

# VIRTUAL CARDIAC REHABILITATION

## YOUR PROGRAM

FOR PATIENTS AND CAREGIVERS

Presented by  
UNIVERSITY HEALTH NETWORK



DELIVERY: TELEPHONE ONLY  
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# WELCOME

## Welcome

Welcome to our Virtual Cardiac Rehab Program. We are glad that you joined us. Our cardiac rehab program has been helping people reach their exercise and lifestyle goals for more than 50 years. You are in good hands.

Your program includes both exercise and education. Our team will work with you to create an exercise program that is safe and effective for you. Your education program includes 16 weekly learning plans that you will work through with the support of your cardiac rehab team. By taking part in your exercise and education program, you will improve your health and gain the knowledge and skills to manage your condition and maintain healthy habits.

Here is what patients have said about the care they received from our team.

“The instructors set the tone and it was always positive.”

“I felt I could make a difference in my life during the goal planning session. It was the realization that progress, rather than perfection, was the goal.”

“Without exception, your staff is kind, warm, welcoming, caring, helpful, and professional. They are very well-trained, knowledgeable and always eager to help. Your program is a life giving gift and I thank you all.”

We look forward to working with you on your journey to better health.

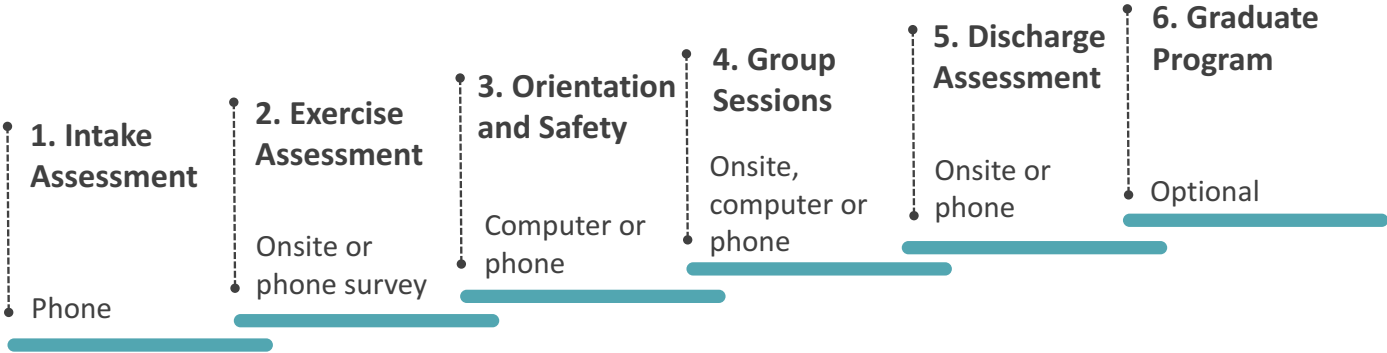




# ABOUT YOUR PROGRAM

## About Your Program

Your cardiac rehab program is 16 weeks long and includes 6 main parts, shown in the picture below.



### 1. Intake Assessment

Our lab staff and program doctor talked to you about your medical history and risk factors for heart disease, did an exercise survey, and started a plan for your care.

### 2. Exercise Assessment

You may have come onsite to complete an exercise stress test. This test measures your fitness level. The team will use the information from this test to create an exercise prescription just for you. This prescription will guide you to exercise at a level that is safe and effective for you.

### **3. Orientation and Safety**

This is the first scheduled group session in your program. Use your phone to join a required session to:

- Hear more about your program
- Learn what cardiac rehab is and how it can help you
- Learn what to expect during each session
- Ask questions

### **4. Group Sessions**

There are 12 scheduled group sessions - this includes the Orientation and Safety session. All 12 sessions will be delivered by phone. During these sessions, your cardiac rehab team will help you create an exercise routine and provide expert advice on exercise and education related to your care.

### **5. Discharge assessment**

As you get close to graduation you will review your program with your cardiac rehab team. To see the progress you have made, you may 1) complete an exercise stress test and, 2) repeat a few surveys and questions from the intake assessment so we can compare your numbers from the start and end of your program.

### **6. Graduate program**

Stay connected to the program with access to education, exercise, and fundraising events after you graduate.



### YOUR CARDIAC REHAB TEAM

Many team members work together to help you reach your goals in cardiac rehab. As the patient, you are the focus of the team.



A Cardiac Rehab Supervisor (CRS) will lead most of your sessions. Your CRS will:

- Provide you with a safe and effective exercise program
- Provide education to help you make changes to your health habits
- Connect you to other members of our team such as a dietitian, social worker, or psychologist, if needed
- Share your progress in the program with your doctor(s)

All of our CRSs are trained to provide safe and effective exercise programs. They are registered professionals in healthcare areas such as [kinesiology](#), [nursing](#), and [physiotherapy](#).

### **Appointments by Request**

During your program, tell your cardiac rehab team if you would like to talk to a dietitian, social worker, or psychologist. They can help arrange a referral for you.

### **Meet with a registered dietitian**

Dietitians explain nutrition in terms you can understand and support healthy living for their patients.<sup>1</sup> Dietitians look beyond fads and gimmicks to deliver reliable, life-changing advice just for you. They will help you reach your goals by talking about your needs and helping you solve problems that get in your way.

### **Meet with a social worker**

Social workers help patients, families, and caregivers cope with the emotional, financial, and practical impact of a condition, such as cardiovascular disease.<sup>2</sup> They provide support and counselling and can help you access community services.

### **Meet with a psychologist**

Psychologists are trained to assess, treat, and prevent behavioural and mental conditions.<sup>3</sup> Our staff psychologist helps patients learn tools to overcome challenges with mood, anxiety, stress, pain, sleep, and trauma that are affecting their recovery from a heart condition or event.

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<sup>1</sup>[Dietitians of Canada](#)

<sup>2</sup>[About Social Work at UHN](#)

<sup>3</sup>[About Psychology at UHN](#)

### COMMONLY USED WORDS

The list below explains a few important words that are used in our program. If, at any point in the program, you are not sure what something means, please ask your cardiac rehab team. It is important to your safety and progress that we have explained all ideas and instructions clearly. If you have access to the Internet, many medical terms are also explained on our [Cardiac College](#) and [Diabetes College](#) websites.

#### **Program**

**Cardiac Rehabilitation:** Cardiac Rehabilitation (or Cardiac Rehab) is an exercise, education, and counselling program to help people recover from a heart condition or heart event. Cardiac rehab is proven to help people manage their condition and improve their health and quality of life. In fact, people who complete cardiac rehab are up to 50% less likely to die from a second heart event.

**Virtual:** in our program, 'virtual' refers to the use of phone or computer to complete your cardiac rehab program

**Self-Management:** self-management means you take an active role in your health. Being a self-manager means you 1) know about your health problems, 2) make informed choices about your health, 3) track and manage your symptoms, and 4) find answers and solve problems about your health. The learning plans in this manual provide many tools to help you become a self-manager.

## Medical Terms

**Cardiovascular disease:** a group of diseases of the heart ('cardio') and blood vessels ('vascular').

**Heart disease** is the group of cardiovascular diseases that affect the structure and function of your heart. Examples include coronary artery disease, heart failure, valve disorders, and arrhythmias (problems with the rhythm of your heart).

**Vascular disease** is the group of cardiovascular diseases that affect your blood vessels. Examples include: peripheral arterial disease (disease of the blood vessels that supply your arms and legs) and cerebrovascular disease (disease of the vessels that supply blood to your brain).

**Angina:** angina is a warning sign that your heart is under stress. When there is not enough blood getting to your heart you may feel pain in one or more of these areas: chest, jaw, arms, upper back, or throat. You may also feel short of breath, feel very tired (fatigue), or have nausea (upset stomach). Your cardiac rehab team will talk to you about how to manage angina.

## Exercise

**Aerobic Exercise:** aerobic exercise is continuous activity using all the major muscle groups. It allows your heart rate to slowly increase to a target rate and keeps it at this level for a period of time. Examples include: walking, cycling, jogging, and swimming

**Exercise Stress Test:** an exercise stress test involves walking on a treadmill or cycling on a stationary bike. You will be attached to an electrocardiogram (ECG)

so the lab team can watch how your heart responds to exercise. Your cardiac rehab team uses the information from this test to create a safe and effective exercise program, just for you.

**Physical Activity**: physical activity is any body movement that uses your muscles and requires energy<sup>1</sup> such as recreational activities, household chores, playing, aerobic exercise, and resistance training. Physical activity is not the same as exercise. Exercise is a type of physical activity that is planned and structured.

**Rating of Perceived Exertion (RPE)**: the Rating of Perceived Exertion scale (RPE scale) will help you rate how much effort you are using during exercise.

**Resistance Training (RT)**: resistance training is a type of exercise that improves the strength of the muscles in your body. These exercises can be done with different types of equipment such as hand held weights, resistance bands or tubes, exercise machines, or your body weight.

### Education

**Health e-University**: Health e-University is a web-based education platform created by our team. The website provides reliable information that can help you treat your disease, get active, eat healthy, feel well, and take control of your health. Health e-University includes [Cardiac College](#) and [Diabetes College](#).

**THRIVE**: THRiVE is a 12-week education program to help you make small changes each day to be healthier and live the best life you can. Your education program uses the THRiVE videos, action planning tools, and reflection tools as part of your 16-week program.

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<sup>1</sup>WHO <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/physical-activity>





# YOUR SAFETY

## Your Safety

Safety is very important to us. We begin every day with a team safety meeting to help ensure the safety of our patients and our team. Safety is one of the 7 central priorities of UHN.

### Safety and COVID-19

During the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, we have added new measures to keep you safe.

- Most (or all) of the program is virtual so you can do your cardiac rehab from home
- All staff wear the recommended personal protection equipment (PPE)
- We limit how many people can be in the building at one time
- All patients need to wear a mask unless they are exercising
- All people need to remain 6 feet (or 2 metres) apart
- We follow all rules put in place by the Ontario government and UHN

## Exercise Safety

There are many resources to help keep you safe while you exercise. Learn more in booklet 5 of your patient guide “Staying active for a healthy heart”.



## What if I have questions about my care?

If you have questions about your care, try to work with your cardiac rehab team to address your concerns.

You can contact the front office team by phone 416-597-3422 extension 5200

If you need more help, contact [Patient Relations](#) by phone 416-340-4907 or email: [patientrelations@uhn.ca](mailto:patientrelations@uhn.ca)

Patient Relations is there to support you and hear your questions, complaints, suggestions, or compliments.





# LEARNING PLANS

## Learning Plans

There are 16 learning plans – one for each week of your program. Most of the education will be delivered by your CRS during your group sessions. Some learning plans assign self-learning – learning that you can do at home on your own.

Your education program uses education, goal setting, and action planning to help you make small changes over time to improve your health.

The list below describes the features of your learning plans.

- Instructions: reminders to check your email
- Clinical Care Focus: the focus of the discussion with your group
- Learning Focus: topic for discussion
  - Learning Goals
  - Learn: details about the topic
  - Learn more (optional)
- Before the Next Session: tasks to complete before the next session
- Next Week: topic and delivery for the next session

## 16 EDUCATION TOPICS

The education is delivered in a structured order, shown below. Use your patient guide, “A Guide to Help You Live and Thrive with Cardiovascular Disease” at any time to learn about topics that are different from the weekly focus.

### Weeks 1 to 8: Group Sessions by Telephone



1. Create a Plan for Change

2. Exercise and Weather Safety

3. Start an Aerobic Exercise Program

4. Start a Resistance Training Program

5. How Your Heart Works

6. Sit Less, Move More

7. Eat the Mediterranean Way

8. Manage Depression, Stress and Burnout

**Mid-point: Congratulations! You are half-way done your program.**

## Weeks 9 to 16: Group Sessions by Telephone and Self-Learning



9. Self-Learning: Develop a Healthy Relationship with Food



10. Take Your Medicine



11. Self-Learning: Choose Healthy Foods



12. Sleep Well



13. Self-Learning: Strengthen Your Social Relationships



14. Choose Health Everyday



15. Self-Learning: Sexual Health



16. Exercise and Weather Safety





# LEARNING PLAN 1

VIRTUAL CARDIAC REHABILITATION  
SMALL CHANGES FOR BETTER HEALTH

**Instructions:** To join the group session, call the number your CRS shared with you a few minutes before your scheduled class time.

## Clinical Care Focus: Orientation

- What cardiac rehab is and how it can help you
- What to expect during each session
- Using your program manual and the patient guide

Cardiac rehab is a program that helps you to:

- Get active and exercise safely
- Make healthy food choices
- Take care of your emotional well being
- Lower your risk of heart disease

Your cardiac rehab team includes:

- Referring doctor
- Office team
- Lab team
- Program physicians
- Dietitian
- Social worker and Psychologist
- Research staff
- Students
- Cardiac rehab supervisor

Since we are a new group, we have a few reminders to help us all work well together:

- Treat each other with respect
- Give each other the opportunity to share experiences/feelings
- Listen to others without judgement
- Keep shared information private



# LEARNING PLAN 1

VIRTUAL CARDIAC REHABILITATION  
SMALL CHANGES FOR BETTER HEALTH

## Consent

Remember, the consent to telephone conferencing that everyone in the group agreed to includes sharing your name and what is said. You have also agreed that: you will not audio record the group sessions and you will not share the names of the group members with others.

## Your Program

Your cardiac rehab program is 16 weeks long. We will have 12 group sessions – the first 8 sessions occur every week, and the last 4 sessions occur every other week. Each session is up to 60 minutes long.

The routine for each contact will be:

- Reflection – 5 minutes
- Case Management – 20 minutes
- Education – 10 minutes
- Goal Setting/Action Planning – 10 minutes
- Questions and Answers – 10 minutes
- Next Steps: The Week Ahead – 5 minutes

## Exercise

Your exercise program will be designed for you at a level that is safe and effective. It will include aerobic exercise, resistance training, and guidelines for any other activities you may be interested in.



# LEARNING PLAN 1

VIRTUAL CARDIAC REHABILITATION  
SMALL CHANGES FOR BETTER HEALTH

## Education

The weekly education topics will cover your heart condition, exercise, heart healthy food and managing stress for well-being. This program manual includes the Learning Plans for each week.

## Referrals

Outside of your scheduled telephone contact, you have the option to meet with a dietitian, social worker, or psychologist for an individual phone call. Let your cardiac rehab supervisor know if you would like to schedule this.

## Learning Focus: Create a Plan for Change

### 1. Review the learning goals

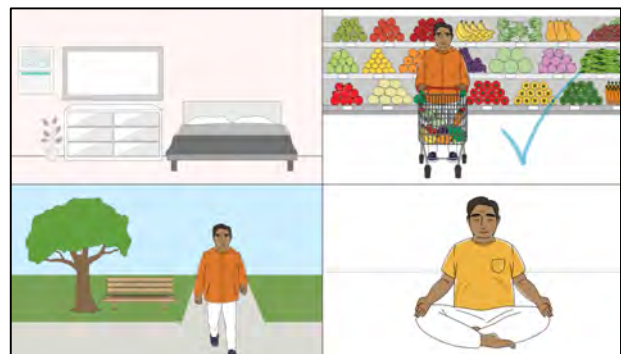
By the end of this learning plan you will know:

- how to choose one behaviour to focus on for the week
- how to create an action plan for the week

### 2. Learn

Building new, healthier habits can be achieved through three simple steps:

- A. Define your vision
- B. Set a goal
- C. Build an action plan





# LEARNING PLAN 1

VIRTUAL CARDIAC REHABILITATION  
SMALL CHANGES FOR BETTER HEALTH

## A. Develop a vision. Think about:

- How do you want to see yourself in the future? What do you see yourself doing?
- How would you be feeling?
- Who are the people you are surrounded by?
- Are you healthier? How do you know?

## B. Set a goal

Once you have a clear vision, you need goals. Goals will help you get to your vision. Make a list of goals. Pick one goal to focus on.

## C. Build an action plan

Make an action plan to help you achieve that goal. Divide your goal into smaller steps each week.

Ask yourself:

- What am I going to do this week?
  - When am I going to do it?
  - Where am I going to do it?
  - How much am I going to do?
  - How often am I going to do it?



Once you make your action plan for the week, make sure you feel:

- This small change is important to you
- You are ready to do it
- You are confident that you can do it





# LEARNING PLAN 1

VIRTUAL CARDIAC REHABILITATION  
SMALL CHANGES FOR BETTER HEALTH

At the end of the week, reflect on what went well and what didn't go as planned.

Solve the problems that get in your way and try these steps:

- Describe the problem. What stopped you from doing your action plan?
- Brainstorm and think about other ways to achieve your goal
- Pick one idea to try
- Build your next action plan
- Try a new idea if the first one didn't work

Define your vision, set a goal, and build an action plan. See the example below:

## **Vision**

You might see yourself with more energy and doing things like spending time with your family, travelling, or playing your favourite sport. It might just be sleeping through the night and doing your day-to-day activities more easily

## **Goals**

A vision to have more energy, for example, can be achieved by setting goals to:

- sleep better
- eat healthy
- exercise regularly
- and manage your stress

## **Action Plan**

Using the example of a goal to eat healthy, an action plan for the week may look something like this: "This week I will":

- What: Eat more vegetables
- When: At dinner time
- Where: At home
- How Much: One extra cup of vegetables
- How Often: 3 days this week

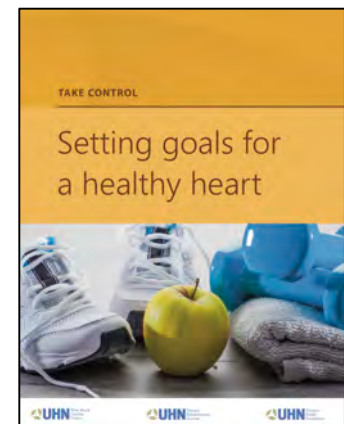


# LEARNING PLAN 1

VIRTUAL CARDIAC REHABILITATION  
SMALL CHANGES FOR BETTER HEALTH

## 3. Learn more (optional)

- Talk to your cardiac rehab team
- Read booklet 9 “Setting goals for a healthy heart” in your patient guide “A Guide to Help Your Live and Thrive with Cardiovascular Disease“



### Before the next session

- Create a vision and set goals
- Reflect on your week

### Next week

- Topic: Exercise and Weather Safety
- Discuss the importance of a warm-up, cool down, and stretching routine
- Learn how to manage angina



# YOUR VISION

VIRTUAL CARDIAC REHABILITATION  
SMALL CHANGES FOR BETTER HEALTH

## Your Vision

As you begin your journey to develop new healthy habits, it's a good idea to develop your vision and set goals. A vision is about how you want to see yourself in the future. Once you have a clear vision, you need goals. Goals will help you get to your vision.

Answer the 4 questions below to develop your vision.



### 1. What do you see yourself doing in the future?

Examples:

- I will do all the things I need to do each day
- I will be able to play with my grandchildren
- I will be able to play sports
- I will volunteer
- I will travel



# YOUR VISION

VIRTUAL CARDIAC REHABILITATION  
SMALL CHANGES FOR BETTER HEALTH



## 2. How will you be feeling in the future?

Examples:

- I will feel good
- I will feel healthy
- I will have more energy
- I will feel happy
- I will feel closer to family and friends



## 3. Who are the people you are surrounded by in the future?

Examples:

- Family
- Friends
- Colleagues



# YOUR VISION

VIRTUAL CARDIAC REHABILITATION  
SMALL CHANGES FOR BETTER HEALTH



## 4. Are you healthier in the future? And how do you know?

Examples:

- I am healthier because my blood sugar and blood pressure are lower
- I am healthier because I feel happy and motivated
- I am healthier because I can golf again
- I am healthier because I have enough energy to take care of my grandkids

### Goals

Set 1 to 3 goals that will help you achieve your vision. A vision to have more energy and travel with friends, for example, can be achieved by setting goals to:

- Sleep better
- Eat healthy
- Exercise regularly



### Goal 1:



### Goal 2:



### Goal 3:

Choose one goal to work on first.  
Create an action plan each week to help you reach your goal.



# WEEKLY REFLECTION

VIRTUAL CARDIAC REHABILITATION  
SMALL CHANGES FOR BETTER HEALTH

## Your Reflection

Answer the 2 questions below to reflect on your action plan each week.

**1. What went well with your action plan? What felt good?**

**2. What did not go as planned with your action plan? What challenges or problems got in the way? Follow the steps to solve problems in your patient guide.**







# LEARNING PLAN 2

VIRTUAL CARDIAC REHABILITATION  
SMALL CHANGES FOR BETTER HEALTH

**Instructions:** To join the group session, call the number your CRS shared with you a few minutes before your scheduled class time.

## Clinical Care Focus: Exercise Safety

- Stretching routines
- Symptoms to be aware of and what to do
- Discuss how to fit exercise into your routine

### Exercise Safety Tips

- Do not exercise if you are ill, injured, or have had alcohol
- Avoid marijuana at least 2 hours before exercise
- Avoid heavy meals before exercise
- Take your heart medicines as prescribed
- Carry a fast acting carbohydrate (sugar) if you take insulin or an insulin secretagogue medicine
- Carry your nitroglycerine medicine with you, if prescribed
- Warm up before exercise for 5 or more minutes
- Follow your exercise prescription closely
- Pay attention to how your body is responding and lower your effort if needed
- Cool down after exercise for 5 or more minutes

Keep your cardiac rehab supervisor updated with your exercise. You can record the amount of exercise you complete in the week including the distance, minutes, and your heart rate. This information will be used to help progress your exercise program.



# LEARNING PLAN 2

VIRTUAL CARDIAC REHABILITATION  
SMALL CHANGES FOR BETTER HEALTH

Tell your team about any symptoms that you feel such as chest pain, shortness of breath, dizziness, or pain anywhere in your muscles. Also, tell your team about any doctor visits, testing, or changes to your medicine.

It is important to follow your exercise prescription so that you are exercising at the right intensity. You can monitor the intensity by:

- Checking your heart rate
- Using the Rating of Perceived Exertion (RPE) Scale
- The Talk Test – Walk and talk comfortably, but not too slow that you can sing

Refer to booklet 4 of your patient guide “Managing your symptoms” to know how to manage angina (chest pain) and hypoglycemia (low blood sugar).

## **Learning Focus: Exercise and Weather Safety**

### **1. Review the learning goals**

By the end of this learning plan you will know:

- how your body may respond to a change in weather
- how to exercise safely when there is a change in weather

### **2. Learn**

Hot and cold weather conditions can affect how your body responds to exercise. Learn what tools you can use to help you decide if it is safe for you to exercise outdoors.



# LEARNING PLAN 2

VIRTUAL CARDIAC REHABILITATION  
SMALL CHANGES FOR BETTER HEALTH

## Hot weather conditions

In higher temperatures and higher humidity, your body may react in the ways listed below:

- Your heart rate goes up
- You have more irregular beats
- You feel light-headed (dizzy)
- You feel tired (fatigue)
- You sweat more and lose body water (dehydrate)
- You overheat

Follow these hot weather exercise safety tips:

- Check the weather report
- Check the heat safety index (page 41 in your 'Staying active for a healthy heart' booklet)
- Check the air quality index (page 42 in your 'Staying active for a healthy heart' booklet)
- Stay hydrated (drink lots of water). Speak to your doctor if you have limits on how much fluid you can have each day.
- Wear light-coloured, loose, comfortable clothing
- Do your warm up and cool down
- Reduce your speed and distance if the exercise feels too hard
- Know what medicines you take and how they can affect you in the sun and heat
- Be aware of symptoms and adjust your exercise as needed



# LEARNING PLAN 2

VIRTUAL CARDIAC REHABILITATION  
SMALL CHANGES FOR BETTER HEALTH

## Cold weather conditions

Cold weather can make your exercise feel harder. In cold weather, the blood vessels under your skin narrow (constrict) to send blood away from the surface. This lowers the amount of heat lost from your body.

When your blood vessels narrow, it is harder for blood to get through to deliver oxygen to your heart and exercising muscles. This makes your heart work too hard and can put you at risk for heart problems.

Follow these cold weather exercise safety tips:

- Check the weather forecast: temperature, wind, rain/wet snow
- Wear layers of clothing to help keep warm
- Wear your running shoes outdoors (they have the best grip)
- Reduce your speed and distance if the exercise feels too hard
- Choose an exercise route that is clear of snow and ice
- Drink water before, during, and after your exercise. Speak to your doctor if you have limits on how much fluid you can have each day
- Be aware of symptoms and adjust exercise if needed
- Do not shovel snow

**Safety alert: Consider an indoor exercise option if it is -10°C (15 °F) or colder**

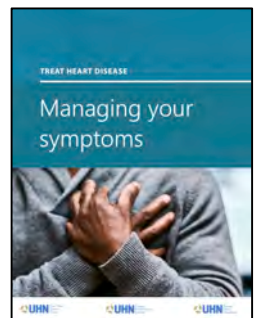
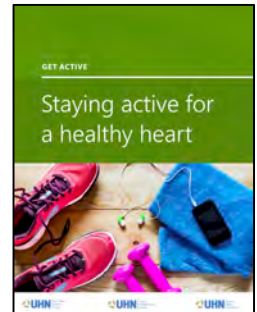


# LEARNING PLAN 2

VIRTUAL CARDIAC REHABILITATION  
SMALL CHANGES FOR BETTER HEALTH

## 3. Learn more (optional)

- Talk to your cardiac rehab team
- Read booklet #5 of your patient guide “Staying active for a healthy heart”
  - page 40: – How to exercise safely in hot weather
  - page 46 – How to exercise safely in cold weather
- Read booklet 4 of your patient guide “Managing your symptoms”
  - page 6 – How do I manage my angina?
  - page 14 – How do I treat hypoglycemia?



## Before the next session

- Create your action plan at the start of the week
- Practice using the heat safety index
- Practice checking the air quality
- Write down any questions you want to ask during the next session
- Reflect on your week

## Next week

- Topic: Starting an aerobic exercise program
- Receive your exercise prescription







# WEEKLY REFLECTION

VIRTUAL CARDIAC REHABILITATION  
SMALL CHANGES FOR BETTER HEALTH

## Your Reflection

Answer the 2 questions below to reflect on your action plan each week.

**1. What went well with your action plan? What felt good?**

**2. What did not go as planned with your action plan? What challenges or problems got in the way? Follow the steps to solve problems in your patient guide.**







# LEARNING PLAN 3

VIRTUAL CARDIAC REHABILITATION  
SMALL CHANGES FOR BETTER HEALTH

**Instructions:** To join the group session, call the number your CRS shared with you a few minutes before your scheduled class time.

## Clinical Care Focus: Aerobic Exercise

- Stretching routine
- Discuss how much exercise to start with

## Learning Focus: Start an Aerobic Exercise Program

### 1. Review the learning goals

By the end of this learning plan you will know:

- what aerobic exercise is
- how to plan for exercise
- the benefits of aerobic exercise
- how to exercise safely

### 2. Learn

What is aerobic exercise? It's the kind of exercise that raises your breathing rate and heart rate for at least 10 minutes. Some examples include walking, biking, jogging and swimming. Aerobic exercise is sometimes called cardio.

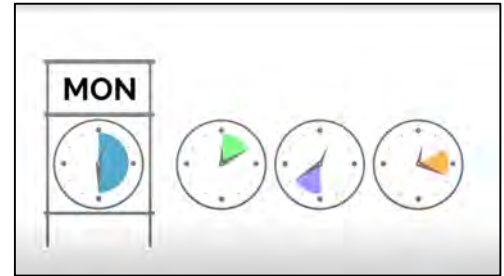
It can be overwhelming to start an aerobic exercise program. There is a lot of information available on the Internet but most of that information is not designed for a person who just had a heart event.



# LEARNING PLAN 3

VIRTUAL CARDIAC REHABILITATION  
SMALL CHANGES FOR BETTER HEALTH

Research says that doing aerobic exercise for at least 30 minutes most days of the week will give you the most benefit. You can even divide the 30 minutes into 3, 10-minute bouts of activity.

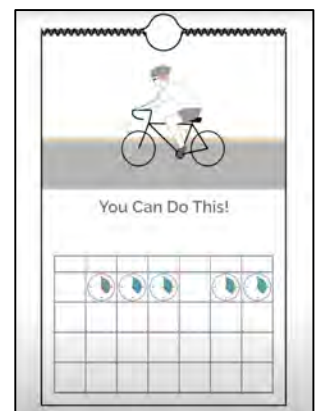


Many people worry that they will have another heart event if they exercise too hard. Ask your Cardiac Rehab team how hard you should work during your exercise sessions. Most people can exercise at a level that feels like ‘somewhat’ hard work. At this level you will breathe faster and deeper, your heart will beat faster and you may start to sweat.

When you start a new exercise program, go slowly and listen to your body. If you have aches and pains, rest and see if they go away. If they don’t, talk to your Cardiac Rehab team.

As you become more fit, you may notice you have more energy, or your mood improves. You might find your daily activities become easier to complete. You also lower your risk of having another heart event, and lower your risk of getting diabetes and certain types of cancer.

Look at your calendar right now and see how you can schedule 10 minutes of exercise on 3 to 5 separate days. Now decide what type of exercise you will do. Walking is the most effective type of exercise and costs the least amount of money - all you need is a good pair of shoes.





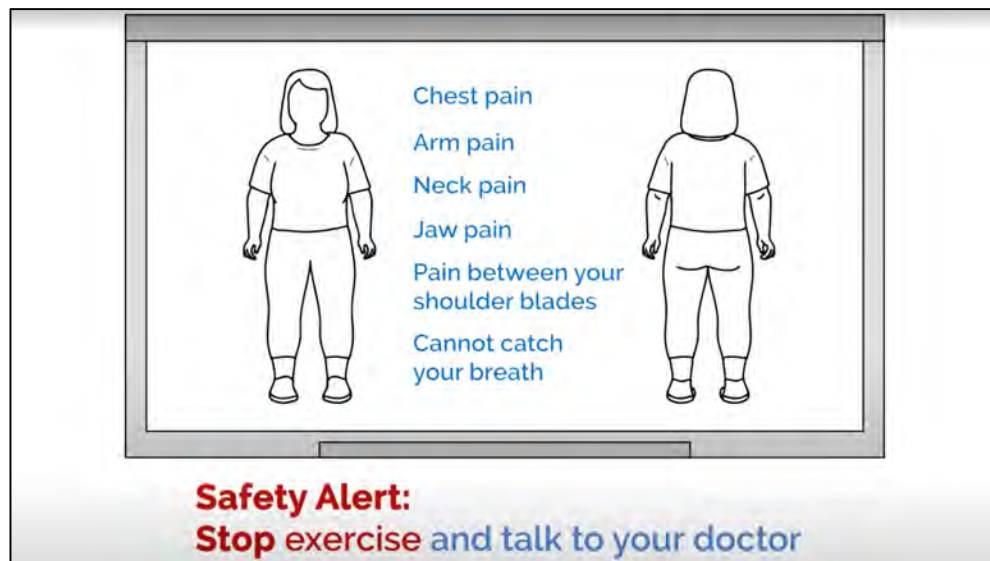
# LEARNING PLAN 3

VIRTUAL CARDIAC REHABILITATION  
SMALL CHANGES FOR BETTER HEALTH

Next, plan where you will exercise.

Find a flat route if you are exercising outside. Think about where you will exercise indoors if it's too cold or too hot outside. You may consider joining an exercise facility or buying some home exercise equipment.

If you get symptoms like chest pain, arm pain, neck pain, jaw pain, pain between your shoulder blades or if you cannot catch your breath, stop your exercise immediately and talk to your Cardiac Rehab team.



When you get used to exercising for 10 minutes on 5 separate days each week, the next step is to add extra minutes to your exercise time. Slowly increase your time to 30 minutes each day.

Remember, you can divide your exercise time into short 10-minute bouts.



# LEARNING PLAN 3

VIRTUAL CARDIAC REHABILITATION  
SMALL CHANGES FOR BETTER HEALTH

## Action Plan

Here is an example of an action plan to start an exercise program.

This week I will:

- What: Walk
- When: In the evening
- Where: Around the house
- How much: For 10 minutes
- How Often: On Monday, Wednesday, and Friday

## 3. Learn more (optional)

- Talk to your cardiac rehab team
- Read more about aerobic exercise in booklet 5 of your patient guide “Staying active for a healthy heart”



## Before the next session

- Create your action plan at the start of the week
- Complete your exercise diary
- Reflect on your week

## Next week

- Topic: Start a Resistance Training Program
- Discuss your resistance training program
- Find and use resistance training resources in your manual and patient guide



# WEEKLY REFLECTION

VIRTUAL CARDIAC REHABILITATION  
SMALL CHANGES FOR BETTER HEALTH

## Your Reflection

Answer the 2 questions below to reflect on your action plan each week.

**1. What went well with your action plan? What felt good?**

**2. What did not go as planned with your action plan? What challenges or problems got in the way? Follow the steps to solve problems in your patient guide.**







# LEARNING PLAN 4

VIRTUAL CARDIAC REHABILITATION  
SMALL CHANGES FOR BETTER HEALTH

**Instructions:** To join the group session, call the number your CRS shared with you a few minutes before your scheduled class time.

## Clinical Care Focus: Resistance Training

- Review resistance training exercises
- Discuss how to start with a few exercises

## Learning Focus: Start a Resistance Training Program

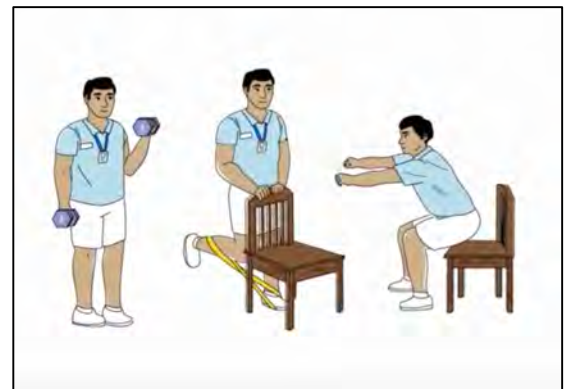
### 1. Review the learning goals

By the end of this learning plan you will know:

- what resistance training is
- the benefits of resistance training
- how to do resistance training safely

### 2. Learn

Resistance training is when you use dumbbells, exercise bands, or your own body weight to target specific muscle groups and strengthen them.



Even doing these exercises just two times each week will strengthen your muscles and give you all the health benefits.



# LEARNING PLAN 4

VIRTUAL CARDIAC REHABILITATION  
SMALL CHANGES FOR BETTER HEALTH

As you get older you lose the amount of muscle you have. Losing muscle increases the chance that you will fall, break bones, and develop diabetes or heart disease.

Resistance training can:

- Stop you from losing muscle
- Improve your health
- Make your day-to-day activities feel a lot easier



Many of the benefits of resistance training can't be seen, but are happening inside your body. Resistance training will improve your mood and sleep patterns, improve your bone health, and can even delay or prevent osteoporosis (weak and brittle bones). And, if you have diabetes, the added muscle will help you lower your blood sugar.

Talk to your Cardiac Rehab Team before you start a resistance training program especially if you have any of the health problems listed below:

- High blood pressure
- An abdominal or inguinal hernia that needs to be repaired
- Glaucoma that is not treated
- Problems with your eyes from diabetes
- Muscle or joint problems especially with your shoulders, wrists or knees
- Or if you find it hard to get up from the floor





# LEARNING PLAN 4

VIRTUAL CARDIAC REHABILITATION  
SMALL CHANGES FOR BETTER HEALTH

Most often you can still do resistance training if you have one of these health issues, you just might need to modify or avoid some of the exercises. Once your Team says it's safe for you to start, think about how you will establish the habit of doing this type of training.

Most people can do resistance training at a level that feels like 'somewhat hard' to 'hard' work. Always remember to breathe. This will help you keep your blood pressure from rising too much.

- Start with 10 repetitions of each exercise. You will know you are using the correct resistance if at the end of 10 repetitions you feel like you could do only 2 or 3 more.
- If you are struggling to do 10, the dumbbell you are using is too heavy.
- If you can do 15 repetitions easily, it's too light.

Soreness and stiffness in your muscles is normal when you begin your resistance training program. This may begin many hours after your workout and can last up to 3 days.

If the soreness or stiffness lasts longer than 4 days you probably used dumbbells that are too heavy or your technique was not quite right. Make sure you tell your Cardiac Rehab team before continuing.



# LEARNING PLAN 4

VIRTUAL CARDIAC REHABILITATION  
SMALL CHANGES FOR BETTER HEALTH

Look at your calendar and schedule a time for resistance training on 2 separate days. Make sure you have at least 1 or 2 days of rest between resistance training sessions. Don't worry about how long you exercise for right now. This is all about setting a routine and trying out some new exercises.

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT

Talk to your Cardiac Rehab team about your goals and what getting fitter with resistance training means to you. Then make an action plan to get started with small changes and progress from there.

## Action Plan

Here is an example of an action plan to start a resistance training program.

This week I will:

- What: Try 5 resistance training exercises
- When: After lunch
- Where: In my living room
- How much: For 30 minutes
- How Often: On Thursday and Saturday

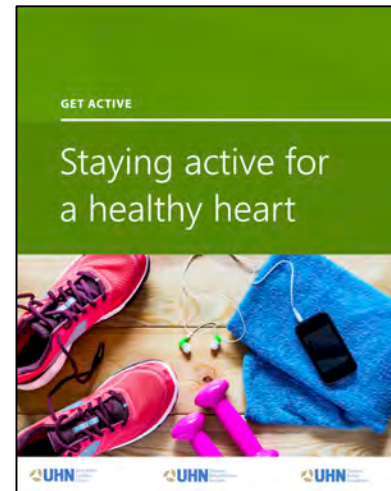


# LEARNING PLAN 4

VIRTUAL CARDIAC REHABILITATION  
SMALL CHANGES FOR BETTER HEALTH

## 3. Learn more (optional)

- Talk to your cardiac rehab team
- Read more about resistance training in booklet 5 of your patient guide “Staying active for a healthy heart”



### Before the next session

- Create your action plan at the start of the week
- Complete your exercise diary
- Reflect on your week

### Next week

- Topic: Resistance Training
- Self-Learning: How the Heart Works





# WEEKLY REFLECTION

VIRTUAL CARDIAC REHABILITATION  
SMALL CHANGES FOR BETTER HEALTH

## Your Reflection

Answer the 2 questions below to reflect on your action plan each week.

**1. What went well with your action plan? What felt good?**

**2. What did not go as planned with your action plan? What challenges or problems got in the way? Follow the steps to solve problems in your patient guide.**





# LEARNING PLAN 5

VIRTUAL CARDIAC REHABILITATION  
SMALL CHANGES FOR BETTER HEALTH

**Instructions:** To join the group session, call the number your CRS shared with you a few minutes before your scheduled class time.

## Clinical Care Focus: Resistance Training

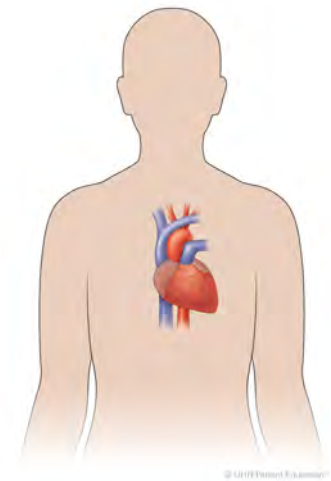
- Review the resistance training exercises you tried last week
- Learn how to adjust the amount of weight you lift

## Learning Focus: How the Heart Works

### 1. Review the learning goals

By the end of this learning plan you will know:

- how a healthy heart works
- what can go wrong with the systems in your heart
- treatments that try to correct these problems



### 2. Learn

Your heart is a muscle that is about the size of your fist. It is slightly to the left of the centre of your chest. Your heart pumps more than 100,000 times each day. Each time it beats, it supplies your body with blood and oxygen.





# LEARNING PLAN 5

VIRTUAL CARDIAC REHABILITATION  
SMALL CHANGES FOR BETTER HEALTH

It can be helpful to think of your heart like a house. The heart:

- **has rooms.** There are 4 rooms (called chambers) in the heart:
  - 2 small ones (called atria)
  - 2 larger ones (called ventricles)
- **has doors.** There are doors (called valves) between the rooms that open and close to allow blood to flow through your heart.
- **has electricity.** The heart's electrical system has a built-in pacemaker. The electricity allows the heart to pump 24 hours a day
- **has plumbing.** The heart has small pipes (called coronary arteries). The pipes supply oxygen-rich blood to the heart muscle.

## **Everything works together to keep it functioning.**

The rooms (chambers) and doors (valves) work together as a pump to move blood around your body. Each time your heart contracts (beats), this pumping action is felt in the large arteries of your body as a pulsing sensation. This is what you feel when you take your pulse.

## **Types of Heart Disease**

Heart disease refers to many types of heart problems. These problems can affect the way your heart beats and how blood moves into and out of your heart.





# LEARNING PLAN 5

VIRTUAL CARDIAC REHABILITATION  
SMALL CHANGES FOR BETTER HEALTH

Examples of heart disease include:

- Coronary artery disease
- Heart failure
- Valve disorders
- Arrhythmias (problems with the rhythm of your heart)

Read more about how your heart works in booklet 1 of your patient guide “How your heart works and common types of heart problems.”

## Common Test and Treatments

To know if there is a problem with your heart, your doctor may refer you for some or all of the tests below:

- Electrocardiogram (ECG)
- Holter monitor
- Exercise stress test
- Nuclear stress test
- Echocardiogram (echo)
- Stress echocardiogram (stress echo)
- Angiogram (angio or cath)

If you learn you have coronary artery disease, your doctor may refer you for one or more of the treatments below:

- Angioplasty
- Angioplasty with stent
- Coronary artery bypass graft surgery
- Heart medicines
- Exercise

Read more about how your heart works in booklet 2 of your patient guide “Common tests and treatments for heart disease.”

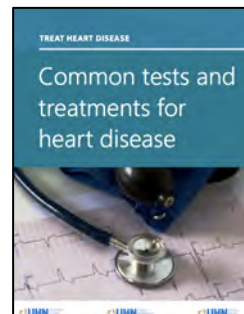
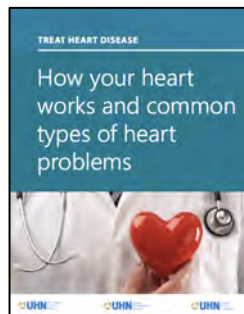


There are many resources to help you manage your health condition. The 2 resources listed below can help you organize your questions and concerns before a doctor’s visit. These forms are included in your program materials.

- ‘Preparing for Your Doctor’s Appointment’ by the Heart and Stroke Foundation
- ‘PACE Guide Sheet’ by the American Heart Association

### 3. Learn more (optional)

- To learn more about adjusting how much weight you lift, read booklet 5 of your patient guide “Staying active for a healthy heart”
  - page 28 - How do I progress my resistance training?
- Read more about your heart in booklet 1 of your patient guide “How your heart works and common types of heart problems”
- Read more about tests and treatments in booklet 2 of your patient guide “Common tests and treatment for heart disease”





# LEARNING PLAN 5

VIRTUAL CARDIAC REHABILITATION  
SMALL CHANGES FOR BETTER HEALTH

## Before the next session

- Create your action plan at the start of the week
- Complete one of these forms before your next doctor's visit: 'Preparing for Your Doctor's Appointment' or 'PACE Guide Sheet'
- Complete your exercise diary
- Reflect on your week

## Next week

- Topic: Sit Less, Move More / Risk Factors for Heart Disease





# WEEKLY REFLECTION

VIRTUAL CARDIAC REHABILITATION  
SMALL CHANGES FOR BETTER HEALTH

## Your Reflection

Answer the 2 questions below to reflect on your action plan each week.

**1. What went well with your action plan? What felt good?**

**2. What did not go as planned with your action plan? What challenges or problems got in the way? Follow the steps to solve problems in your patient guide.**





# LEARNING PLAN 6

VIRTUAL CARDIAC REHABILITATION  
SMALL CHANGES FOR BETTER HEALTH

**Instructions:** To join the group session, call the number your CRS shared with you a few minutes before your scheduled class time.

## Clinical Care Focus: Risk Factors

- Learn more about risk factors that increase the chance that you will get heart disease or that your heart disease will get worse
- Discuss the health behaviours that can help manage your risk factors

To learn about risk factors, refer to booklet 1 in your patient guide “How your heart works and common types of heart problems”.

## Learning Focus: Sit Less, Move More

### 1. Review the learning goals

By the end of this learning plan you will know:

- how sitting too much affects your health
- ways to sit less during the day

### 2. Learn

Sitting for long periods of time increases the chance you will develop heart disease, diabetes, and certain cancers. In fact, people who sit for long periods of time are 91% more likely to develop diabetes.





Sitting for long periods of time throughout your day increases your chance for:

- Stroke
- Sleep apnea
- High blood pressure, heart disease, heart attack
- Diabetes
- Certain cancers
- Pulmonary embolism (blood clot in your lung)
- Back pain and back injuries
- Numbness, tingling, and swelling in your legs and feet

The effects of sitting too much are scary. Research shows that your body starts to change even after one hour of sitting. That's why it's important to take breaks from sitting.

The good news is that you can do something to improve your health today. Many of us know it is important to exercise more, but we often don't think about sitting less.

**It is best to stand up and move around for 2-3 minutes, every 45 minutes.**

Those extra minutes you spend moving or standing add up over the day and that adds up to better health.





Here is a list of small changes you can make to sit less and move more:

- Walk or stand while you talk on the phone
- Step in place or stand during TV commercials
- Use a stationary pedal under your desk while at work
- Set an alarm to remind you to get up and walk around your office for two to three minutes after 45 minutes of sitting
- Fold your clean laundry while standing
- Park farther from work and shopping centres to walk the rest of the way
- Stand on the bus or train
- Use more stairs
- Drink more water so you have to walk to the bathroom more often

### Action Plan

Here is an example of an action plan to sit less and move more.

This week I will:

- What: Set a timer to stand up
- When: Every 45 minutes
- Where: On my phone
- How much: Monday to Friday
- How Often: While I am at work



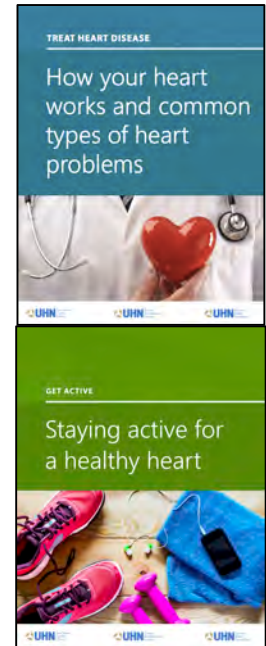


# LEARNING PLAN 6

VIRTUAL CARDIAC REHABILITATION  
SMALL CHANGES FOR BETTER HEALTH

## 3. Learn more (optional)

- Talk to your cardiac rehab team
- Read booklet 1 in your patient guide “How your heart works and common types of heart problems”
  - page 11 – Know your risk factors
- Read booklet 5 in your patient guide “Staying active for a healthy heart”
  - page 1 - How Moving More Helps Prevent Disease



### Before the next session

- Create your action plan at the start of the week
- Complete your exercise diary
- Reflect your week

### Next week

- Topic: Eat the Mediterranean Way



# WEEKLY REFLECTION

VIRTUAL CARDIAC REHABILITATION  
SMALL CHANGES FOR BETTER HEALTH

## Your Reflection

Answer the 2 questions below to reflect on your action plan each week.

**1. What went well with your action plan? What felt good?**

**2. What did not go as planned with your action plan? What challenges or problems got in the way? Follow the steps to solve problems in your patient guide.**





# LEARNING PLAN 7

VIRTUAL CARDIAC REHABILITATION  
SMALL CHANGES FOR BETTER HEALTH

**Instructions:** To join the group session, call the number your CRS shared with you a few minutes before your scheduled class time.

## Clinical Care Focus: Exercise

- Discuss barriers to exercise and problem solve

## Learning Focus: Eat the Mediterranean Way

### 1. Review the learning goals

By the end of this learning plan you will know:

- what foods to include in a heart healthy eating pattern
- how to include more whole foods in your eating

### 2. Learn

Traditional foods from around the Mediterranean have powerful benefits for heart health by lowering blood pressure, blood cholesterol and blood sugar. The Mediterranean pattern also uses meals as a way to spend time with others.

This approach focuses on eating more delicious food, which makes it a pattern of eating that is easier to maintain. It includes:

- More fruits and vegetables of all types
- More whole grains like brown rice and quinoa
- More legumes like beans, lentils and chickpeas



# LEARNING PLAN 7

VIRTUAL CARDIAC REHABILITATION  
SMALL CHANGES FOR BETTER HEALTH

- More nuts and seeds like walnuts and pumpkin seeds
- More fish and seafood
- More healthy dairy and dairy alternatives choices like lower fat cheese and yogurt
- Lots of seasoning with spices, tomato, onion and garlic instead of salt

Try to focus on fresh, whole foods. That means buying most of your foods from the outside edges of the grocery store.

- Fresh vegetables are a good place to start.
- You can also find lean meats like chicken and fish along the outside edges of the store. Fresh, frozen - take your pick. All of these choices can fit into your meals.
- Next, you might want to look for eggs - they are a great source of protein.
- Milk and yogurt? Look for some healthy dairy choices to put into your cart.

Finally, find the aisle that has whole grains, legumes and extra virgin olive oil. These foods are just as important as the fresh foods you put in your cart.

When you shop along the outside edges of the grocery store, it means you are buying more whole foods packed with healthy nutrients, and less processed, canned, and boxed foods.

This way of eating is based on more than just food choices. It celebrates home cooking and enjoying the flavours, smells, colours, and textures of whole foods, while





# LEARNING PLAN 7

VIRTUAL CARDIAC REHABILITATION  
SMALL CHANGES FOR BETTER HEALTH

spending time with others. There are countless recipes that fit this way of eating and you can adapt it to your cultural way of eating.

## What is one change you can try this week?

You might start by shopping along the outside edges of the grocery store to find fresh, whole foods. If you're ready, try making one meal a day at home using those ingredients.

### Action Plan

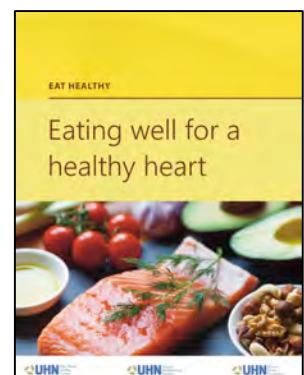
Here is an example of an action plan to start eating the Mediterranean way.

This week I will:

- What: Make a meal using fresh, whole foods
- When: Tuesday dinnertime
- Where: At home
- How much: One meal
- How often: Just once this week

### 3. Learn more (optional)

- Talk to your cardiac rehab team
- Read more about eating the Mediterranean way in booklet 6 of your patient guide "Eating well for a healthy heart"
- Join a Q&A session with our dietitians. Ask your cardiac rehab team how to join these telephone sessions.





# LEARNING PLAN 7

VIRTUAL CARDIAC REHABILITATION  
SMALL CHANGES FOR BETTER HEALTH

## Before the next session

- Create your action plan the start of the week
- Complete your exercise diary
- Complete the Mediterranean Diet Score
- Book your exercise stress test (if you are able to come onsite)
- Read about progressing your exercise on the next page
- Reflect on your week

## Next week

- Topic: Manage Stress, Depression and Burnout





# LEARNING PLAN 7

VIRTUAL CARDIAC REHABILITATION  
SMALL CHANGES FOR BETTER HEALTH

## Progress Your Exercise

Progressing your exercise over time will allow you to continue to increase your fitness. Increased fitness can improve your quality of life and lower your risk of heart events.

### Why should I progress my exercise?

- Your body adapts to your exercise program
  - Your breathing will be easier
  - Your heart rate may be lower
  - Your effort (on RPE scale) is rated lower
- To keep improving your exercise

You are ready to progress your exercise if:

- Exercise is rated as easy or fairly light
- Exercise heart rate is below your target
- You want to:
  - Exercise longer
  - Try different types of exercise
  - Increase your fitness
- You have new goals you want to achieve



# LEARNING PLAN 7

VIRTUAL CARDIAC REHABILITATION  
SMALL CHANGES FOR BETTER HEALTH

You are **not ready** to progress if:

- Your current exercise is challenging
- You feel unwell (sickness, knee pain, joint pain)
- You recently changed or started new medicines
- There is a change in weather
- You have a muscle or joint injury
- Your heart rate is above your target
- You had a major life event

## How do I progress my exercise program?

To progress your walking prescription, you can:

- Increase the total time you walk
- Increase how often you walk
- Include periods of faster walking (interval training)
- Try a different type of aerobic exercise

To progress your resistance training, you can:

- Do more repetitions
- Increase dumbbell weight or band resistance
- Do more sets
- Add new exercises
- Change exercises



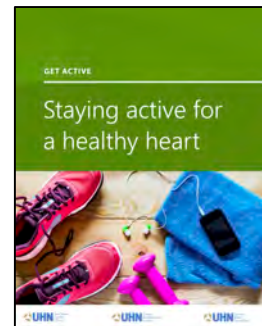
# LEARNING PLAN 7

VIRTUAL CARDIAC REHABILITATION  
SMALL CHANGES FOR BETTER HEALTH

Read more about progressing your exercise in booklet 5 of your patient guide

“Staying active for a healthy heart”

- page 16 – How do I progress my aerobic exercise?
- page 28 – How do I progress my resistance training?



**Talk to your cardiac rehab supervisor about how to progress your specific exercise program.**





# WEEKLY REFLECTION

VIRTUAL CARDIAC REHABILITATION  
SMALL CHANGES FOR BETTER HEALTH

## Your Reflection

Answer the 2 questions below to reflect on your action plan each week.

**1. What went well with your action plan? What felt good?**

**2. What did not go as planned with your action plan? What challenges or problems got in the way? Follow the steps to solve problems in your patient guide.**





# LEARNING PLAN 8

VIRTUAL CARDIAC REHABILITATION  
SMALL CHANGES FOR BETTER HEALTH

**Instructions:** To join the group session, call the number your CRS shared with you a few minutes before your scheduled class time.

## **Clinical Care Focus:** Exercise

- Discuss barriers to exercise and problem solve

## **Learning Focus:** Manage Depression, Stress and Burnout

### **1. Review the learning goals**

By the end of this learning plan you will know:

- what depression, stress, and burnout are
- techniques you can try to help you feel in charge of your health

### **2. Learn**

Taking care of yourself with a chronic physical condition like heart disease or diabetes can affect you mentally and emotionally. It can feel like a burden you carry everywhere you go.

Research says that depression is common in people living with heart disease or diabetes. Many people also struggle with stress. There is also the feeling of burnout.



# LEARNING PLAN 8

VIRTUAL CARDIAC REHABILITATION  
SMALL CHANGES FOR BETTER HEALTH

Depression is a feeling of sadness, hopelessness and no longer enjoying the things you used to. These feelings can be constant and last for a long time. You might start feeling this way after a sudden event such as a death in the family or having a heart attack. It can also come from long-term issues with money, work, relationships or your health.

Talking to your doctor is a great start. Your doctor can help you make sense of what you are feeling. They will help you find a psychologist or psychiatrist, or they might suggest medicine. You can learn coping strategies such as labeling your feelings. This strategy uses specific words to describe how you feel such as being frustrated, angry, or hopeless instead of just saying 'I'm in a bad mood.'

Stress is a state of mental strain that puts pressure on your body. Like depression, it can come from a single major event or from a long list of everyday factors. It's OK to be busy and have a lot going on. But if the pressure of doing all those things overwhelms you, there's a problem.

If you feel stressed, try making your own health and wellbeing a priority. Learn to say 'no' to requests that don't fit your priorities. And ask for help from others when you feel overwhelmed.

You can relieve stress with activities like exercise, meditation, or belly breathing. There will always be things you can't change, but you can build your ability to handle them.







# LEARNING PLAN 8

VIRTUAL CARDIAC REHABILITATION  
SMALL CHANGES FOR BETTER HEALTH

Burnout is when you grow tired or bored of having to manage your disease. For example, if you have diabetes, the daily routine of constantly checking blood sugars, worrying about what you eat, and timing your medicines can seem like a full time job.

One way to relieve these feelings is to practice self-compassion. This means you have concern and sympathy for yourself. Most people are very kind and supportive of their friends and loved ones. So, treat yourself the same way. Be warm and understanding toward yourself when you don't feel 'good enough'.

You might be dealing with depression, stress and burnout all at once, or they might come and go as you live your life. Remember, you are not alone. The first step is to talk to someone you trust and share how you are feeling. You might also:

- Take breaks throughout the day
- Set a work schedule you can manage
- Watch a guided meditation video
- Look in the mirror and say one thing positive about yourself

## **Action Plan**

Make an action plan. This week I will:

- What: try a relaxing breathing technique
- When: every day
- Where: in bed
- How much: in the morning
- How often: before I get out of bed

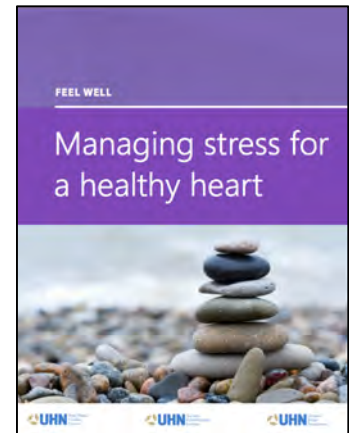


# LEARNING PLAN 8

VIRTUAL CARDIAC REHABILITATION  
SMALL CHANGES FOR BETTER HEALTH

## 3. Learn more (optional)

- Talk to your cardiac rehab team
- Read booklet 7 in your patient guide “Managing stress for a healthy heart”



## Before the next session

- Create your action plan the start of the week
- Complete your exercise diary
- Reflect on your week

## Next week

- Self-Learning – no group session
- Topic: Develop a Healthy Relationship with Food



# WEEKLY REFLECTION

VIRTUAL CARDIAC REHABILITATION  
SMALL CHANGES FOR BETTER HEALTH

## Your Reflection

Answer the 2 questions below to reflect on your action plan each week.

**1. What went well with your action plan? What felt good?**

**2. What did not go as planned with your action plan? What challenges or problems got in the way? Follow the steps to solve problems in your patient guide.**





# LEARNING PLAN 9

VIRTUAL CARDIAC REHABILITATION  
SMALL CHANGES FOR BETTER HEALTH

**Instructions:** Self-Learning (no group session)

## **Clinical Care Focus:** Mid-Point Progress Discussion

- Your cardiac rehab team will contact you to review your progress

## **Learning Focus:** Develop a Healthy Relationship with Food

### **1. Review the learning goals**

By the end of this learning plan you will know:

- the importance of paying attention to flavour, texture, and your surroundings when you eat
- ways to eat with more pleasure and know when you are full

### **2. Learn**

For many people, the stress of eating the right food, in the right amounts, at the right time has made it hard to enjoy food.

Mindful and intuitive eating can help you develop a healthy relationship with food. No rules, no diets. Just eating to feel energized and nourished.

The media shares a lot of information about diets and weight loss. You may have got the message over time that you shouldn't eat for pleasure. Maybe your doctor told you to lose weight.



## LEARNING PLAN 9

VIRTUAL CARDIAC REHABILITATION  
SMALL CHANGES FOR BETTER HEALTH

The problem with focusing on diets to lose weight is that it often doesn't work as a long-term solution. Diets are restrictive and they often label food as either good or bad. Restricting food to follow a diet or lose weight can lead to undereating, overeating and missing out on key nutrients. There is an emotional side to eating too. Trying to follow a strict diet can lead to feeling shame or guilt when you eat something outside your diet plan. It can also make dinner time a stressful event.

Instead of following a long list of rules, try 'mindful eating.'

**Mindful eating** is when you take notice of all that surrounds you before, during and after a meal. It's being in the moment and involves using all your senses -- sight, smell, sound, taste and touch -- when you eat.

It means you are aware of your thoughts, feelings, and actions around food because you are fully present and paying attention when you are eating.





# LEARNING PLAN 9

VIRTUAL CARDIAC REHABILITATION  
SMALL CHANGES FOR BETTER HEALTH

It sounds easy, but eating mindfully takes a lot of practice. Over time you might find that you start to notice details in the way food tastes, smells, and feels. Eating this way allows you to experience food in a new way. You can start to make a choice to eat certain foods to feel a certain way. This can help you to feel free of guilt and judgment and let go of expectations for your body.

**Intuitive eating** is eating in response to what you feel inside your body. Eating when you are hungry and stopping when you have had enough. It's about eating for the purpose of nourishing your body and getting energy from food.

Before your next meal, ask yourself how hungry you are on a scale of 1 to 10. 1 means you are starving and 10 means you are too full. Knowing how hungry you are can help you decide what kind and how much food to eat.

Mindful and intuitive eating is a long process with lots of learning along the way. To start you might:

- Sit down to eat a meal
- Take a short pause to appreciate your meal right before eating
- Write down how you feel after eating different foods
- Rate how hungry you feel before eating
- Enjoy your favourite food while you savour the smell, taste and texture while eating





# LEARNING PLAN 9

VIRTUAL CARDIAC REHABILITATION  
SMALL CHANGES FOR BETTER HEALTH

## Action Plan

Here is an example of an action plan to develop a healthy relationship with food.

This week I will:

- What: Pause for 3 deep breaths
- When: At dinner
- Where: While sitting at the table
- How much: Right before eating
- How Often: 3 nights this week

## 3. Learn more (optional)

- Talk to your cardiac rehab team
- Join a Q&A session with our dietitians. Ask your cardiac rehab team how to join these telephone sessions.



## Before the next session

- Create your action plan the start of the week
- Complete your exercise diary
- Reflect on your week

## Next week

- Group session
- Topic: Take Your Medicine



# WEEKLY REFLECTION

VIRTUAL CARDIAC REHABILITATION  
SMALL CHANGES FOR BETTER HEALTH

## Your Reflection

Answer the 2 questions below to reflect on your action plan each week.

**1. What went well with your action plan? What felt good?**

**2. What did not go as planned with your action plan? What challenges or problems got in the way? Follow the steps to solve problems in your patient guide.**





# LEARNING PLAN 10

VIRTUAL CARDIAC REHABILITATION  
SMALL CHANGES FOR BETTER HEALTH

**Instructions:** To join the group session, call the number your CRS shared with you a few minutes before your scheduled class time.

## **Clinical Care Focus:** Exercise

- Discuss barriers to exercise and problem solve

## **Learning Focus:** Take Your Medicine

### **1. Review the learning goals**

By the end of this learning plan you will know:

- the common classes of heart medicines and how they help you
- who can help you manage side effects and answer your questions

### **2. Learn**

After a heart event, your heart doctor will prescribe medicines for you to take every day.

If you wonder why you take these medicines, or struggle with side effects from the medicines, talk to your pharmacist or doctor about how you are feeling. Research says that taking your heart medicines regularly as prescribed will help prevent your heart disease from getting worse and decrease the chance you will have another heart event.



# LEARNING PLAN 10

VIRTUAL CARDIAC REHABILITATION  
SMALL CHANGES FOR BETTER HEALTH

There are five common heart medicines you should know about:

- Antiplatelets
- Beta Blockers
- Cholesterol Lowering Agents
- ACE Inhibitors
- Nitrates

**Antiplatelet agents** include medicines like Aspirin. This type of medicine prevents blood clots. If you stop taking this medicine too soon after your heart event you have a high chance of having a heart attack.

**Beta blockers** have lots of names, but you can recognize them as Beta Blockers because they end in 'lol.' Metoprolol is a common type. This medicine lowers blood pressure and slows down your heart rate. Taking Beta Blockers will greatly reduce your chance of dying suddenly after a heart attack.

**Cholesterol lowering agents** are a group of medicines with names that end in 'statin', for example, Rosuvastatin. This medicine changes how much cholesterol is made by your liver. Taking it greatly reduces your chance of heart attack, stroke, and even death.

**ACE inhibitors** are the medicines that end in 'pril', for example, Ramipril. This medicine opens up your blood vessels to lower blood pressure and improves the amount of blood your heart pumps.



# LEARNING PLAN 10

VIRTUAL CARDIAC REHABILITATION  
SMALL CHANGES FOR BETTER HEALTH

Lastly, there are **Nitrates**. They are often referred to as ‘Nitro’ or ‘Nitroglycerin’. This medicine opens up your blood vessels to allow blood and oxygen to flow more easily to your heart muscle. This relieves angina symptoms like chest pain.

If you don’t remember what your doctor told you about your medicine, make an appointment with your pharmacist or doctor to review your prescriptions one by one.

- Ask about possible side effects of your medicines.
- Discuss the amount of each medicine that you take. Make sure you are prescribed the right dose for you.
- Ask which medicines you need to take for a short period of time and which ones you will need to take for the rest of your life.

**Talk to your doctor or pharmacist before you stop taking any of your heart medicines.** If you stop taking your heart medicines suddenly, you may put your heart health and life in danger. If you feel unwell it may be due to your medicines or it may be from something else. Give your doctor and pharmacist the chance to help find a solution.

## Action Plan

Here is an example of an action plan to take your medicine regularly, as prescribed. This week, I will:

- What: have a MedsCheck appointment with my pharmacist
- When: on Monday
- Where: at the pharmacy (drug store)
- How much: for 30 minutes
- How often: one time

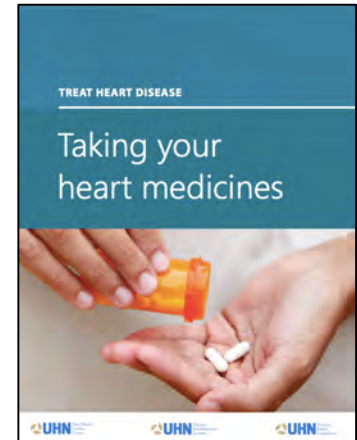


# LEARNING PLAN 10

VIRTUAL CARDIAC REHABILITATION  
SMALL CHANGES FOR BETTER HEALTH

## 3. Learn more (optional)

- Learn more about your heart medicines in booklet 3 of your patient guide “Taking your heart medicines”
- Review the resource ‘Preparing for Your Doctor’s Appointment’ by the Heart and Stroke Foundation
- Review the resource ‘PACE Guide Sheet’ by the American Heart Association



## Before the next session

- Create your action plan the start of the week
- Plan a day to schedule a MedsCheck appointment with your pharmacist
- Plan a day to schedule an appointment with your doctor to talk about your heart medicines
- Complete your exercise diary
- Reflect on your week

## Next week

- Self-Learning – no group session
- Topic: Choose Healthy Foods





# WEEKLY REFLECTION

VIRTUAL CARDIAC REHABILITATION  
SMALL CHANGES FOR BETTER HEALTH

## Your Reflection

Answer the 2 questions below to reflect on your action plan each week.

**1. What went well with your action plan? What felt good?**

**2. What did not go as planned with your action plan? What challenges or problems got in the way? Follow the steps to solve problems in your patient guide.**





# LEARNING PLAN 11

VIRTUAL CARDIAC REHABILITATION  
SMALL CHANGES FOR BETTER HEALTH

**Instructions:** Self-Learning (no group session)

## Clinical Care Focus: Reflect on Your Needs

- Tell your cardiac rehab team if you would like an appointment with the dietitian, social worker, or psychologist

## Learning Focus: Choose Healthy Foods

### 1. Review the learning goals

By the end of this learning plan you will know:

- types of foods that can improve your heart health
- how to use a nutrition facts table to choose healthy foods

### 2. Learn

A healthy way of eating includes more fresh, whole foods and less processed foods.

If you buy packaged foods, check the Nutrition Facts table to know the amount of nutrients in the product per serving size. The 4 nutrients from this table that affect your heart health the most are: saturated fat, trans fat, sodium, and fibre.

Nutrition Facts	
Valeur nutritive	
Serving Size (19 g) / per 10 crackers	
Amount	% Daily Value
	% valeur quotidienne
Calories / Calories	90
Fat / Lipides	4.5 g 7 %
Saturated / saturés	0.4 g 2 %
+ Trans / trans	0 g
Cholesterol / Cholestérol	0 mg
Sodium / Sodium	100 mg 4 %
Carbohydrate / Glucides	12 g 4 %
Fibre / Fibres	2 g 8 %
Sugars / Sucres	2 g
Protein / Protéines	1 g
Vitamin A / Vitamine A	0 %
Vitamin C / Vitamine C	0 %
Calcium / Calcium	2 %
Iron / Fer	6 %



# LEARNING PLAN 11

VIRTUAL CARDIAC REHABILITATION  
SMALL CHANGES FOR BETTER HEALTH

Some types of fat are really important for your health. **Unsaturated fats** come from plants. Eating these fats will lower your LDL, or bad cholesterol and reduce the chance that you will have a heart attack or stroke. Olive oil, avocados, nuts and natural nut butter are all good sources of unsaturated fats.

**Saturated and trans fats** are the fats you want to eat less of. Saturated fats come from all animal products such as fatty meats, whole milk, cheese, and butter. Trans fats are found in processed, factory-made food like crackers, cookies, pastries and deep-fried restaurant foods such as fries.

- Saturated and trans fats both raise your LDL, or bad cholesterol and increase your chance of having a heart attack or stroke.
- If you are buying packaged foods, check the Nutrition Facts table and try to **select foods with 5% or less daily value of saturated and trans fats.**





# LEARNING PLAN 11

VIRTUAL CARDIAC REHABILITATION  
SMALL CHANGES FOR BETTER HEALTH

The next nutrient to think about is **sodium**, which is found in all types of salt. Your body needs some sodium to function well but the problem is, most people eat too much.

Most of the sodium that people eat comes from prepared foods or restaurant meals. Eating too much sodium is linked to high blood pressure. Cooking your meals at home will allow you to manage the amount of sodium in the food you eat.

To eat less sodium, choose fresh, whole foods like vegetables, fruit, fish, whole grains and legumes. If you buy packaged foods use the Nutrition Facts table to **select foods that have 5% or less daily value of sodium.**

The last nutrient to talk about is **fibre**. Eating fibre can lower your blood sugar, LDL, or bad cholesterol, and blood pressure. It does this by attaching itself to the fat, sugar and sodium you eat and helps your body get rid of them.

Fibre is only found in plant-based foods. Choose fresh or frozen fruits and vegetables, legumes, whole grains and nuts. On packaged foods, look at the fibre on the Nutrition Facts table. **Choose foods with 15% or more daily value of fibre.**

As you eat more fibre, spread it out over the day and be sure to drink more water. Drinking water can help prevent gas and bloating that can happen when you eat more fibre.



# LEARNING PLAN 11

VIRTUAL CARDIAC REHABILITATION  
SMALL CHANGES FOR BETTER HEALTH

To improve your health, choose fresh, whole foods more often. If you buy packaged foods, check the label and use the % daily values to make a heart healthy choice:

- 5% or less daily value of saturated and trans fat
- 5% or less daily value of sodium
- 15% or more daily value of fibre



**Ask your cardiac rehab team for an appointment with the dietitian.**

## Action Plan

Here is an example of an action plan to choose healthy foods.

This week I will:

- What: Look for a high fibre cereal
- When: Tomorrow
- Where: At the grocery store
- How much: One type of cereal
- How Often: To eat 3 times this week



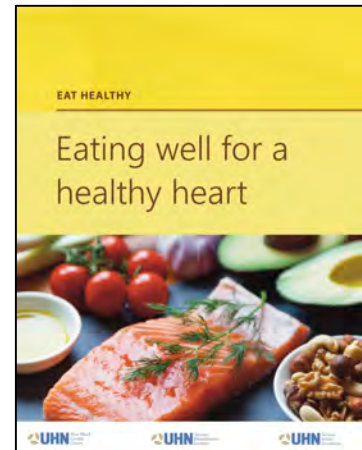


# LEARNING PLAN 11

VIRTUAL CARDIAC REHABILITATION  
SMALL CHANGES FOR BETTER HEALTH

## 4. Learn more (optional)

- Talk to your cardiac rehab team
- Read more about choosing healthy foods in booklet 6 of your patient guide “Eating well for a healthy heart”
  - page 59 – How to Read a Food Label



## Before the next session

- Create your action plan at the start of the week
- Complete your exercise diary
- Reflect on your week

## Next week

- Virtual group session
- Topic: Sleep Well







# WEEKLY REFLECTION

VIRTUAL CARDIAC REHABILITATION  
SMALL CHANGES FOR BETTER HEALTH

## Your Reflection

Answer the 2 questions below to reflect on your action plan each week.

**1. What went well with your action plan? What felt good?**

**2. What did not go as planned with your action plan? What challenges or problems got in the way? Follow the steps to solve problems in your patient guide.**





# LEARNING PLAN 12

VIRTUAL CARDIAC REHABILITATION  
SMALL CHANGES FOR BETTER HEALTH

**Instructions:** To join the group session, call the number your CRS shared with you a few minutes before your scheduled class time.

## Clinical Care Focus: Exercise

- Discuss barriers to exercise and problem solve

## Learning Focus: Sleep Well

### 1. Review the learning goals

By the end of this learning plan you will know:

- what might be stopping you from sleeping well
- the signs of sleep apnea

### 2. Learn

There is a lot more to sleep than just adding up the hours. Getting a good night sleep is linked to better health and can improve how you feel.

**Poor quality sleep** can mean too little sleep (less than 6 hours of sleep), or too much sleep (more than 9 hours of sleep). It may also be that you are waking up several times during the night or you are going to bed and waking up at different times each day.



# LEARNING PLAN 12

VIRTUAL CARDIAC REHABILITATION  
SMALL CHANGES FOR BETTER HEALTH

Poor quality sleep three nights or more each week is a problem for your health.

Getting better quality sleep at night, starts during the day. Try to be active every day and avoid eating, drinking alcohol, or doing vigorous exercise within 4 hours of your bedtime.

Then, 1 hour before you want to be sleeping, start getting ready:

- Turn off all electronics. That's anything with a screen: computers, television, and cell phones
- Then your routine might include having a bath or shower, listening to music, reading a book, or doing a simple thing you enjoy like knitting, drawing, or doing a puzzle
- The last part of your day could be used for some quality time chatting with a loved one
- Finally, make sure your room is cool and dark when you go to bed

One serious condition that can cause you to have poor quality sleep is **sleep apnea**. Sleep apnea means you stop breathing when you sleep. You stop breathing because soft tissue in the back of your throat blocks the air passage to your lungs. This block makes your stress system wake you up so you can start to breathe again. In severe sleep apnea, this occurs more than 30 times every hour. When you wake up this often you cannot get into a deep sleep at night and you wake up feeling like you didn't sleep at all.



# LEARNING PLAN 12

VIRTUAL CARDIAC REHABILITATION  
SMALL CHANGES FOR BETTER HEALTH

The signs of sleep apnea are:

- loud snoring
- feeling very tired during the day
- high blood pressure
- you stop breathing at night. You may not notice that you stop breathing at night. This is often noticed by a bed partner.

Sleep apnea makes your health worse. Each time your stress system wakes you up to breathe, your blood sugar goes up. If you have diabetes and sleep apnea you will notice that your blood sugar is high in the morning. Sleep apnea also makes your blood pressure and cholesterol go up.

If you have sleep apnea and don't get treatment, your risk of having a heart attack or a stroke is 4 times higher. In fact, untreated sleep apnea is as bad for your health as smoking a pack of cigarettes a day!

The only way to really know if you have sleep apnea is to request a Sleep Test. You will need to spend a night in a sleep clinic or hospital room, where your sleep is monitored.

If you do have sleep apnea, your doctor will prescribe you a CPAP machine. This device will help you breathe normally during sleep and lower your risk of heart attack or stroke. The best part is you will feel so much better.



# LEARNING PLAN 12

VIRTUAL CARDIAC REHABILITATION  
SMALL CHANGES FOR BETTER HEALTH

Here are a few tips to improve the quality of your sleep:

- get to bed at the same time every night for a week
- wake up at the same time every night for a week
- turn down the lights and have some herbal tea before bed
- talk to your doctor if you are concerned about your sleep

## Action Plan

Here is an example of an action plan to help you sleep better.

This week, I will:

- What: turn off my screens
- When: by 10pm
- Where: in bed
- How much: once
- How often: for 5 nights this week

## 3. Learn more (optional)

- Tell your cardiac rehab team if you would like an appointment with the social worker or psychologist
- Read more about sleeping well in booklet 7 of your patient guide “Managing stress for a healthy heart”







# LEARNING PLAN 12

VIRTUAL CARDIAC REHABILITATION  
SMALL CHANGES FOR BETTER HEALTH

## Before the next session

- Create your action plan at the start of the week
- Complete your exercise diary
- Reflect on your week

## Next week

- Self-Learning – no group session
- Topic: Managing Social Relationships





# WEEKLY REFLECTION

VIRTUAL CARDIAC REHABILITATION  
SMALL CHANGES FOR BETTER HEALTH

## Your Reflection

Answer the 2 questions below to reflect on your action plan each week.

**1. What went well with your action plan? What felt good?**

**2. What did not go as planned with your action plan? What challenges or problems got in the way? Follow the steps to solve problems in your patient guide.**





# LEARNING PLAN 13

VIRTUAL CARDIAC REHABILITATION  
SMALL CHANGES FOR BETTER HEALTH

**Delivery:** Self-Learning (no group session)

## **Clinical Care Focus:** Progress Your Exercise

- Tell your cardiac rehab team if you feel ready to progress your exercise

## **Learning Focus:** Strengthen Your Social Relationships

### **1. Review the learning goals**

By the end of this learning plan you will know:

- how social relationships can improve your health
- how heart disease can affect sex and intimacy
- techniques to create healthy relationships

### **2. Learn**

Relationships change over time. Some may have grown stronger when you learned you had heart disease or diabetes. You may also have lost some relationships.

Some people may have withdrawn from you when you got sick. It's possible they didn't know what to say or they might have thought you needed some space and time to yourself. Others might be trying to help, but not giving you the support you need.



# LEARNING PLAN 13

VIRTUAL CARDIAC REHABILITATION  
SMALL CHANGES FOR BETTER HEALTH

Try talking to the people you trust like family members, friends, colleagues, people in your community, your place of worship, or your health care team. Don't assume you know what they're thinking. Also, don't assume they should know how you feel. Sharing your thoughts and feelings makes people aware of your needs. Be clear and specific when you share how you feel. You might say "I need to vent" or "I want you to spend more time with me."

The people in your life will be better at giving you the support you need, when they know how you feel. If you find you need more support, talk to your doctor and get a referral to a social worker or psychologist.

Not all relationships are healthy. Think about the people in your life and decide which ones you have healthy positive relationships with, and which ones you have a conflict- or tension-filled relationship with. Some people define it as 'relationships that give you energy' and 'relationships that drain you of energy.'

Once you understand your relationships, you can decide which ones you want to give your attention to.

All healthy relationships need respect, sharing, and trust. In a romantic relationship, sex and intimacy are also important. Diabetes and heart disease can cause problems with your sexual intimacy. Common reasons include the side effects of medicines, stress, anxiety, and depression.

There are always ways to get help and talking to your doctor is the first step to improving your sexual intimacy.



# LEARNING PLAN 13

VIRTUAL CARDIAC REHABILITATION  
SMALL CHANGES FOR BETTER HEALTH

Try these tips to help create healthy relationships:

- Identify what you need from your relationships
- talk about your feelings openly and honestly with someone you trust
- Be clear and direct about the help you want and use the word 'I' when talking about your feelings such as, 'I feel sad when I cannot walk as fast as you' or 'I feel angry when you tell me what to eat'
- Create new positive relationships and take care of ones you already have

## Action Plan:

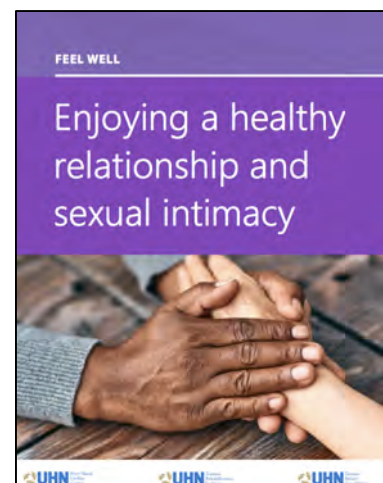
Here is an example of an action plan to strengthen your relationships:

This week, I will:

- What: talk to my partner about what is bothering me
- When: by the end of the weekend
- Where: at home
- How much: for a couple of hours
- How often: one time

## 3. Learn more (optional)

- Talk to your cardiac rehab team
- Read booklet 8 of your patient guide "Enjoying a healthy relationship and sexual intimacy"







# LEARNING PLAN 13

VIRTUAL CARDIAC REHABILITATION  
SMALL CHANGES FOR BETTER HEALTH

## Before the next session

- Create your action plan at the start of the week
- Complete your exercise diary
- Reflect on your week

## Next week

- Group session
- Topic: Choose Health Everyday



# WEEKLY REFLECTION

VIRTUAL CARDIAC REHABILITATION  
SMALL CHANGES FOR BETTER HEALTH

## Your Reflection

Answer the 2 questions below to reflect on your action plan each week.

**1. What went well with your action plan? What felt good?**

**2. What did not go as planned with your action plan? What challenges or problems got in the way? Follow the steps to solve problems in your patient guide.**





# LEARNING PLAN 14

VIRTUAL CARDIAC REHABILITATION  
SMALL CHANGES FOR BETTER HEALTH

**Instructions:** To join the group session, call the number your CRS shared with you a few minutes before your scheduled class time.

## Clinical Care Focus: Exercise

- Discuss barriers to exercise and problem solve

## Learning Focus: Choose Health Everyday

### 1. Review the learning goals

By the end of this learning plan you will know:

- how to maintain your healthy habits
- what to do if you stop your healthy habit

### 2. Learn

When you picture the future, what do you see yourself doing? Who are the people around you? How are you feeling? And what does that look like?

Each day you can make choices that support your journey to better health. It's not about erasing the past and being disease free. It's about accepting who you are and making choices to be healthier and to live the healthiest life you can.



# LEARNING PLAN 14

VIRTUAL CARDIAC REHABILITATION  
SMALL CHANGES FOR BETTER HEALTH

Over the past few weeks you may have worked on one or more of the following habits:

1. Taking your medicines
2. Getting active
3. Eating healthy
4. Taking care of your emotional wellbeing

Your quality and length of life depend on you keeping up these healthy habits, so take your time. Pick one thing to work on. Build an action plan for the week and review how it went. What went well? Can you do more of that? What did not go as planned? Solve the problems that get in your way and try again.

Make small changes so that you can celebrate your success. As you accomplish each tiny step, it will motivate you and build your confidence to keep going.

Research says that relapse from a healthy habit back to an unhealthy habit is common. Something will come up such as a vacation, busier time at work, illness, or family issues that will stop you from doing your healthy habits. Some of those you can plan ahead for. If you know you are going on vacation, acknowledge that your routine will be different for a week, but make a plan to go to the gym the day after you return, even if it's not your normal workout day.

Once you stop a healthy habit it becomes easy to lose motivation and difficult to start again. This is a normal part of changing lifestyle habits.



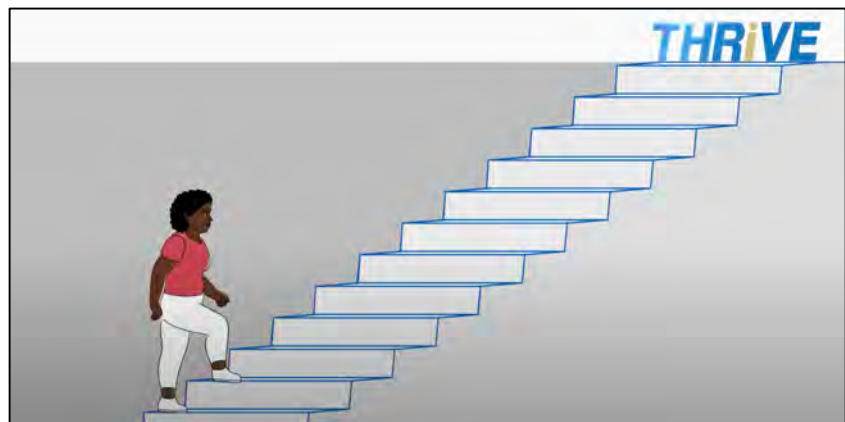
# LEARNING PLAN 14

VIRTUAL CARDIAC REHABILITATION  
SMALL CHANGES FOR BETTER HEALTH

To help you get back on track, go back to the reasons you wanted to make a change in the first place. Ask yourself:

- Why this habit is important to you?
- Who can support you through the process?
- How can you reward yourself for getting back on track?

When it comes to changing lifestyle habits there is no finish line; that also means it's not a race. This is a journey with twists and turns, ups and downs, and plenty of surprises.



## Action Plan

Here is an example of an action plan to choose health everyday.

This week, I will:

- What: reflect on each of the action plans I tried in this program
- When: after I wake up
- Where: in my journal
- How much: for 5 minutes
- How often: every morning

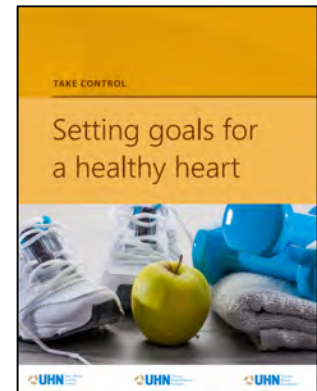


# LEARNING PLAN 14

VIRTUAL CARDIAC REHABILITATION  
SMALL CHANGES FOR BETTER HEALTH

## 3. Learn more (optional)

- Talk to your cardiac rehab team
- Read more about how to manage challenges in booklet 9 of your patient guide “Setting goals for a healthy heart”



## Before the next session

- Create your action plan at the start of the week
- Book your exercise stress test
- Complete your exercise diary
- Reflect on your week

## Next week

- Self-Learning – no group session
- Topic: Sexual Health





# WEEKLY REFLECTION

VIRTUAL CARDIAC REHABILITATION  
SMALL CHANGES FOR BETTER HEALTH

## Your Reflection

Answer the 2 questions below to reflect on your action plan each week.

**1. What went well with your action plan? What felt good?**

**2. What did not go as planned with your action plan? What challenges or problems got in the way? Follow the steps to solve problems in your patient guide.**





# LEARNING PLAN 15

VIRTUAL CARDIAC REHABILITATION  
SMALL CHANGES FOR BETTER HEALTH

**Instructions:** Self-Learning (no group session)

## **Clinical Care Focus:** Final Discharge Progress Discussion

- Your cardiac rehab team will contact you to review your progress

## **Learning Focus:** Sexual Health

### **1. Review the learning goals**

By the end of this learning plan you will know:

- ways to communicate better with your family
- how to feel comfortable returning to sexual activity after a heart event

### **2. Learn**

Having a healthy relationship with your partner is important to your recovery from a heart attack and living with heart disease. Living with heart disease can affect your body, mind, and what you are able to do.

Dealing with heart disease can be stressful. Talk about your feelings with your family to make them aware of your needs. Do not assume they know how you are feeling. Your family and loved ones can help to meet your needs better and more easily if you are clear and specific about how you feel.



# LEARNING PLAN 15

VIRTUAL CARDIAC REHABILITATION  
SMALL CHANGES FOR BETTER HEALTH

Some families find it helpful to get more support. Social workers and psychologists can help with communication, conflict, and family stress. Talk to your cardiac rehab team or doctor if you would like a referral to a social worker or psychologist.

## **Sexual Intimacy**

Intimacy, sexuality, respect, sharing and trust are important in a romantic relationship. Having and recovering from a heart condition can impact your sexual intimacy.

Sexual intimacy is part of being close to your loved one. In a survey of cardiac patients, 75% of them told us that sexual activity was important in living well. Sex includes all the activities that allow a couple to feel pleasure in physical contact and emotional connection with each other.

It is common to have questions, concerns, and fears about returning to sexual activity after a heart event.

Most people with little damage to their heart can get back to sexual activity within 2 to 3 weeks of going home from the hospital. If you can walk up two flights of stairs or walk briskly with ease, your heart should be safe during sex.

Speak to your cardiologist to confirm that sex is safe for you.



# LEARNING PLAN 15

VIRTUAL CARDIAC REHABILITATION  
SMALL CHANGES FOR BETTER HEALTH

Our patients told us they wanted to know more about the questions below. Find answers to these questions in booklet 8 of your patient guide “Enjoying a healthy relationship and sexual intimacy”.

1. How does heart disease affect sexuality?
  - How do medicines affect sexual function?
2. When is it safe to have sex after a heart attack?
3. What are the safest sexual activities for my heart as it heals?
4. What are some sexual activities that may make my heart work too hard as it heals?

It is important to tell your partner how you are feeling. Take action to have and maintain healthy sexual intimacy.

- Talk to your partner about your needs, desires, and fears about sex
- Talk to your doctor about your medical concerns, stress, anxiety and depression
- Adjust how you have sex so that it is safer for you while you are recovering
- Know how your medication can affect your sexual function
- Be intimate with your partner in other ways such as hugging, massaging and making eye contact
- Don't assume your loved ones know how you are feeling



# LEARNING PLAN 15

VIRTUAL CARDIAC REHABILITATION  
SMALL CHANGES FOR BETTER HEALTH

## Action Plan

Here is an example action plan:

This week, I will:

- What: take time to make eye contact with my partner
- When: in the evening
- Where: before bed
- How much: while we talk before bed
- How often: every night

## 3. Learn more (optional)

- Talk to your cardiac rehab team or doctor
- Read booklet 8 in your patient guide “Enjoying a healthy relationship and sexual intimacy”



## Before the next session

- Create your action plan at the start of the week
- Talk to your partner or loved one about how you are feeling
- Complete your exercise diary
- Reflect on your week

## Next week

- Group session (last session)
- Topic: Graduation



# WEEKLY REFLECTION

VIRTUAL CARDIAC REHABILITATION  
SMALL CHANGES FOR BETTER HEALTH

## Your Reflection

Answer the 2 questions below to reflect on your action plan each week.

**1. What went well with your action plan? What felt good?**

**2. What did not go as planned with your action plan? What challenges or problems got in the way? Follow the steps to solve problems in your patient guide.**







# LEARNING PLAN 16

VIRTUAL CARDIAC REHABILITATION  
SMALL CHANGES FOR BETTER HEALTH

**Instructions:** To join the group session, call the number your CRS shared with you a few minutes before your scheduled class time.

## **Clinical Care Focus:** Graduate Resources

- Learn where to find graduate resources
- Discuss motivation to maintain your healthy habits

## **Learning Focus:** Exercise and Weather Safety

### **1. Review the learning goals**

By the end of this learning plan you will know:

- how your body may respond to a change in weather
- how to exercise safely when there is a change in weather

### **2. Learn**

Hot and cold weather conditions can affect how your body responds to exercise. Learn what tools you can use to help you decide if it is safe for you to exercise outdoors.



# LEARNING PLAN 16

VIRTUAL CARDIAC REHABILITATION  
SMALL CHANGES FOR BETTER HEALTH

## Hot weather conditions

In higher temperatures and higher humidity, your body may react in the ways listed below:

- Your heart rate goes up
- You have more irregular beats
- You feel light-headed (dizzy)
- You feel tired (fatigue)
- You sweat more and lose body water (dehydrate)
- You overheat

Follow these hot weather exercise safety tips:

- Check the weather report
- Check the heat safety index (page 41 in your 'Staying active for a healthy heart' booklet)
- Check the air quality index (page 42 in your 'Staying active for a healthy heart' booklet)
- Stay hydrated (drink lots of water). Speak to your doctor if you have limits on how much fluid you can have each day.
- Wear light-coloured, loose, comfortable clothing
- Do your warm up and cool down
- Reduce your speed and distance if the exercise feels too hard
- Know what medicines you take and how they can affect you in the sun and heat
- Be aware of symptoms and adjust your exercise as needed



# LEARNING PLAN 16

VIRTUAL CARDIAC REHABILITATION  
SMALL CHANGES FOR BETTER HEALTH

## Cold weather conditions

Cold weather can make your exercise feel harder. In cold weather, the blood vessels under your skin narrow (constrict) to send blood away from the surface. This lowers the amount of heat lost from your body.

When your blood vessels narrow, it is harder for blood to get through to deliver oxygen to your heart and exercising muscles. This makes your heart work too hard and can put you at risk for heart problems.

Follow these cold weather exercise safety tips:

- Check the weather forecast: temperature, wind, rain/wet snow
- Wear layers of clothing to help keep warm
- Wear your running shoes outdoors (they have the best grip)
- Reduce your speed and distance if the exercise feels too hard
- Choose an exercise route that is clear of snow and ice
- Drink water before, during, and after your exercise. Speak to your doctor if you have limits on how much fluid you can have each day
- Be aware of symptoms and adjust exercise if needed
- Do not shovel snow

**Safety alert: Consider an indoor exercise option if it is -10°C (15 °F) or colder**

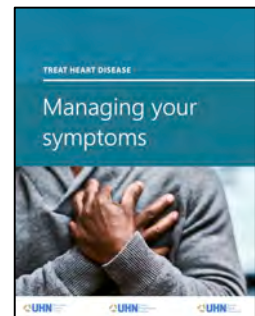


# LEARNING PLAN 16

VIRTUAL CARDIAC REHABILITATION  
SMALL CHANGES FOR BETTER HEALTH

## 3. Learn more (optional)

- Talk to your cardiac rehab team
- Read booklet #5 of your patient guide “Staying active for a healthy heart”
  - page 40: – How to exercise safely in hot weather
  - page 46 – How to exercise safely in cold weather
- Read booklet 4 of your patient guide “Managing your symptoms”
  - page 6 – How do I manage my angina?
  - page 14 – How do I treat hypoglycemia?



## Maintain Your Healthy Habits

- Create an action plan at the start of each week
- Complete your exercise diary
- Reflect on your week



**Congratulations on your graduation!** It takes a lot of hard work to get here. We wish you the very best on your journey to better health.



# WEEKLY REFLECTION

VIRTUAL CARDIAC REHABILITATION  
SMALL CHANGES FOR BETTER HEALTH

## Your Reflection

Answer the 2 questions below to reflect on your action plan each week.

**1. What went well with your action plan? What felt good?**

**2. What did not go as planned with your action plan? What challenges or problems got in the way? Follow the steps to solve problems in your patient guide.**





# PROGRAM MATERIALS





## ACTIVITY LEVEL

Physical activity can be a lifesaver – literally. To dramatically lower your risk of heart disease and stroke, you should accumulate at least 150 minutes of moderate-to-vigorous-intensity physical activity each week. Activity can be in bouts as short as 10 minutes and should be spread out throughout the week.

- ▶ Find out more at [heartandstroke.ca](http://heartandstroke.ca)

TYPE	WHAT IS IT?	YOUR LEVEL/TYPE	YOUR TARGET
Activity Level	Minutes per week you are active and type of activity		

## SMOKING

Smoking contributes to the buildup of plaque in your arteries, increases the risk of blood clots, reduces the oxygen in your blood, increases your blood pressure and makes your heart work harder.

- ▶ Find out more at [heartandstroke.ca](http://heartandstroke.ca)

## ASK YOUR DOCTOR

- ▶ What is my risk for heart disease and stroke?
- ▶ What other screening or diagnostic tests for heart disease or stroke do I need? Do I need an electrocardiogram or stress test?
- ▶ What can you do to help me quit smoking and manage my cravings?
- ▶ What is a heart-healthy eating plan for me? Should I see a registered dietitian or a qualified nutritionist to learn more?
- ▶ How can I tell if I am having a heart attack or a stroke?
- ▶ How often should I return for check-ups?

Developed by Dr. Mike Evans in association with the Heart and Stroke Foundation

For more of Dr. Mike's favourite health information resources go to [myfavouritemedicine.com](http://myfavouritemedicine.com)



HEART &  
STROKE  
FOUNDATION



HEART &  
STROKE  
FOUNDATION

# KNOW YOUR NUMBERS

You can't control your family history, age, gender or ethnicity. But, you can do something about other factors that could increase your risk of heart disease or stroke. Use this worksheet to discuss with your doctor what your numbers are and what your targets should be for cholesterol, blood pressure, blood sugar level, waist circumference and physical activity level.

Are you at risk? Find out at [heartandstroke.ca/risk](http://heartandstroke.ca/risk)

## CHOLESTEROL

Cholesterol and triglycerides are types of fat in your blood. High levels of low-density lipoprotein (LDL) in the blood promote the build-up of plaque in the artery walls. High-density lipoprotein (HDL) helps carry LDL cholesterol away from the artery walls. High triglycerides are associated with excess weight, excess alcohol consumption and diabetes.

► **Find out more at [heartandstroke.ca](http://heartandstroke.ca)**

TYPE	WHAT IS IT?	YOUR READING	YOUR TARGET
TC: HDL	Your total cholesterol (TC) level divided by your HDL		
HDL Cholesterol	Your good cholesterol A high reading is good		
LDL Cholesterol	Your bad cholesterol A high reading is bad		
Triglycerides	Often measured at the same time as cholesterol. Can be genetic. High readings often monitored.		

## BLOOD PRESSURE

Blood pressure involves two measurements: systolic and diastolic. An optimal blood pressure is below 120/80. When your pressure is too high it makes your heart work harder. Go to [heartandstroke.ca](http://heartandstroke.ca) for more information.

TYPE	WHAT IS IT?	YOUR READING	YOUR TARGET
Systolic	Higher number represents the pressure when the heart is contracting		
Diastolic	Lower number represents the pressure when the heart is relaxed between beats		

► **To track your blood pressure online, try out the [heartandstroke.ca/BP](http://heartandstroke.ca/BP) etool.**

## BLOOD SUGAR

The two most common ways to measure blood sugar levels are: Fasting Blood Sugar (FBS) and A1C tests.

**FASTING BLOOD SUGAR: a blood test completed after an eight hour fast**

NORMAL Fasting Blood Sugar or Glucose	PRE-DIABETES*	DIABETES* Needs to be Confirmed
4 to 6	6.1 to 6.9	7+

\*If your reading is in this range, your healthcare provider may repeat this test or perform another test to confirm diagnosis.

**A1C: a blood test that measures your last three months of sugar control**

A1C can be expressed as a percentage or as a number. Canadian guidelines suggest a normal range is up to 6.0% (0.06). Higher than normal A1C readings may indicate diabetes. Generally, individuals with diagnosed diabetes will have an A1C target below 7%.

## WAIST CIRCUMFERENCE

Where you carry your weight is just as important as how much weight you carry when it comes to your health. Too much fat stored around your middle increases your risk of heart disease or stroke. If your waistline measurement is within 8 cm/3 in. of, or greater than, the cutoff according to your ethnicity and gender, you are at increased risk.

ETHNICITY*	MALE	FEMALE
European/Caucasian, Sub-Saharan Africans, Eastern Mediterranean and Middle Eastern	102 cm (40 in.)	88 cm (35 in.)
South Asian, Malaysian, Asian, Chinese, Japanese, Ethnic South and Central Americans	90 cm (35 in.)	80 cm (32 in.)

\*Waist circumference measurement does not apply to pregnant or nursing women, people under the age of 18 or over the age of 65. Persons of ethnicities not listed here should speak to their healthcare provider.

► **You can measure this yourself. Find out how at [heartandstroke.ca](http://heartandstroke.ca)**

TYPE	YOUR READING	YOUR TARGET
Waist Measurement		

# TO HELP YOU PREPARE FOR YOUR DOCTORS VISIT

Appointment Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Doctor: \_\_\_\_\_ Location/Address: \_\_\_\_\_



1. Bring a list of all your medicines, including vitamins, herbs and over-the-counter medicines.
2. Ask for a copy of test results or reports about procedures (such as ECG).
3. When filling out this form and at your appointment, remember the PACE method for communicating with your healthcare professionals:
  - **P = Provide information about how you feel**
  - **A = Ask questions if you don't have enough information**
  - **C = Clarify what you hear**
  - **E = Express any concerns you may have**

Reasons for the appointment: \_\_\_\_\_

Describe your symptoms and concerns: \_\_\_\_\_

What you hope doctor will do: \_\_\_\_\_

Questions about your condition: \_\_\_\_\_

Questions about tests, procedures: \_\_\_\_\_

Questions about medicines: \_\_\_\_\_

Questions about other treatments: \_\_\_\_\_

During the visit, clarify what you hear:

- If you don't understand something, ask the doctor to explain.
- Repeat the doctor's instructions in your own words.
- At the end of the visit, review what you and the doctor agreed upon.

Used with permission from Donald J. Cegala, Professor of Communication and Family Medicine, Ohio State University

[www.AmericanHeart.org/CardiacRehab](http://www.AmericanHeart.org/CardiacRehab)

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# Dynamic Stretches

moving

**BEFORE  
EXERCISE**

Do these stretches **BEFORE** you do your walking/biking or resistance training program.

## 1 Standing March



## 2 Shoulder Rolls



## 3 Leg Swings



## 4 Ankle Rolls





# Static Stretches

not moving

**AFTER  
EXERCISE**

Do these stretches **AFTER** you do your walking/biking or resistance training program. **Hold each stretch for 15 to 30 seconds. Breathe normally.**

1

pectoral  
muscle

Chest  
Stretch



2

deltoid  
muscle

Shoulder  
Stretch



3

Standing  
Leg  
Stretch

hamstring  
muscle



4

Calf  
Stretch

calf  
muscle

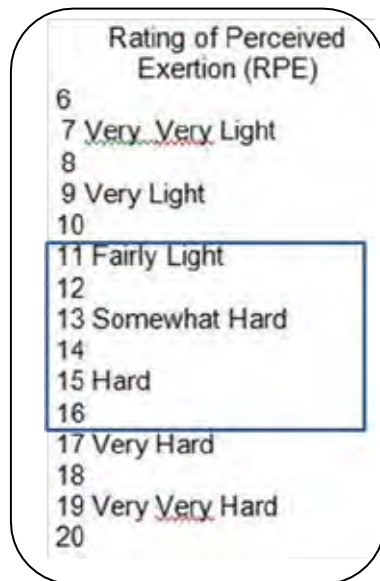


# Resistance Training Program

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## How to do Resistance Training:

- Warm up for 5 minutes before resistance training e.g., walk or cycle slowly
  - Avoid stretching before resistance training
- Do all exercises in the order prescribed
- Breathe normally. Do not hold your breath
- Lift the weight to a count of 2 and lower the weight to a count of 3
- Keep your rating of perceived exertion (RPE) between 11 and 16



A vertical scale titled "Rating of Perceived Exertion (RPE)" with numbers 6 through 20. The scale is enclosed in a rounded rectangle. A blue box highlights the numbers 11 through 16. The text for each number is as follows: 6, 7 Very Very Light, 8, 9 Very Light, 10, 11 Fairly Light, 12, 13 Somewhat Hard, 14, 15 Hard, 16, 17 Very Hard, 18, 19 Very Very Hard, 20.

Rating	Description
6	
7	Very Very Light
8	
9	Very Light
10	
11	Fairly Light
12	
13	Somewhat Hard
14	
15	Hard
16	
17	Very Hard
18	
19	Very Very Hard
20	

### Safety Alert!

**Stop** and talk to your Cardiac Team if you have any symptoms such as pain or shortness of breath

- Take at least a 30 to 60 second rest between exercises
- Cool down for 5 minutes after resistance training e.g., walk or cycle slowly
  - Your cool down can also include stretching exercises
- Do resistance training at least 2 times a week with at least one day of rest in between workouts
- Track your progress on your exercise diary. Your Cardiac Team will review your exercise diary and help you progress your resistance training program

## How Much Weight Should You Lift?

To find out if you are using the correct weight or exercise band, answer these questions:

- 1) After doing the last repetition, do you feel that you can do 5 to 10 more repetitions?

If you answer yes, the weight or exercise band is **too light or easy**

- 2) Are you struggling to do the last repetition?

If you answer yes: the weight or exercise band is **too heavy or hard**

- 3) After the last repetition, do you feel as if you could do 2 to 3 more repetitions and no more?

If you answer yes, this is a **good starting weight or exercise band to use**

### What is a repetition?

A repetition is one complete motion of an exercise

e.g., 1 bicep curl

### What is a set?

A set is a group of repetitions done without stopping

e.g., 1 set of 10 bicep curls



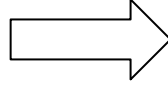
A dumbbell



An exercise band

## How to Progress Your Resistance Training Program

When you are ready, slowly increase the number of repetitions you do from 10 to 15



Once you can do 15 repetitions with ease:

- Increase the weight you lift by 2 to 5 pounds

**OR**

- Change your exercise band for one that has more resistance

Use the chart below to help you select the next correct weight or band colour

**Safety Tips**

- Report any symptoms to your Diabetes Team
- Not all exercises progress at the same rate
- Not all muscle groups will be ready to progress at the same time
- Not all muscles use the same weight

## Tool to Help You Increase the Weight You Lift or Band You Use

When progressing your dumbbells, follow this order												
Lightest  Heaviest												
1 lb	2 lbs	3 lbs	5 lbs	8 lbs	10 lbs	12 lbs	15 lbs	20 lbs	25 lbs	30 lbs	35 lbs	40 lbs

When progressing your exercise bands, follow this order				
Lightest  Heaviest				
Yellow	Red	Green	Blue	Black

## Getting Up Off the Floor

Many people feel light-headed or dizzy if they get up off of the floor too quickly. This can lead to a fall or injury. The following is a demonstration of how to get up off of the floor safely. Take your time.



**Step 1:** Bend your knees and place your feet flat on the floor



**Step 2:** Roll onto your right side, knees bent, right arm supporting your head and your left hand on the floor



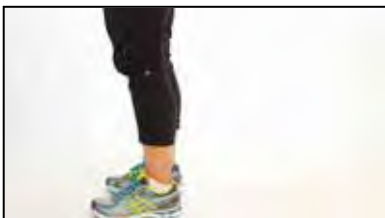
**Step 3:** Place both hands on the floor and push your upper body off of the floor



**Step 4:** Come up onto your hands and knees as shown



**Step 5:** Bend your right leg and place your right foot flat on the floor. Place both hands on your right leg for support and push yourself up to a standing position



**Step 6:** Slowly stand up



## Getting Up Off the Floor (using a chair for support)

Many people feel light-headed or dizzy if they get up off of the floor too quickly. This can lead to a fall or injury. The following is a demonstration of how to get up off of the floor safely using a chair for support. Take your time getting up off the floor.



**Step 1:** Bend your knees and place your feet flat on the floor



**Step 2:** Roll onto your right side, knees bent, right arm supporting your head and your left hand on the floor



**Step 3:** Place both hands on the floor and push your upper body off of the floor



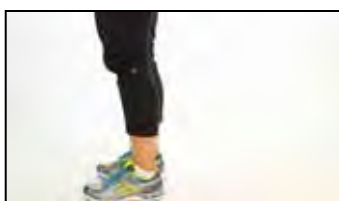
**Step 4:** Come up onto your hands and knees as shown



**Step 5:** Place both hands on the seat of a sturdy chair



**Step 6:** Bend your right leg and place your right foot flat on the floor. Push yourself up to a standing position

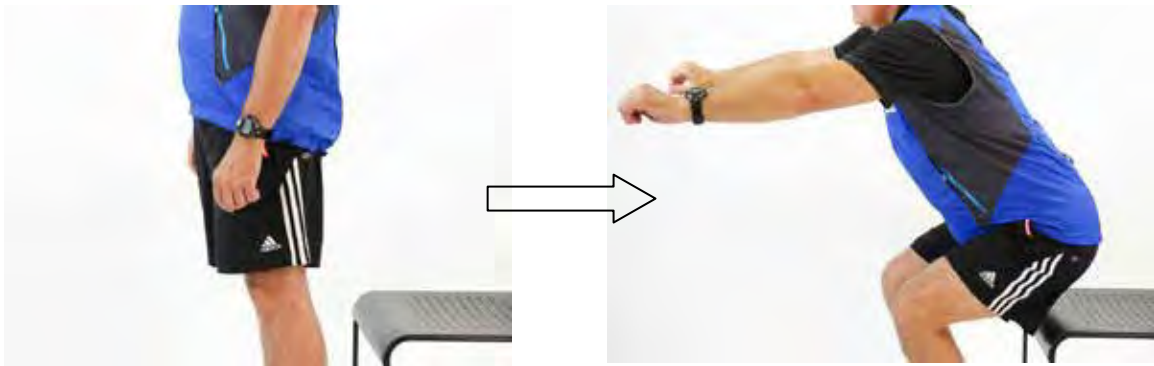


**Step 7:** Slowly stand up

# Resistance Training (Mini-Program)

## 2) Half-Squat (thigh muscles)

For an alternative see exercise **2A**



**Equipment:** Chair, as you get stronger add dumbbells for added resistance

**Step 1:** Stand with feet shoulder width apart, arms at your side and draw your belly button in toward your spine. Keep your feet flat on the floor and toes slightly pointed out

**Step 2: Start** by pushing your buttocks back and flexing your hips to slowly lower your body to a half-squat position. Make sure you can see your toes when you lower yourself down. At the same time, raise your arms straight out in front of you

**Note:** This movement should feel like you are sitting back into a chair

**Step 3:** Return to an upright position and bring your arms back down to your sides. Start with about 10 repetitions and build up slowly to 15

**My Cardiac Team Prescribed:** \_\_\_ set(s) of \_ repetitions

**Health club alternative:** Leg press, hack squat machine, smith machine squat



**2) Half-Squat with Dumbbells** (thigh muscles)

This is a progression to the Half-Squat without Dumbbells



**Equipment:** Dumbbells, chair

**Step 1:** Stand with feet shoulder width apart, arms at your side and draw your belly button in toward your spine. Hold 1 dumbbell in each hand with your palms facing toward your sides. Keep your feet flat on the floor and toes slightly pointed out

**Step 2: Start** by, pushing your buttocks back and flexing your hips to slowly lower your body to a half-squat position. Make sure you can see your toes when you lower yourself down. Keep your arms straight at your sides

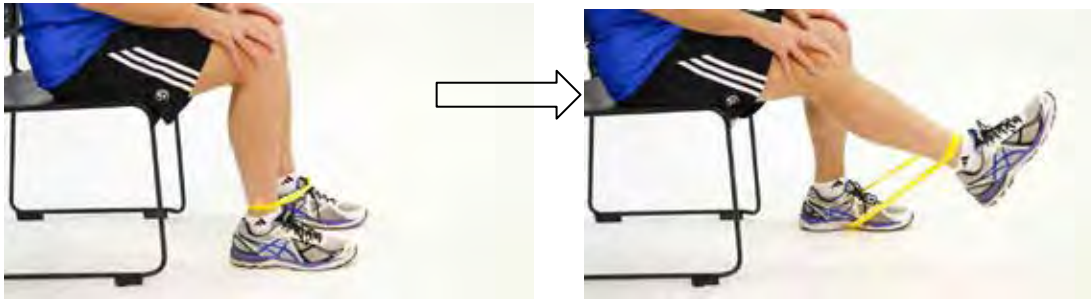
**Note:** This movement should feel like you are sitting back into a chair

**Step 3:** Return to an upright position with your arms at your sides. Start with about 10 repetitions and build up slowly to 15

**My Cardiac Team Prescribed:** \_\_\_\_\_set(s) of \_\_\_repetitions using\_\_\_\_pounds

**Health club alternative:** leg press, hack squat machine, smith machine squat

**2A) Seated Leg Extension** (thigh muscles)



**Equipment:** Exercise band (tie band to form a loop), chair

**Step 1:** Sit back in a chair and place one end of the loop under your left foot and the other end around your right ankle

**Step 2:** Sit with a straight back. Draw your belly button in toward your spine. Keep your hands on your thighs to keep yourself stable

**Step 3: Start** by flexing your right foot towards you and straightening your right leg. Do not completely straighten your right leg or lock your right knee. Keep your right thigh on the chair

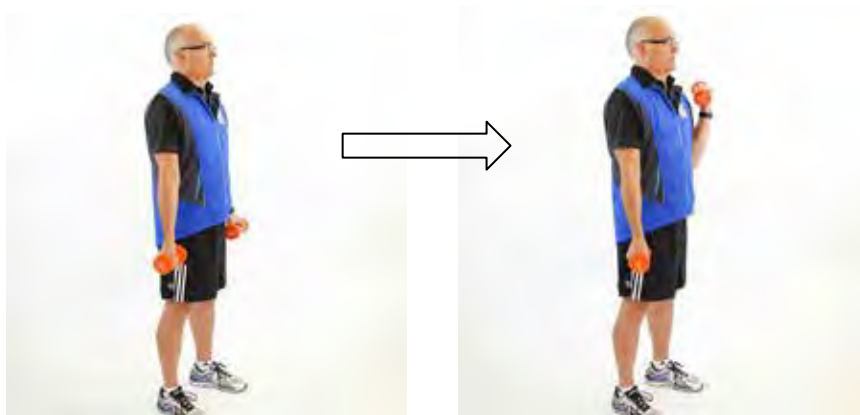
**Step 4:** Slowly return to the starting position. When you are done 10 to 15 repetitions, switch to your left side

**My Cardiac Team Prescribed:**

\_\_ set (s) of \_\_ repetitions using \_\_\_\_\_ (colour) band

**Health club alternative:** Leg extension machine

### 3) Bicep Curls (arm muscles)



**Equipment:** Dumbbells, a chair if you need to sit during this exercise

**Step 1:** Stand with feet shoulder width apart, knees slightly bent and draw your belly button in toward your spine. Hold a dumbbell in each hand, with your arms at your side and palms facing forward. Roll your shoulders back and down before starting

**Step 2: Start** by curling your right arm up to your right shoulder, keeping your elbow close to your body

**Step 3:** Slowly lower to the starting position. Repeat with your left arm and continue switching between your two arms. Start with about 10 repetitions on each arm and build up slowly to 15

**My Cardiac Team Prescribed:**      \_\_\_set(s) of \_\_\_repetitions using\_\_\_pounds

**Health club alternative:** Seated bicep curl machine or bicep cable curl

**6) Heel Raises** (calf muscles)

For an alternative see exercise **6A**



**Equipment:** Chair for balance (if needed), as you get stronger add dumbbells for added resistance

**Step 1:** Hold a dumbbell in each hand and your arms at your sides. Stand with your feet hip width apart, heels on the floor and draw your belly button in towards your spine

**Step 2: Start** by slowly raising your heels so you are standing on your toes

**Step 3:** Slowly return to the starting position. Start with about 10 repetitions and build up slowly to 15

**My Cardiac Team Prescribed:**

\_\_ set (s) of \_\_ repetitions (no added dumbbells)

OR

\_\_ set(s) of \_\_ repetitions using \_\_\_\_ pounds

**Health club alternative:** Seated calf raise or standing calf raise machine

**6A) Toe Press** (calf muscles)



**Equipment:** Exercise band (tie band to form a loop), chair

**Step 1:** Sit in a chair. Loop the middle of the band around the ball of your right foot and grasp the ends of the band with both hands. Wrap the ends of the band around your hands. This will help you hold onto the band during the exercise

**Step 2:** Extend your right leg out in front of you resting your right heel on the floor and your toes pointing up. Sit with a straight back. Draw your belly button in toward your spine

**Step 3: Start** by pushing your right foot down against the resistance of the band pointing your toes forward towards the floor

**Step 4:** Slowly return to the starting position. When you are done 10 to 15 repetitions, switch to your left side

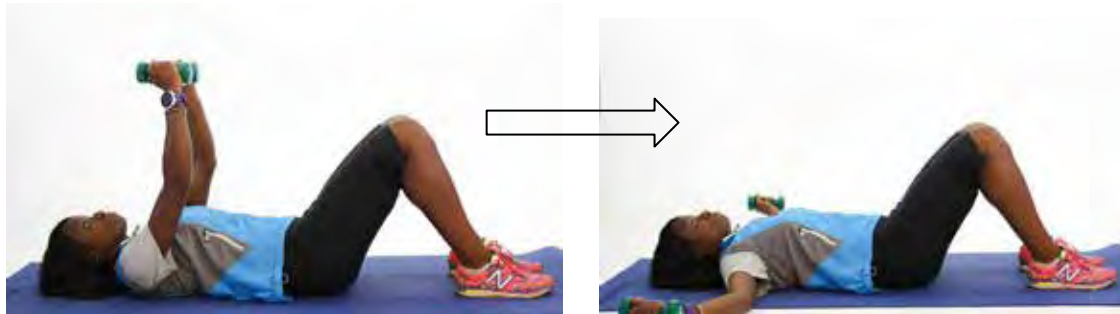
**My Cardiac Team Prescribed:**

\_\_ set (s) of \_\_ repetitions using \_\_\_\_ (colour) band

**Health club alternative:** Seated calf raise or standing calf raise

**7) Chest Fly** (chest muscles)

For alternative exercise see exercise **7A**



**Equipment:** Dumbbells, exercise mat

**Step 1:** Bend your knees and place your feet flat on the floor

**Step 2:** Grab 1 dumbbell in each hand. Extend your arms straight up (over your chest) towards the ceiling. Draw your belly button in toward your spine

**Step 3:** **Start** with your palms facing in and elbows slightly bent, lower the dumbbells to the floor, extending your arms straight out sideways from your shoulders. Palms should be about 1 to 2 inches off of the floor

**Step 4:** Slowly return to the starting position. Start with about 10 repetitions and build up slowly to 15

**My Cardiac Team Prescribed:**                    \_\_\_set(s) of \_\_\_repetitions using\_\_\_pounds

**Health club alternatives:** Seated fly machine or cable fly

**7A) Wall Push-Up** (chest muscles)



**Equipment:** Wall

**Step 1:** Stand facing a wall, then take one step back

**Step 2:** Place your palms against the wall directly in front of you and in line with your shoulders. Next, move your hands across the wall so they are slightly wider apart than your shoulders. Draw your belly button in toward your spine

**Step 3: Start** by bending your elbows and leaning your whole body towards the wall

Note: to make this exercise more difficult, place feet further away from the wall

**Step 4:** Gently push against the wall until you are back to your starting position. Start with about 10 repetitions and build up slowly to 15

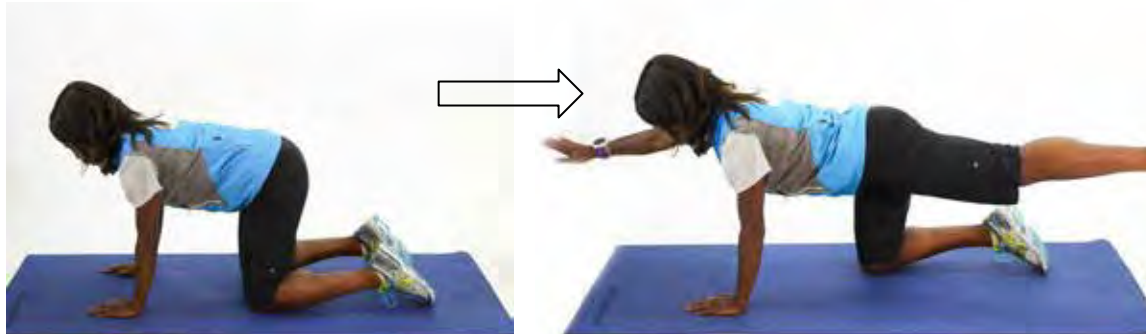
**My Cardiac Team Prescribed:**                    \_\_\_set(s) of \_\_\_repetitions

**Health club alternative:** Chest press



**10) Bird Dog** (back muscles)

For alternative see exercise **10A**



**Equipment:** Exercise mat

**Step 1:** Get onto your hands and knees on an exercise mat. Draw your belly button in towards your spine

**Step 2: Start** by slowly raising your right arm and left leg off of the floor

**Note:** If it is too difficult, lift only one arm or leg individually

**Step 3:** Slowly lower to the starting position. Repeat the same movement now with your left arm and right leg. Alternate back and forth. Start with about 10 repetitions and build up slowly to 15

**My Cardiac Team Prescribed:**                      \_\_\_set(s) of \_\_\_repetitions

**10A) Standing Bird Dog (back muscles)**



**Right Leg**



**Left Leg**

**Equipment:** Wall

**Step 1:** Stand facing a wall. Place your hands on the wall to help keep your balance. Draw your belly button in toward your spine

**Step 2:** Start by slowly lifting your right leg behind you. Extend from the hip, keeping your right leg straight

**Note:** You only need to pull your leg out a small distance behind you

You can also alternate your arms with this exercise

**Step 3:** Slowly return to the starting position. Repeat with you left leg. Alternate legs back and forth. Start with about 10 repetitions and build up slowly

**My Cardiac Team Prescribed:                    \_\_\_set(s) of \_\_\_repetitions**

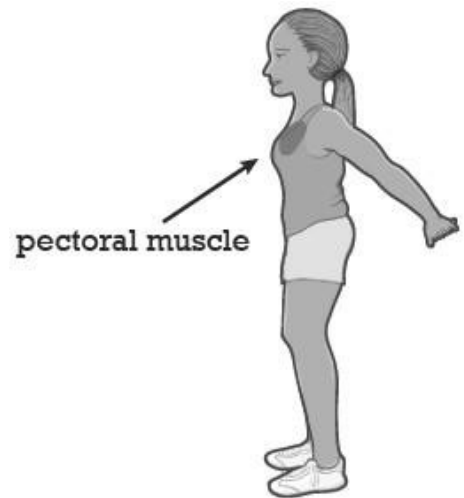


# Stretches

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## 1) Chest Stretch (Pectoral Muscle)

- Stand with your feet shoulder width apart
- Relax your shoulders and make sure they are not hunched up
- Clasp your hands behind your back (if you cannot clasp them, then place them behind your back)
- Looking straight ahead, open up the chest and squeeze your shoulder blades together
- Hold the stretch while continuing to breathe for 15-30 seconds
- Ensure you feel a stretch, not pain/discomfort



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## 2) Shoulder Stretch (Deltoid Muscle)

- Stand with your feet shoulder width apart, arms by your side
- Relax your shoulders and make sure they are not hunched up
- Take one arm and bring it across your chest
- Take the other arm and place it on your elbow to help hold it in position
- Ensure your arm is across your chest and not across your neck
- Hold the stretch while continuing to breathe for 15-30 seconds
- Ensure you feel a stretch, not pain/discomfort
- Repeat to stretch the opposite shoulder



### 3) Thigh Stretch (Quadricep Muscle)

- Using a wall for support, stand sideways to the wall
- Take hold of your ankle, foot, sock, or pant leg as you bend your leg back from the knee (see figure)
- The knee should be facing down toward the floor and in line with the leg that is planted on the floor
- Hold the stretch while continuing to breathe for 15-30 seconds
- Ensure you feel a stretch, not pain/discomfort
- Repeat to stretch the opposite thigh



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### 4) Hamstring Stretch

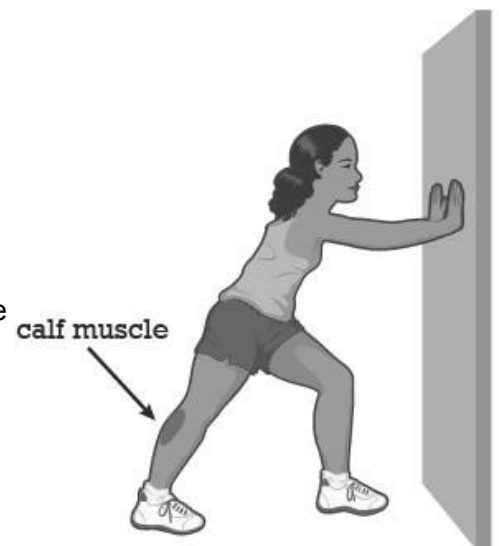
- Using a wall or table for support, stand sideways to it
- Put all of your body weight on one leg and bend that leg
- Take the opposite leg and place the heel on the floor or on a small step with the toes pointed up. Keep this leg straight
- From this position, bend forward from the waist – you will feel a stretch in the back of the upper leg that is straight
- Hold the stretch while continuing to breathe for 15-30 seconds.
- Ensure you feel a stretch, not pain/discomfort
- Repeat to stretch the opposite hamstring



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### 5) Calf Stretch

- Using a wall for support, face the wall standing with both feet close to it. Place your hands on the wall at chest height
- Take a step back with one leg keeping that leg straight and lean into the wall keeping the front leg bent
- Ensure both feet are facing forward
- As you lean into the wall, you will feel a stretch in the calf of the back leg
- Hold the stretch while continuing to breathe for 15-30 seconds
- Ensure you feel a stretch, not pain/discomfort
- Repeat to stretch the opposite calf





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