

Cardiovascular rehabilitation

This leaflet explains more about our cardiovascular rehabilitation programme. If you have any questions, please contact us (details at the end of this leaflet).

What is cardiovascular rehabilitation?

Cardiovascular rehabilitation is an outpatient programme for people who have cardiovascular disease. The aim of the programme is to help you manage your condition and increase your physical activity and ability to exercise. The programme includes information and discussion sessions as well as relaxation and exercise classes. It is a wonderful opportunity to gain support and learn how to look after your health in the future.

Who runs the programme?

A team of health professionals offer support and encouragement to you and your partner. The team includes specialist cardiovascular:

- nurses
- doctors
- physiotherapists
- occupational therapists
- dietitians
- pharmacists.

Please feel free to bring a partner or friend with you to your appointments.

The assessment clinic

Before you start the programme, you will be invited to make an appointment at our assessment clinic. At this clinic you will meet members of the cardiovascular rehabilitation team. We will need to assess your current health and identify any ongoing problems – this will help us decide how the programme can best work for you.

What do I need to bring to the assessment clinic?

- The completed forms that were given to you with your clinic letter.
- A list of all the medicines you are taking.

Following your assessment, we will give you two dates.

1. The first date is for a fitness test. This allows us to check your fitness and ability to exercise, and prescribe the most suitable level of exercise for you.
2. The second is your date to start the programme.

The rehabilitation programme

The rehabilitation programme lasts six weeks. It is held at St Thomas' Hospital on Tuesday and Thursday mornings from 10am to 12pm.

What happens during the exercise sessions?

The exercise sessions are group circuit-based classes.

For your first session, please arrive 30 minutes before the class starts so that the physiotherapist can introduce you to the exercises.

On Tuesdays, the exercise sessions are followed by relaxation – this is a chance to try out different relaxation techniques and find one that works for you. We know that relaxation can be an important part of managing everyday stress.

On Thursdays, following exercise, we offer information sessions on a variety of topics related to cardiovascular disease. More details about these sessions will be available at the assessment clinic.

What do I need to bring for the fitness test and the exercise class?

- Clothes you feel comfortable exercising in and trainers or shoes with flat soles (changing and showering facilities are available, you will need to bring your own towel).
- Please bring your GTN spray and/or inhalers if you have these.
- A padlock if you wish to use a locker for your valuables.

What happens at the end of the programme?

It doesn't end there! The cardiovascular rehabilitation team will give you lots of information while you are on the programme about support for the future – for example exercise programmes, support for stopping smoking and help with ongoing emotional problems.

We will also follow you up after 12 months to find out how you are getting along. If you need any more support at this stage, we can give you advice and/or refer you to the appropriate service.

Contact us

If you have questions or concerns about cardiovascular rehabilitation, please contact us on **020 7188 0946**. Please leave a message on our answerphone so we can return your call.

For more information leaflets on conditions, procedures, treatments and services offered at our hospitals, please visit **w:** www.guysandstthomas.nhs.uk/leaflets

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, Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm

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

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