

# From Your Cardiology Team

## *An important message about cardiac rehabilitation*

*This handout explains how cardiac rehabilitation can help your heart heal after you leave the hospital. It describes the 3 phases of rehab and how to safely start exercise, build healthy habits, and track your progress at home.*

**Congratulations!** You will be leaving the hospital soon.

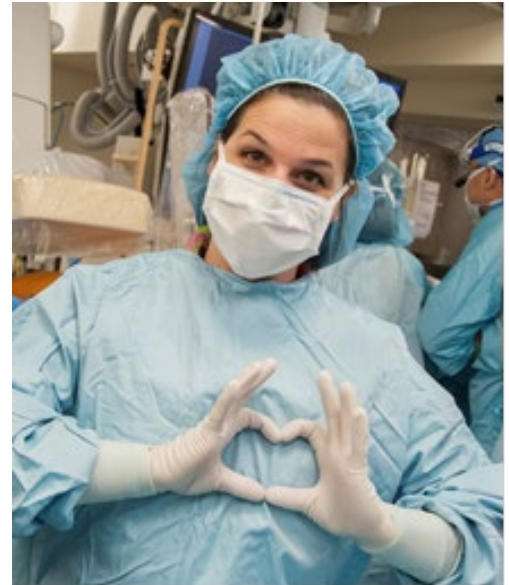
When you go home, keeping your heart healthy will depend on the choices you make each day. Take your medicines, get daily exercise, eat healthy foods, and do not smoke. Doing these things will help your heart heal and stay strong.

## Daily Exercise

One of the most important ways to improve your heart health is to get exercise every day. Joining a *cardiac rehabilitation (rehab) program* will help you reach your exercise goals.

A team of experts at UW Medical Center wrote a set of handouts about the first phase of cardiac rehab. The handouts tell how to start a safe and effective exercise routine and to live a healthy lifestyle. We hope you find them helpful.

Please read our Phase I Cardiac Rehab handouts **before** you start your exercise routine.



***We wish you a quick and smooth recovery!***

## 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 your risk factors. You will learn how to safely return to activity at home and follow any limits your doctor gives you. During Phase I, you will slowly build a safe and helpful exercise routine.
- **Phase II** is called *outpatient rehabilitation*. For this phase, you will go to a cardiac rehab center in your community. This center has exercise equipment and a trained medical staff. These experts will help you safely increase your exercise while they check your heart with an *electrocardiogram (ECG)*. They will guide your program and help you reach higher exercise goals.
- **Phase III** is the 2nd stage of outpatient rehabilitation. In this phase, your goal is to manage your own exercise program. You will still get some exercise training, monitoring, and teaching.



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## Phase I Cardiac Rehab

- 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.
- It is very important to start gently and to slowly increase your exercise.
- The best exercise plan combines both *aerobic* (cardio) and *resistance* (strength) exercises.
- **For your best health:**
  - Have a regular exercise routine. By 6 weeks after going home, your goal is to exercise at least 30 to 40 minutes every day.
  - Eat a healthy diet.
  - Do **not** smoke or use tobacco.
  - Keep healthy levels for your weight, blood pressure, and cholesterol.

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

## Questions?

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