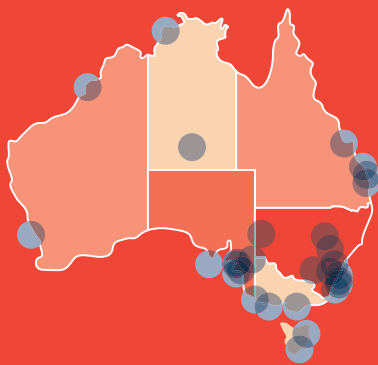


# Exercise, physical activity & your heart health

Please scan the QR code to visit Heart Support Australia's website for additional information and access our online resources to further support your journey.



Being part of Heart Support Australia and sharing your lived experience benefits your heart health in many ways.

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@heartsupportaustralia



@heartsupportaus



@heart-support-australia

Heart Support Australia acknowledges the Traditional Owners and custodians of country throughout Australia and their continuing connection to land, waters, and community. We pay our respect to them and their cultures, and Elders past, present and future.



**KNOW YOUR NUMBERS  
TREAT YOUR RISK**

Help reduce the chances of a secondary heart event by knowing your numbers. Visit [www.knowyournumberstreatyourrisk.com.au](http://www.knowyournumberstreatyourrisk.com.au)

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## Why is exercise important?

Exercise and Physical Activity are important not only to reduce the chances of developing heart disease in the first place, but it is an important part of the treatment process after being diagnosed.

### Exercise, what you need to know

#### General health benefits

- ♥ Improves cardiac function.
- ♥ Improves cardiorespiratory fitness.
- ♥ Improves good cholesterol levels (HDL) and lowers bad cholesterol levels (LDL).
- ♥ Improves insulin resistance and diabetes levels.
- ♥ Reduces rhythm disturbances.
- ♥ Assist with weight loss.

#### Mental health benefits

- ♥ Improves energy and reduces fatigue levels.
- ♥ Improves the quality of your sleep.
- ♥ Reduces stress/anxiety.
- ♥ Improves confidence.
- ♥ Improves concentration.
- ♥ Lessens feeling of low mood.

## Why is it important to be active each day?

Those with heart disease who exercise regularly and are physically active have been shown to have significant benefits including:

- Reduction in repeat events and re-hospitalisations.
- Improvement in quality-of-life.
- Live longer (reduced mortality).
- Improved cardiac function.

**Protect your heart and reduce your risk by keeping active.**

**Exercise is medicine. Increase gradually. Make it part of everyday.**

**Active people with coronary disease have a 50% lower risk of mortality, compared to inactive counterparts.**

# Exercise & physical activity treatment options

## What you need to know

Those who have had heart attacks, or suffer from heart failure, atrial fibrillation, valve disease, congenital heart disease all benefit significantly from exercise and physical activity.



## Physical activity

Physical activity is defined as any bodily movement produced by skeletal muscles that result in energy expenditure – including walking for transport, dancing, housework, or gardening; with exercise as a subset.

These activities are generally incidental and associated with activities of daily living such as walking to work, to the shops or being more active at home. Moving more and sitting less is the key here.

The World Health Organization recommends 150–300 minutes of moderate intensity aerobic physical activity or 75–150 minutes of vigorous intensity aerobic physical activity or a combination of both. This includes aerobic exercise as a subset.

## Aerobic exercise

Aerobic exercise is defined as any activity that uses large muscle groups, can be maintained continuously, and is rhythmic in nature. Common forms of aerobic exercise include walking, jogging, cycling, rowing, and swimming. These activities are generally deliberate in nature with a goal to improve fitness with a defined time and intensity target.

Aerobic exercise should be completed on 3 or more days per week, with a minimum session duration of 30 minutes, at moderate-to-vigorous intensities.

High-Intensity Interval Training (HIIT) is a form of exercise training that is gaining a lot of attention and is safe and recommended for those patients with cardiac disease who wish to attempt this type of training. This should be completed 2 times per week, which is a part of the 3 aerobic exercise sessions per week.

## Resistance exercise

Resistance exercise requires the contraction of one or more muscle groups against an external resistance (e.g., weights) with the intention to enhance muscular adaptations such as strength, mass, and endurance.

These activities are important and have significant metabolic and cognitive benefits, along with reducing frailty. Resistance training should be done twice per week and can be done in conjunction with an aerobic exercise session. These exercises can be done with bodyweight or can use free weights, machine weights, or elastic resistance bands to increase the intensity of the workout.

**Always speak with your healthcare professional to ensure you are doing what is best for you! If you are looking for an exercise physiologist or physiotherapist visit [www.essa.org.au](http://www.essa.org.au) or [www.choose.physio](http://www.choose.physio)**

# Talking with your health professional about exercise & physical activity

Exercise is safe and beneficial for all heart disease patients especially after a recent diagnosis or surgery. As a rule of thumb people can return to normal levels of exercise and physical activity 4-weeks after a hospitalization or surgery, and this may be even sooner. It is important to get some guidance and instructions from your healthcare professional about what you can and cannot do during this period.

We recommend visiting an Exercise Physiologist or Physiotherapist to assist you with your exercise and physical activity program.

Here are some questions to ask your exercise professional.

## Understanding exercise and my heart

- What types of exercise should I do?
- How hard can I exercise?
- How long should I exercise for?
- Can I join a gym or group classes for my exercise?

## When should I stop exercising?

- Angina/chest pain that is progressively worsening and is not a normal feeling associated with exercising
- Shortness of breath that is worsening, especially during low levels of activity or exercise
- Heart rate greater than your maximum heart rate
- Feeling cold or clammy
- Experiencing dizziness or other feelings of being unwell

## Will you recognise your heart attack?

Get your heart attack warning signs action plan.

If you experience the warning signs of a heart attack, tell someone how you feel. If you feel worse or not better after 10 minutes, call Triple Zero (000).


Our heart attack warning signs action plans can help you to recognise a heart attack and take action.

If you want to see more details, please scan the QR code to visit Heart Foundation.



### Will you recognise your heart attack?

Warning Signs Action Plan



**Do you feel any**

pain pressure heaviness tightness

**In one or more of your**

chest neck jaw arm/s back shoulder/s

**You may also feel**

nauseous a cold sweat dizzy short of breath

**Yes**

**1 STOP** and rest now

**2 TALK** tell someone how you feel

**If you take angina medicine**

- Take a dose of your medicine.
- Wait 5 minutes. Still have symptoms? Take another dose of your medicine.
- Wait 5 minutes. Symptoms won't go away?

Are your symptoms severe or getting worse? **or** Have your symptoms lasted 10 minutes?

**Yes**

**3 CALL 000** Triple Zero and chew 300mg aspirin, unless you have an allergy to aspirin or your doctor has told you not to take it

- Ask for an ambulance.
- Don't hang up.
- Wait for the operator's instructions.

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