



Post-Cardiac Rehab Exercise Readiness Checklist

Congratulations on completing cardiac rehabilitation! Continuing to exercise is one of the most important things you can do for your long-term heart health. Review this checklist before beginning a new exercise program.

1. Obtain Medical Clearance

- ☐ Receive approval from your cardiologist or primary care physician.
- ☐ Confirm there are no exercise restrictions related to your heart condition or recent procedures.
- ☐ Understand any target heart rate or exercise intensity recommendations.

2. Know Your Medical History

- ☐ Know your cardiac diagnosis or procedure.
- ☐ Know when your surgery, heart attack, or intervention occurred.
- ☐ Know any additional medical conditions.
- ☐ Understand any movement or activity restrictions.

3. Understand Your Medications

- ☐ Know the names and purpose of your medications.
- ☐ Understand whether medications (especially beta blockers) affect heart rate or blood pressure
- ☐ Be aware of exercise-related side effects.

4. Know Your Warning Signs

- ☐ Chest pain or pressure
- ☐ Unusual shortness of breath
- ☐ Dizziness or fainting
- ☐ Irregular or rapid heartbeat
- ☐ Pain in the jaw, neck, shoulder, or arm
- ☐ Excessive fatigue



5. Know Your Exercise Limits

- ☐ Recommended exercise intensity
- ☐ Target heart rate (if applicable)
- ☐ Rate of Perceived Exertion (RPE) guidelines
- ☐ Safe duration and frequency

6. Establish Baseline Measurements

- ☐ Resting heart rate
- ☐ Blood pressure
- ☐ Weight
- ☐ Waist circumference (optional)
- ☐ Walking distance/endurance
- ☐ Strength, flexibility, and balance

7. Choose Appropriate Exercise

- ☐ Aerobic exercise
- ☐ Strength training
- ☐ Flexibility
- ☐ Balance
- ☐ Recovery and mobility

8. Wear Appropriate Equipment

- ☐ Supportive shoes
- ☐ Comfortable clothing
- ☐ Heart rate monitor (optional)
- ☐ Water bottle
- ☐ Any prescribed medical devices

9. Plan for Safe Exercise

- ☐ Exercise in a safe environment
- ☐ Avoid extreme temperatures
- ☐ Stay hydrated
- ☐ Know where emergency assistance is available
- ☐ Consider exercising with a partner initially



10. Set Realistic Goals

- ☐ Walk regularly
- ☐ Gradually improve strength and endurance
- ☐ Return to favorite activities
- ☐ Increase energy
- ☐ Reduce cardiovascular risk

11. Create an Exercise Schedule

- ☐ Plan weekly exercise days
- ☐ Schedule rest days
- ☐ Progress gradually over 8–12 weeks

12. Monitor Your Progress

- ☐ Track workouts
- ☐ Monitor symptoms
- ☐ Record heart rate (if advised)
- ☐ Record blood pressure (if advised)
- ☐ Celebrate improvements

Before Your First Workout

- ☐ Physician clearance received
- ☐ Medications reviewed
- ☐ Heart rate or RPE guidelines understood
- ☐ Proper footwear available
- ☐ Exercise plan selected
- ☐ Water bottle ready
- ☐ Emergency contact information available

Disclaimer

This checklist is for educational purposes only and is not a substitute for medical advice. Always consult your physician or cardiologist before beginning or changing an exercise program following a cardiovascular event or procedure.