.

Research shows that participating in cardiac rehab will help you **live longer** and **stay out of hospital**.



What happens in the cardiac rehabilitation program?



During the first half of the program, you will take part in onsite exercise sessions and virtual group education classes:

- Exercise sessions are once a week for six weeks. Each session is one hour. For those unable to exercise onsite, home-based programming and support is available.

Exercise and nursing staff will support you in safely exercising, provide guidance, symptom management, and answer your questions.



- You will also complete a series of virtual education classes – a new topic each week. Printed versions of materials and phone options for classes are available those without computer or internet access. These classes will use weekly action plans and goal setting to help participants be more successful in reaching their heart health goals.

In the second half of the program, exercise will shift to home. You will be placed in a group with other participants that attends a weekly virtual session together for the remainder of the program. This peer group format provides an opportunity for group discussion and support to help participants stay motivated in working towards their goals and overcome barriers.



Your rehab team will help you build confidence in your exercise abilities and provide you with the and tools to help you manage your symptoms, medications, and risk factors more effectively. They will also help you make a plan for maintaining the improvements you have made once you have completed the program.

Is there a cost to attend the cardiac rehabilitation program?

There is no cost for the initial appointment to determine if the program is right for you. If you decide to take part in the program following this appointment, there is a fee to join. We have financial assistance and payment options to ensure all patients eligible to participate are able to do so.

Where can I learn more about the program?



For more information about our program and frequently asked questions, please visit our website at tcrehab.ca.



You can also contact us Monday to Friday 7:30 am – 4:30 pm at 403-571-6950.



“The real benefit of this program is the people. I have had more caring and support during my brief time in cardiac rehab than I had in over 40 years in the oil patch.” ~ Nick. C