

Lack of exercise is one of the risk factors for heart disease. It is a risk factor which if controlled, will help you control several other risk factors as well eg. being overweight, having high cholesterol and/or high blood pressure (hypertension).

Exercise can also reduce stress and the negative effects that this has on your lifestyle.

OUTPATIENT WALKING GUIDELINES for Heart Patients

WEEK	MINIMUM TIME (minutes)	DISTANCE (metres)	FREQUENCY per day	PACE
1	5-10 minutes	250	2	Stroll
2	10-15 minutes	500	2	Comfortable
3	15-20 minutes	1,000	2	Comfortable
4	20-25 minutes	1,500	1 - 2 x	Comfortable or stride out
5	25-30 minutes	1,500	1 - 2 x	Comfortable or stride out
6	30 minutes	2,000	1 - 2 x	Comfortable or stride out

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LRH9057

Cardiac Rehabilitation

WALKING PROGRAMME



TIPS FOR YOUR WALKING PROGRAMME:

- Walk at a pace you find comfortable. Start off and finish at a slower pace.
- Start with a comfortable distance and gradually build up, increasing both your pace and the distance you walk. The distance you start with will depend on your age, mobility prior to your hospital admission and the amount of activity you have been able to do whilst in hospital. Your physiotherapist or nurse will advise you if you are unsure.
- Another way to make your walk more challenging is to add a hill or two. Avoid hills initially if you can. When you do start walking up hills you will have to expect to reduce your pace and the distance of your walk. Always walk up the hill first so that you have enough energy left to return home.
- After walking you may feel slightly puffed but you should not feel distressed or exhausted. You should be able to comfortably talk to someone whilst you are walking. This is a good indication that you are not pushing yourself too hard.
- If you develop chest pain, stop, use Anginine under the tongue as directed, and rest until it disappears, then continue your walk. If the pain is severe and not relieved at rest or by your Anginine tablets or spray, call an ambulance or get someone to take you to hospital.
- If you are on Anginine you should carry some with you. Make sure they are not "old" (an opened bottle loses its action after approximately 3 months) and make sure that they are not exposed to extremes of temperature.
- Avoid walking straight after a meal. Digestion will take enough of your energy. You should wait at least an hour after a normal meal and longer if having eaten a "heavier" meal.
- Avoid walking when it is very hot or very cold. If it is very cold wrap up well and put a scarf around your face. This will warm the air you are breathing.
- Wear sensible clothing and comfortable shoes. Clothing should be loose and comfortable for walking. It's a good idea to wear "layers" of clothing so that as you warm up you can remove a layer eg. jacket or jumper, then as you continue to exercise you will remain comfortable and not get overheated. As you cool down you can replace your jacket.
- Make a note of how you feel after each day's walk. If you find any one distance tires you out or causes pain, do not increase the distance you do the next day. Bring your exercise record with you to the cardiac rehabilitation sessions or to your GP.
- Combine your walking program into everyday activities such as walking to the local paper shop rather than driving there to buy the paper.
- If you have any further queries about exercise and activities, please ask your GP or cardiac rehabilitation nurse or physiotherapist. Many problems can be solved by making a quick phone call.
- Avoid heavy lifting. Organise any heavy loads you need to lift, into smaller loads or arrange to push or pull rather than lifting a heavy load.
- Last but not least, walking is the BEST exercise for you. When you have completed this program continue to walk at least 3 times a week. Enjoy yourself and keep us informed at cardiac rehabilitation about your progress.

