Cardiac rehabilitation for patients who have had heart valve surgery
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The cardiac rehabilitation team is available to give you information and support – both before your cardiac surgery and after your discharge. The cardiac rehabilitation nurse will be able to help you with anything you do not understand or are concerned about relating to your cardiac surgery. The cardiac rehabilitation team works at both the John Radcliffe and Horton Hospitals.

If you are interested in the cardiac rehabilitation programme we advise you to contact your nearest team on the telephone number listed at the end of this leaflet.

However, if you live in North Oxfordshire you may find that a cardiac rehabilitation nurse will contact you 1-2 weeks after you go home.

As well as individualized advice and support, the cardiac rehabilitation team offer group information sessions at the John Radcliffe and Horton hospitals. They also offer supervised exercise sessions after you have recovered from your surgery.
Information Sessions

These sessions may include information on:
- medications
- healthy eating
- risk factors for heart disease
- benefits of exercise
- stress and relaxation
- effects of heart disease and treatments
- emergency first aid.

A family member or a friend is welcome to accompany you.

The time and content will vary slightly according to hospital site. At the John Radcliffe Hospital they are held on Wednesday afternoons. At the Horton they are held on Wednesday mornings.

If you are interested in attending these sessions, please contact the cardiac rehabilitation team on the numbers listed on page 6.
The exercise programme takes place at either the gym at the Horton Hospital or in local leisure centres throughout the county.

Before you start exercising in the gym we will give you an appointment for an assessment with the cardiac rehabilitation nurse and exercise physiologist.

You will be taught how to use the equipment safely and how to monitor how hard you are exercising. An individual programme of exercise will be written for you.

Once you are ready to leave the supervised programme you will be able to exercise in the graduate sessions at the Horton gym, or at your local leisure centre.

**The benefits of exercise include:**

- a reduction in your blood pressure
- a reduction in cholesterol and triglycerides
- less risk of becoming diabetic
- increase in your capacity to exercise
- weight loss
- reduced stress and anxiety levels
- increased self confidence
Driving

If you have had cardiac surgery you must stop driving for at least 6 weeks after your operation or until you have spoken to your consultant. If you are a HGV or PSV license holder you will not be allowed to drive for at least 3 months and will need to contact the DVLA for re-licensing.

You do not need to notify the DVLA if you drive a car on an ordinary (Group 1) licence but you should inform your insurance company. If you have a Group 2 licence (HGV/PSV) you should ring the DVLA on 0870 241 1879 to inform them you have heart surgery as soon as you are discharged.

Work

Returning to work depends on the nature of your job, and should be discussed with your GP and/or the cardiac rehabilitation team. If your work is not physically demanding or is light you may be able to go back to work after 6-8 weeks. If your work is physically heavy you may need to be off work for 12 weeks or longer.
Smoking

If you smoke it is very important that you stop if you can. If you would like support or information about giving up, or to discuss nicotine replacement therapy, either:

- make an appointment to see the Smoking Adviser at your local GP practice
- call the Oxfordshire Smoking Advice service on 0845 40 80 300 or visit their website on: http://www.smokefreeoxfordshire.nhs.uk
- contact your cardiac rehabilitation nurse for further information.

More information

Written information and booklets about cardiac rehabilitation are available on the cardiac wards. Please help yourself to these.

After discharge you may wish to contact your local cardiac rehabilitation team.

**Cardiac rehabilitation contact numbers**

John Radcliffe: 01865 220251
Horton Hospital: 01295 229753

**Where you can find out more**

British Heart Foundation www.bhf.org.uk
Heart Info line: 08450 708070

British cardiac patients association
www.bcpa.co.uk
If you need an interpreter or need a document in another language, large print, Braille or audio version, please call **01865 221473**. When we receive your call we may transfer you to an interpreter. This can take some time, so please be patient.