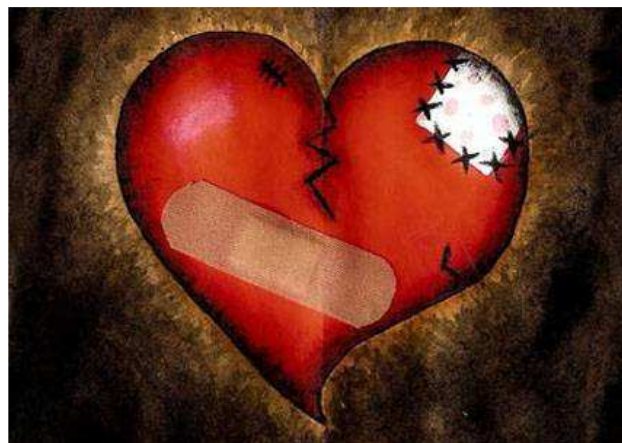


# Cardiac Rehabilitation Service

## Recovery Information

### Following Your Heart Attack



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Who to contact and how: \_\_\_\_\_

Notes: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Diana, Princess of Wales  
Scarcho Road  
Grimsby  
DN33 2BA  
03033 306999  
[www.nlg.nhs.uk](http://www.nlg.nhs.uk)

Scunthorpe General Hospital  
Cliff Gardens  
Scunthorpe  
DN15 7BH  
03033 306999  
[www.nlg.nhs.uk](http://www.nlg.nhs.uk)

Goole & District Hospital  
Woodland Avenue  
Goole  
DN14 6RX  
03033 306999  
[www.nlg.nhs.uk](http://www.nlg.nhs.uk)



# Information for patients

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The purpose of this leaflet is to provide information for all patients who have had a heart attack.

## Driving

Following, your heart attack **DO NOT DRIVE**, until you have discussed this with the Cardiac Rehabilitation Nurse or Doctor. You must inform your motor insurance company that you have had a heart attack.

If you use a Group 2 licence e.g. HGV, PSV. You must inform the DVLA as re-licencing assessment is required. To contact the DVLA you can ring on 0300 790 6806 or via internet [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk), then in the search box put cardiac problems and driving.

If you drive a taxi, you must inform the Hackney Licensing department at the Council.

## Sexual Activity

You can resume sexual activity when you and your partner feel comfortable and you are symptom free. It is not advisable to have sex after a heavy meal. Consider encouraging your partner to take the more active role.

Erectile dysfunction can happen to some men. Do not use **Viagra** with GTN spray/nitrate tablets, as this can lead to a dangerously low blood pressure/collapse.

## Work

Depending on the nature of your work, expect to be off work for at least 4 to 6 weeks, and possibly up to 3 months. You must see your GP to discuss returning to work. A phased return is usually advised.

## Physical Activity

Avoid any heavy lifting, pushing or pulling for six weeks. You can then gradually increase the weight you lift over the next six weeks, as long as you are symptom free.

Walk on the flat initially for the first 2 weeks then add gradient. Avoid adverse weather conditions such as cold, wind and extreme heat. When bathing do not have the water too hot or too cold.

**Week One** – for the first couple of days stay within the parameters of your home and garden. You may carry out light duties, such as preparing meals, washing dishes and attending to personal hygiene needs. Avoid vacuuming, cleaning windows and heavy housework. Take a rest in the afternoon if required. If you remain well, try a short walk of 5 minutes, twice a day, gradually increasing up to 10 minutes.

**Week Two** – begin to increase daily activities. Walk up to 10 to 15 minutes twice a day at a comfortable pace. Continue with light tasks.

**Week Three** – walk for 15 to 20 minutes twice a day at a comfortable pace. You can do light gardening tasks, such as weeding or planting, but no digging.

## Information for patients

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**Weeks Four and Five** – walk for 20 to 25 minutes once or twice a day. Aim towards resuming your normal way of life this week. Try walking up slight inclines. Continue to gradually increase activity.

**Weeks Six to Eight** – resume your normal activities like washing the windows, washing the car, mowing the grass, resuming golf, swimming and cycling.

### Cardiac Rehabilitation Exercise Programme

The Cardiac Rehabilitation team may offer you entry into an exercise program 4-6 weeks, following your heart attack/intervention. This is a **recommended** part of your recovery.

### CHANGES YOU CAN MAKE:

#### Stop Smoking

Smoking increases risk of developing coronary heart disease, stroke and cancers. **It is the single most important step you can take to protect your heart.**

Smoking causes:

- Damages the lining of your arteries, leading to build up of fatty material (atheroma) which narrows the artery
- Carbon monoxide in tobacco smoke reduces the amount of oxygen in your blood. This means your heart has to pump harder to supply the body with oxygen
- Nicotine stimulates your body to produce adrenaline, which makes your heart beat faster and raises your blood pressure, making your heart work harder
- It makes your blood more likely to clot, increasing your risk of heart attack / stroke

**Passive smoking** – Research shows that exposure to second hand tobacco smoke is a cause of heart disease in non-smokers, which means you could be harming the health of your children, family members, partner and friends.

If you would like to see a stop smoking adviser please inform the Cardiac Rehabilitation team or alternative you can contact 08456 032166.

#### Alcohol

Drink alcohol sensibly – as per current government guidelines. Avoid binge drinking.

#### Diabetes

Diabetes increases your risk of developing heart disease. In order to protect your heart and other vital organs keeping your diabetes under control is **essential**.

# Information for patients

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## Blood Pressure

Blood pressure is the pressure of blood within your vessels. High blood pressure puts strain on your arteries and heart, this may lead to heart attacks and strokes. Good control is essential to reduce your cardiac risk.

## Cholesterol

Cholesterol is a fatty substance found in the blood. Too much cholesterol in the blood can increase your risk of having heart and circulatory disease.

You will be commenced on a statin drug to help reduce cholesterol.

## Psychological Health

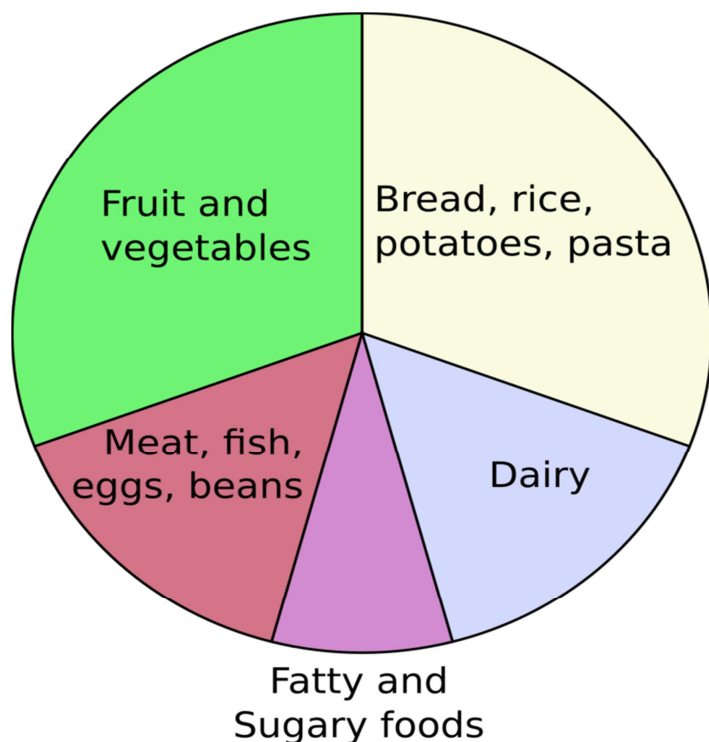
You may feel tired and emotional – this can be normal. However, sometimes you may need extra help. Counselling is available so please ask your GP or Cardiac Rehabilitation Nurse for further advice on how to access these services.

## Healthy Eating:

- Grill, boil, microwave, oven-bake or poach food rather than fry
- Avoid processed and pre-packaged foods e.g. ready meals / processed meats
- Reduce sugar – maximum of six level teaspoons per day – (World Health Organisation 2015 advice)
- Reduce salt intake by removing it from cooking and at the table (1 level teaspoon per day)
- Reduce saturated fats e.g. full fat milk, cheese (choose low fat), cream and fats (lard and butter)
- Eat more foods which are lower in saturated fats e.g. chicken, fish (without batter / breadcrumbs), pulses, skimmed or semi-skimmed milk, lean meats, oily fish and eggs
- Avoid trans fats: fried foods, takeaways, snacks, biscuits, pastries and shop cakes
- Eat five portions of fruit and / or vegetables per day
- Have meat-free days
- Oily fish (pilchards, mackerel, sardines, fresh trout / salmon – 2 portions per week)
- Choose wholegrain varieties of rice, pasta and bread or potatoes
- Seeds and pulses e.g. lentils, chick peas, broad beans, kidney beans
- Avoid fad diets

# Information for patients

## Eat Well Plate



The above plate shows what your daily food intake should consist of.

## Contact Details for Further Information

Your **Cardiac Rehabilitation Team** can be contacted on:

**Grimsby:** 01472 875526 / 03033 304570

**Scunthorpe:** 01724 290093 / 03033 302895

This is an answerphone – please leave a message.

## Useful Websites:

British Heart Foundation [www.bhf.org.uk](http://www.bhf.org.uk)

[www.diabetes.org.uk](http://www.diabetes.org.uk)

NICE [www.nice.org.uk/guidance/cg48](http://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/cg48)

World Health Organisation [www.who.int](http://www.who.int)

# Information for patients

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## Any Comments, Compliments, Concerns or Complaints

If you have any other concerns please talk to your nurse, therapist or doctor. Our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) are available on 03033 306518 (Grimsby, Scunthorpe and Goole). You can also contact [nlg-tr.PALS@nhs.net](mailto:nlg-tr.PALS@nhs.net)

As a Trust we value equality of access to our information and services, therefore alternative formats available on request at [nlg-tr.interpreters@nhs.net](mailto:nlg-tr.interpreters@nhs.net)

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