Mersey and West Lancashire Teaching Hospitals
NHS Trust

Post-cardiac admission therapy information

Patient information leaflet

If you need this information in a different language or accessible format, please speak to a member of staff who can arrange it for you

Якщо вам потрібна ця інформація іншою мовою або в доступному форматі, зверніться до співробітника, який зможе це для вас організувати

إذا كنت بحاجة إلى هذه المعلومات بلغة مختلفة أو بصيغة ميسَّرة، فيرجى التحدث إلى أحد العاملين والذي سيقوم بترتيب ذلك لك.

如果您需要其他語言或無障礙格式的資訊，請聯繫工作人員，他們將為您安排。

இந்தத் தகவலானது உங்களுக்கு வேறொரு மொழியிலோ அல்லது எளிதில் அணுகக்கூடிய வடிவத்திலோ தேவைப்பட்டால், அதனை உங்களுக்காக ஏற்பாடு செய்துதரக்கூடிய பணியாளர் ஒருவரிடம் தயவுசெய்து பேசவும்.

Dacă aveți nevoie de aceste informații într-o altă limbă sau într-un format accesibil, vă rugăm să vă adresați unui membru al personalului, care va face demersurile necesare pentru dumneavoastră.

اگر به این اطلاعات به زبانی دیگر یا در قالب دسترس‌پذیر نیاز دارید، لطفاً با یکی از کارکنان صحبت کنید تا آن را برای شما تهیه کند.

Se necessitar desta informação numa língua diferente ou num formato acessível, por favor fale com um membro da equipa que poderá organizá-la para si

اگر آپ کو یہ معلومات کسی مختلف زبان یا قابل رسائی فارمیٹ میں چاہیے، تو مہربانی کرکے عملے کے کسی رکن سے بات کریں جو آپ کے لیے اس کا بندوبست کر سکتا ہو۔

Jeżeli niniejsze informacje mają być przekazane w innym języku lub dostępnym formacie, prosimy o kontakt z członkiem personelu, który może to dla Państwa przygotować

ئەگەر پێویستیت بەم زانیارییانە هەیە بە زمانێکی جیاواز یان شێوازێکی تر، تکایە لەگەڵ ئەندامێکی ستافەکە قسە بکە کە دەتوانێت بۆت ڕێکبخات

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External resources:

- British Heart Foundation.
- Heart Research UK.
- NHS UK.
- NHS Inform.

Many of the above have information, support groups and helplines that can support you once you leave hospital

The following information is relevant for the following new diagnosis of the below conditions:

- Myocardial infarction (heart attack).
- Heart failure.
- Post-operative cardiac devices.
- Acute coronary syndrome or angina.
- Coronary or chronic heart disease.

Your heart condition & physical activity

After diagnosis, you should expect to gradually return to normal activities and look at some lifestyle changes to improve your heart health.

It is common to feel tired or down initially, but these feelings should pass over time as you begin to recover. We advocate for symptom-based rest periods during the day initially, however these rest periods should decrease during your recovery.

A major part of heart recovery is physiotherapy. The recovery should start from the day you are confirmed to have any of the conditions.

Therapy expectations

You will be assessed by a physiotherapist, and they can offer you advice and reassurance regarding your condition.

Exercise is an essential component of recovery, and your physiotherapist will be aware of the guidelines to support activity following hospitalisation.

Should you have any concerns regarding any of the information in this booklet please contact your physiotherapist.

If you are prescribed a Glyceryl Trinitrate (GTN) spray ensure this is to hand when exercising.

Borg scale – rate of perceived exertion scale

Use the below scale to acknowledge your cardiac symptoms.

It is normal for it to feel difficult when you begin activity again following an admission to hospital and although it is difficult, working at a 13 is recommended to ensure safety in exercise.

Aim for 13.

6	**No exertion at all**	No muscle fatigue, breathlessness or difficulty in breathing.
7	**Extremely light**	Very, very light.
8		
9	**Very light**	Like walking slowly for a short while. Very easy to talk.
10		
11	**Light**	Like a light exercise at your own pace.
12	**Moderate**	
13	**Somewhat hard**	Fairly strenuous and breathless. Not so easy to talk.
14		
15	**Hard**	Heavy and strenuous. An upper limit for fitness training, as when running or walking fast.
16		
17	**Very hard**	Very strenuous. You are very tired and breathless. Very difficult to talk.
18		
19	**Extremely hard**	The most strenuous effort you have ever experienced.
20	**Maximal exertion**	Maximal heaviness.

Borg RPE Scale®
Ratings (R) of Perceived (P) Exertion (E).
© Gunnar Borg, 1970, 1998, 2017
English

Pacing – energy conservation

What is pacing?

Pacing is a skillset that can help you manage your cardiac symptoms such as breathlessness, fatigue and pain. It is about looking forward into your day, acknowledging what needs to be done and working out how best to do this alongside your symptoms.

There are 3 principles of pacing, below you will find them and some questions to help you manage activity:

1. **Prioritise**

- Does it need to be done today?
- Can someone help me?
- Does it need doing at all?

2. **Plan**

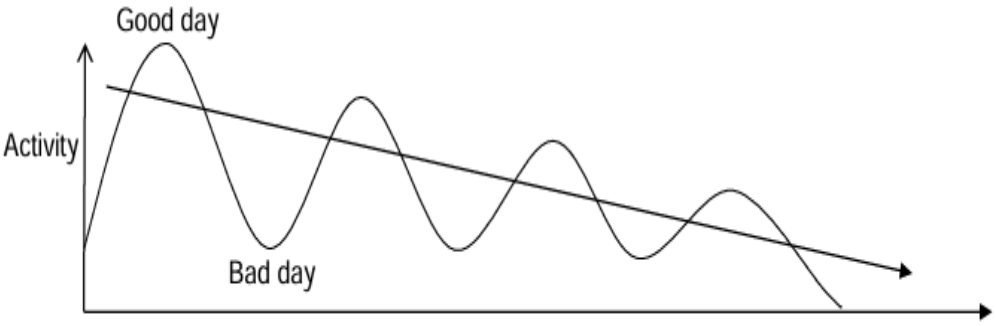
- What do I need to carry out this task?
- Can I do this sitting instead of standing?
- What time of day is best for this activity?

3. **Pace**

- Can I break this activity down into stages?
- Can I take regular breaks?

Why this is important & the boom-bust cycle

Most people do a lot on days they feel good (boom), however this can then cause a drop-in activity as the body tries to recover and an increase in symptoms (bust).



By taking a steady approach to activity and using pacing principles, your overall activity will gradually increase.

Sternal precautions

Why are sternal precautions important?

During some heart operations, the surgeon divides the sternum (breastbone) through an incision called a sternotomy. The sternum is then secured with wires and usually takes 8-12 weeks to heal.

During this time, it is important to avoid activities that place excessive strain on your chest.

As your wound heals:

- Your scar will gradually fade from red to a thin white line as it heals.
- A small bump at the top of the scar is common and usually settles over time.

Who do these precautions apply to?

These precautions apply following any operation involving a sternotomy, including:

- Coronary Artery Bypass Graft (CABG).
- Heart valve repair/replacement.
- Heart transplant.
- Other open-heart procedures.

What are the precautions?

- Avoid reaching far behind your back.
- Avoid forcefully pushing or pulling with one arm.
- Use both arms together whenever possible and keep activities close to your body.
- There is no fixed weight limit; increase activities gradually and let pain be your guide.

Stop or reduce the activity if you experience:

- Pain around your breastbone or wound.
- Pulling, clicking or movement in your chest.
- Excessive tiredness or shortness of breath beyond normal.

On discharge and resources

Occupational therapy referral

On assessment your physiotherapist may feel that your fatigue/breathlessness may need to be reviewed to ensure you can manage once home.

If this is identified, your physiotherapist may refer you to an occupational therapist to review equipment that can be used at home to give you more independence with things like washing, dressing & cooking. Although this equipment may not be needed further along your recovery, it might be needed to facilitate a safe discharge home.

The occupational therapist may issue you with equipment such as perching stools to sit when needed during activities of daily living, commodes or urine bottles if there are stairs in the home, shower chairs/stools if one is indicated. Not everyone will require this equipment but if you are struggling to manage any of the above please inform your therapist.

Cardiac rehabilitation outpatient expectations

On discharge, if you consent, a cardiac rehabilitation referral will be sent to continue your condition management in the community. Attending these sessions can reduce your need for hospitalisation, improve your quality of life and support recovery of your heart.

Along with exercise, cardiac rehabilitation classes include:

- Dietary advice.
- Smoking cessation advice.
- Medication adjustment information.
- Stress management & relaxation.
- Pacing advice.

Contact details

Southport Site

Ward 7A	01704 704 207.
CCU	01704 704 230.

Whiston Site

Ward 1D	0151 430 1601.
Ward 1E	0151 430 2330.

Please contact with any concerns whilst you are an inpatient.

There may be students and observers present during your consultation as part of their ongoing training. Please let the staff know if you do not wish any students to be present during your attendance

Please ask a member of staff if you would like a chaperone present during your procedure.

Whiston Hospital
Warrington Road
Prescot
Merseyside
L35 5DR

St Helens Hospital
Marshall Cross Road
St Helens
Merseyside
WA9 3DA

Newton Hospital
Bradlegh Road
Newton-le-Willows
WA12 8RB

Southport Hospital
Town Lane Kew
Southport
Merseyside
PR8 6PN

Ormskirk Hospital
Dicconson Way
Wigan Road
Ormskirk
L39 2AZ

MWL has a zero-tolerance approach to any form of abuse, violence or aggression shown to staff and patients, by patients, visitors or members of the public. We will not tolerate any form of bullying, victimisation, harassment, discrimination, unacceptable and inappropriate behaviour and/or unacceptable and inappropriate language.

All instances of abuse, violence or aggression, no matter how big or small, will be investigated and action taken if necessary.