

From Your Cardiology Team

An important message about cardiac rehabilitation

Congratulations! You will be leaving the hospital soon.

When you go home, most of the task of keeping your heart healthy is **in your hands**. You will need to take your medicines and live a healthy lifestyle. This includes getting daily exercise, avoiding smoking, and eating healthy foods.

Daily Exercise

One of the most important ways to improve your heart health is to get physical exercise every day. To help you reach your exercise goals, we advise you to take part in a *cardiac rehabilitation (rehab) program*.

A team of experts at UWMC wrote a series of handouts on the first phase of cardiac rehab. The handouts tell how to build a safe and effective physical activity routine and to live a healthy lifestyle. We hope you enjoy the handouts and find them useful.

Your Cardiac Rehab Program

A cardiac rehab program has 3 phases:

- **Phase I** is called *inpatient rehabilitation*. In phase I, your care team in the hospital will teach you more about your heart condition and risk factors. You will learn how to safely resume activity at home and follow any restrictions your doctor advises. During phase I, you will slowly build an effective and safe exercise routine.
- **Phase II** is called *outpatient rehabilitation*. For this phase, you will visit a cardiac rehab center in your community. This center provides exercise equipment and a dedicated medical staff. These experts will safely advance your exercise program while your heart is monitored by *electrocardiogram (ECG)*. They will oversee your program and help you reach your more advanced exercise goals.



We wish you a quick and smooth recovery!



This is one of our handouts for patients with heart failure. The phase I cardiac rehab handout you receive depends on your diagnosis.

- **Phase III** is the 2nd stage of outpatient rehabilitation. In this phase, your goal is to manage your own exercise program. You will still have some exercise training, monitoring, and teaching.

Phase I Cardiac Rehab

Please read our Phase I Cardiac Rehab handouts **before** you start your exercise routine. Here are some of the main points they cover:

- One of the best ways to stay in good health is to be physically active. This is true even if you have advanced heart disease. The key is to start gently and slowly increase your exercise. The best exercise plan combines both *aerobic* and *resistance* exercises.
- For your best health:
 - Have a regular exercise routine. Your goal is to be exercising at least 30 to 40 minutes every day by 6 weeks after your discharge.
 - Eat a healthy diet.
 - Avoid using tobacco.
 - Maintain a healthy weight, blood pressure, and cholesterol levels.

Exercise Log

We want to support you while you are in phase I of your cardiac rehab program. We will give you a handout called “Phase I Cardiac Rehab: Exercise Log.” Use this log to track your daily exercise. Doing this will help you see the progress you are making toward your goals.

Bring your log with you to your follow-up cardiology visits. Your care team will review your activities and give you feedback and advice about your exercise program.

Wishing you a quick and smooth recovery!

Yonatan Buber, MD
*UW Associate Professor of Cardiology
 Cardiac Rehab Physician Champion*

Questions?

Your questions are important. Call your doctor or healthcare provider if you have questions or concerns.
