

Cardiovascular rehabilitation home exercise programme

To get the most benefit from the cardiovascular rehabilitation programme we recommend that you do some form of exercise on the days you are not attending class. You may like to take a brisk walk or do some gardening, or use this sheet to give you some ideas.

Always do the warm up exercises below first. Then complete the exercises before finishing with the cool down. Before you start to exercise, remember to enjoy it and:

- wear comfortable, loose clothing
- make sure the room is not too hot and there is plenty of space to move around in
- have some water to drink nearby
- wait one hour after eating before you exercise
- don't begin to exercise if you feel unwell
- stop exercising if you have chest pain, nausea, dizziness, unusual joint pain, or if you become very breathless, or cold and clammy
- monitor your levels of exertion – aim to achieve no more than 13 on the rated perceived exertion (RPE) scale, this means that the exercise should feel 'somewhat hard'
- **if you are unsure about any exercise or stretch, do not attempt it – ask a member of the team next time you visit.**

Warm up

- March on the spot for **one minute**.
- March on the spot, lifting knees higher, for **one minute**.
- Sideways stepping (step sideways to the left, then to the right) for **one minute**.
- Sideways stepping with bicep curls (bend and straighten elbows) for **one minute**.
- March on the spot while:
 - circling shoulders backwards **five times**
 - looking over each shoulder **five times**
 - interlinking fingers and stretching arms forwards, **hold for 10 seconds**
 - doing heel digs (tap heels alternately on floor in front of you) for **one minute**.
- Heel digs with bicep curls for **one minute**.
- March on the spot while punching alternate arms forwards for **one minute**.
- Sideways stepping, raising alternate arms out to your side for **one minute**.

Red level

Aim to spend two minutes on each of the exercises below that your physiotherapist has shown you:

- **Sit to stand from a chair** – keeping your back straight, use your hands for support if necessary.
- **Bicep curls** – hold a small food tin in each hand, alternately bend and straighten your arms keeping elbows by your sides. March on the spot while doing this exercise.
- **Sideways stepping** – with your hands on your hips, step alternately to the left and to the right.
- **Side arm raise** – lift one arm out to the side to shoulder level, take it back down to your side, then repeat with the other arm. March on the spot while doing this exercise.
- **Tap backs** – hands on hips, lean forwards and tap alternate feet behind you.
- **Upright row** – holding small food tins in hands, lift your hands to your chest while keeping elbows bent and out to the sides. Continue to raise your arms up and down while marching on the spot.
- **Step ups** – use a door step or the bottom step of a flight of stairs, hold the banister for support if necessary, and step up and down at a walking pace.
- **Press ups against a wall** – place your hands on a wall at shoulder height in front of you, bend your elbows and lean in, then straighten your elbows and return to your starting position. Keep your back straight.
- **March on the spot.**
- **Pull back row** – holding small food tins in your hands and with thumbs pointing to the ceiling, start with your arms straight out in front of you. Bend at the elbow, bringing your hands to your waist. Return to the starting position and repeat. March on the spot while doing this exercise.

Cool down

Repeat the exercises you used for the warm up at a gentler pace, without adding in the arm exercises – you should aim to keep your legs moving until you have caught your breath and cooled down.

Contact us

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the **cardiovascular rehabilitation physiotherapist**, **t: 020 7188 0946** (Monday to Friday, 9am-4.30pm) (answerphone).

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**

Amber level

Aim to spend two minutes on each exercise your physiotherapist has shown you:

- **Squats** – sit back letting your knees bend, return to standing and continue to repeat.
- **Bicep curls** – hold a food tin in each hand, bend and straighten your arms keeping elbows by your sides. Do heel digs with your feet while doing this exercise.
- **Sideways stepping** – while rowing arms forwards and back in front of you.
- **Side arm raise** – hold a food tin in each hand, lift one arm out to the side to shoulder level, take it back down to your side, then repeat with the other arm. March on the spot while doing this exercise.
- **Tap backs** – hands on hips, lean forwards and tap alternate feet behind you while raising one arm in front of you, opposite arm to opposite leg.
- **Upright row** – holding a food tin in each hand, lift hands to your chest while keeping elbows bent and out to the sides. Do heel digs with your feet while doing this exercise.
- **Step ups** – use a door step or the bottom step of a flight of stairs, step up and down at a light jog pace.
- **Press ups against a wall** – place your hands on a wall at shoulder height in front of you, bend your elbows and lean in, then straighten your elbows and return to starting position. Keep your back straight.
- **March on the spot** - lifting your knees up in front of you, tapping opposite hand to opposite knee.
- **Pull back row** – holding food tins in your hands and with thumbs pointing to the ceiling, start with your arms straight out in front of you. Bend at the elbow, bringing your hands to your waist. Return to the starting position and repeat. March on the spot while doing this exercise.

Cool down

Repeat the exercises you used for the warm up at a gentler pace, without adding in the arm exercises – you should aim to keep your legs moving until you have caught your breath and cooled down.

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Green level

Aim to spend two minutes on each of the exercises below that your physiotherapist has shown you:

- **Squats with forward arm raises** – sit back letting knees bend while taking both arms out in front of you, return to standing and continue to repeat.
- **Bicep curls** – hold a food tin or bottle of water in each hand, bend and straighten your arms keeping elbows by your sides, while stepping side to side.
- **Sideways stepping** - while rowing arms forwards and back in front of you.
- **Side arm raise** – hold a food tin in each hand, lift both arms out to the side to shoulder level, take them back down to your side, then repeat. Tap alternative feet out to the side while doing this exercise.
- **Tap backs with forward arm raises** – hands on hips, lean forwards and tap alternate feet behind you while raising both arms forwards in front of you.
- **Upright row** – holding a small food tin in each hand, lift hands to your chest while keeping elbows bent and out to the sides. Continue to raise your arms up and down while marching on the spot.
- **Step ups** – use a doorstep or the bottom step of a flight of stairs, step up and down at jogging pace.
- **Press ups against a wall** – place your hands on a wall at shoulder height in front of you, bend elbows and lean in, then straighten elbows and return to the starting position. Keep your back straight.
- **Jog on the spot.**
- **Pull back row** – holding food tins in your hands and with thumbs pointing to the ceiling, start with your arms straight out in front of you. Bend at the elbow, bringing your hands to your waist. Return to the starting position and repeat. March on the spot while doing this exercise.

Cool down

Repeat the exercises you used for the warm up at a gentler pace, without adding in the arm exercises – you should aim to keep your legs moving until you have caught your breath and cooled down.

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