

# Renal rehabilitation

## **What is renal rehabilitation?**

Renal rehabilitation is a 12 week programme designed to help people with kidney disease start exercising regularly.

By the end of the programme you should:

- be able to exercise independently at least three times a week
- know what level to exercise at – when to push harder and when to slow down
- feel fitter and more able to manage day to day activities
- be on your way to living a healthier lifestyle and reducing the risk of developing any further medical problems.

The programme is offered free of charge. If you would like to continue exercising after you have completed the programme, we will be able to advise you on what is available in your local area.

## **Do I need renal rehabilitation?**

A lot of people living with kidney disease find that their fitness levels suffer for a number of reasons. These include:

- dietary restrictions
- changes in muscle structure
- changes in blood supply
- lack of physical activity.

If you feel:

- tired or lethargic
- unfit or weak
- unhealthy
- that basic tasks are harder than they should be
- that you need to lose weight

then renal rehabilitation could help you to reduce these symptoms and be healthier. This may improve the life of your new kidney if you have had a transplant and will reduce your chances of developing other diseases as you get older.

## How does exercise help?

Regular exercise helps to:

- increase muscle strength
- improve mobility and fitness
- improve quality of life
- reduce blood pressure
- improve blood sugar control
- improve your heart and lung function
- lose weight and improve self-esteem
- counteract/reverse the side effects of steroidal treatment, such as muscle wasting, bone thinning and weight gain after transplant.

## What do the classes involve?

The twice weekly hour-long classes involve **circuits**. This is where you move around the room performing exercises with different pieces of equipment at each station. You will learn how to warm up and cool down and

progress exercises safely, and we will monitor your progress and your fitness levels throughout the sessions.

## **What do I need to start the programme?**

**Motivation** – you must be motivated to make long-term changes to your lifestyle.

**Commitment** – you will need to attend classes for 12 consecutive weeks and be committed to performing exercises at home on at least two other days a week.

### **What to wear and bring to classes**

- Wear loose, comfortable clothing and supportive shoes, preferably trainers.
- Bring a drink and healthy snack as you may feel hungry/thirsty after exercising.
- Bring any fast-acting medication that you use, such as inhalers or GTN sprays.

## **I'm motivated and committed – so what happens now?**

If you are ready to start making a positive change to your lifestyle and would like to attend the programme, please ask your nurse, doctor or physiotherapist to refer you.

As long as there is no medical reason for you not to exercise, you will be contacted to book an appointment and asked to complete a couple of questionnaires. These will be sent to you with your appointment

confirmation. It is important that you complete the questionnaires so that we can tailor your exercise programme to meet your personal needs.

**Class times** Tuesday 10.30–11.30am  
Friday 1.30–2.30pm

**Location** Lower ground floor, Southwark wing, signposted as **Therapies Rehabilitation Unit**

We will ask you to arrive 30 minutes before your first and your last class for a one-on-one assessment with one of the physiotherapy team members.

If you have any questions or if you are unable to attend an appointment please call us on **020 7188 5106** as soon as possible.

If you require hospital transport please call **020 7188 4883** or **020 7188 4892**.

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## **Pharmacy Medicines Helpline**

If you have any questions or concerns about your medicines, please speak to the staff caring for you or call our helpline.

**t:** 020 7188 8748 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday

## **Your comments and concerns**

For advice, support or to raise a concern, contact our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS). To make a complaint, contact the complaints department.

**t:** 020 7188 8801 (PALS)                      **e:** pals@gstt.nhs.uk

**t:** 020 7188 3514 (complaints)

**e:** complaints2@gstt.nhs.uk

**Language and Accessible Support Services** – If you need an interpreter or information about your care in a different language or format, please get in touch:

**t:** 020 7188 8815      **e:** languagesupport@gstt.nhs.uk

## **NHS 111**

Offers medical help and advice from fully trained advisers supported by experienced nurses and paramedics. Available over the phone 24 hours a day.

**t:** 111

**NHS Choices** – Provides online information and guidance on all aspects of health and healthcare, to help you make choices about your health.

**w:** www.nhs.uk

## **Get involved and have your say: become a member of the Trust**

Members of Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust contribute to the organisation on a voluntary basis. We count on them for feedback, local knowledge and support. Membership is free and it is up to you how much you get involved. To find out more, and to become a member:

**t:** 0800 731 0319    **e:** [members@gstt.nhs.uk](mailto:members@gstt.nhs.uk)

**w:** [www.guysandstthomas.nhs.uk/membership](http://www.guysandstthomas.nhs.uk/membership)

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