

## Special Feature: Unfolding Cardiac Rehabilitation

# The Rundown of CARDIAC REHABILITATION

ARTICLE BY  
NUHCS Pulse Editorial



### What is Cardiac Rehabilitation (CR)?

Cardiac Rehabilitation (CR) is a medically supervised programme designed to strengthen and improve one's cardiovascular health. The programme is particularly focused on strengthening the hearts of those who are suffering from a cardiac condition, or who are recovering from a heart attack or surgery.

Consisting of exercise training, emotional support, and education about lifestyle changes, this programme helps recover one's strength and health.

Through personalised exercise plans, patients under CR programmes are empowered to regain their fitness in safe and progressive phases, while

learning to manage lifestyle-related risk factors such as blood pressure and cholesterol.

Beneficial for almost any heart condition, NUHCS Cardiac Rehabilitation is a specialised programme to help patients achieve normalcy in daily living, while reducing the risk of a relapse.



Despite international recommendations in support of a CR programme, fewer than 50% of suitable patients complete such a programme.

### Your Cardiac Rehabilitation Team

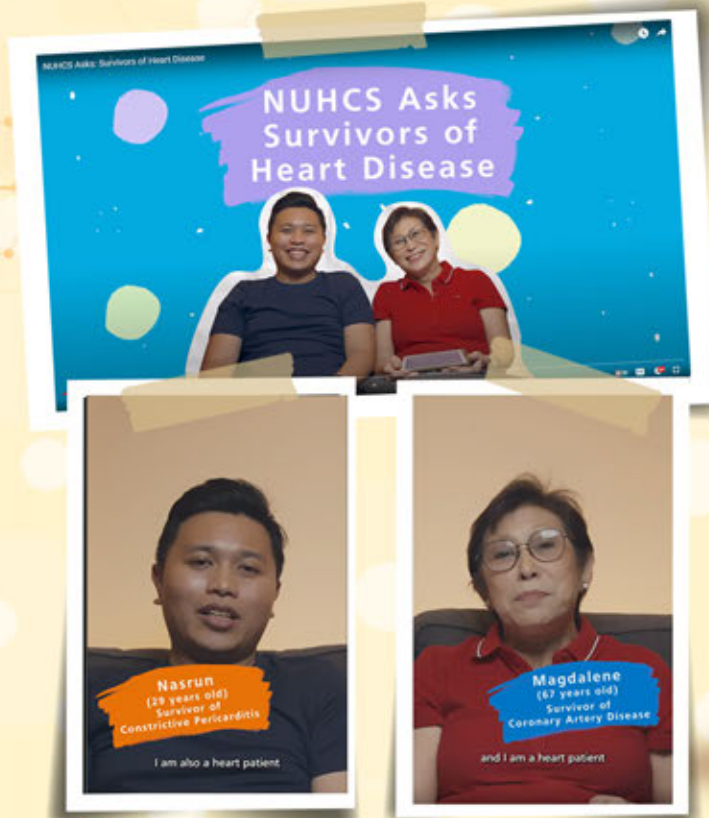
- Cardiologist
- Physiotherapist
- Nurse Clinician
- Pharmacist
- Dietitian
- Occupational Therapist
- Clinical Psychologist
- Medical Social Worker



SCAN HERE TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT NUHCS CR PROGRAMME







SCAN HERE TO HEAR FROM OUR SURVIVORS OF HEART DISEASE



### Should You Join A CR Programme?

A CR programme helps people who have had:

- A heart attack
- Percutaneous coronary intervention (PCI)<sup>1</sup>
- Cardiac surgery, such as a coronary bypass or valve surgery
- Vascular surgery
- Heart failure
- Heart transplantation
- Had an electrophysiology (EP) device implantation
- Treatment for other heart conditions such as heart failure, high-risk coronary artery disease

*Please consult a cardiologist before starting a CR programme.*



### 3 Components of NUHCS' CR Programme

#### Education

Patients need to be informed about the disease, types of treatment, risk factors and be advised on what they can safely do at home.

#### Counselling

Many patients and their families are struck with many uncertainties (e.g. fear of having another heart event, coping with lifestyles changes, worrying about hospital expenses or future follow-up costs). The NUHCS CR team helps patients navigate these challenges by providing support and guidance to them and their families on this road to recovery.

#### Prescribed exercise training

Each patient is unique and will be guided on safe and suitable physical exercises that fit his or her individual tolerance, progress, endurance, needs, and goals. The intensity or frequency of the exercise will be increased in a progressive manner to give one's cardiac recovery a boost and to help one maintain their heart health even after a heart attack.

<sup>1</sup>PCI – A non-surgical procedure to treat the narrowing of the coronary arteries, often done through balloon angioplasty.



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# Caring Hearts SUPPORT GROUP



Caring Hearts Support Group (CHSG) is a volunteer initiative by patients of NUHCS. The support group was established with the vision to build an inspiring and caring heart patient support group that brings positive changes to the lives of cardiac patients and the community.

In September 2022, CHSG organised its Annual Retreat-cum-Appreciation Day with the theme "Exercise and Love Your Heart", while introducing new CHSG shirts that members can use in their group exercises.



Held at the National University Health System (NUHS) Tower Block, the event kick-started with a heartwarming sharing session, where members encouraged each other with their experiences of living and overcoming their heart conditions. The NUHCS Cardiac Rehabilitation team also engaged members with a video-led mass workout session during the event.

NUHCS doctors and staff as well as partners from the Singapore Heart Foundation also gamely took part in support of NUHCS patients and CHSG.







## How Does CHSG Help?

CHSG designed the **H.E.L.P.** Programme Initiatives with educational and training support from NUHCS. The programme aims to instil friendship and bonding amongst heart patients to foster a heart-healthy lifestyle.


**H**

### HEALING TOWARDS A HEALTHY HEART

Working together towards attaining and sustaining a healthy heart.

**E**

### EMPOWER, EDUCATE AND EXERCISE

Through partnership, members are empowered through education and exercise to achieve their health objectives.

**L**

### BALANCED LIFESTYLE AND LOVE

Promoting a balanced and healthy lifestyle filled with meaning, love and laughter through friendships and social activities.

**P**

### PERSEVERANCE, PROGRESS AND PREVENTION

Supporting each other in the persevering process of overcoming health challenges, and in preventing future heart related issues.

*“No member walks alone. We will grow stronger together.”*

-- Ms Magdalene Chia,  
Programme Coordinator, CHSG

### Join CHSG

Membership is open to heart patients who have completed the Basic Cardiac Rehabilitation Programme at NUHCS. For more information about CHSG or to join CHSG, please contact Programme Coordinator, Magdalene Chia, at [mchia@kucinta.com](mailto:mchia@kucinta.com).





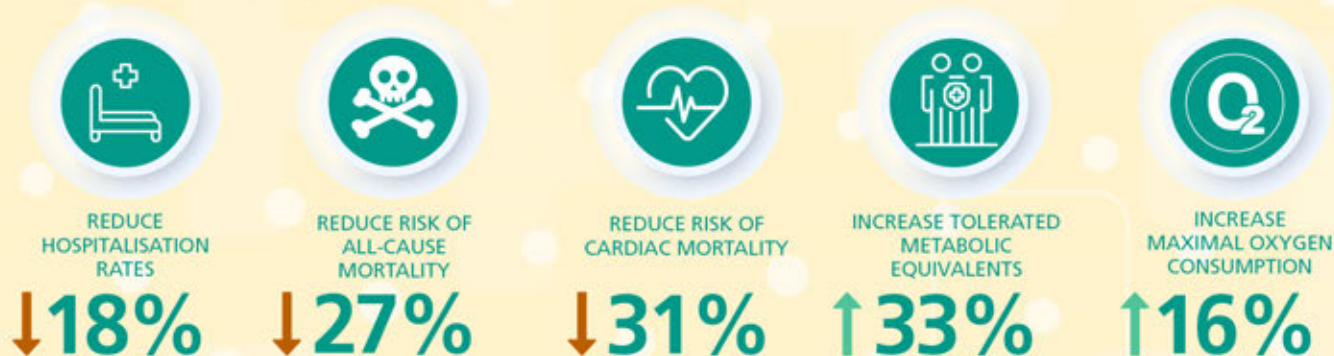
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# Facts about CARDIAC REHABILITATION (CR)

Many studies show evidence supporting the effectiveness and benefits of a comprehensive CR programme. International guidelines as well as leading CR centres around the world support a structured exercise programme as part of the rehabilitative process.

The heart needs time to recover especially after major events such as a heart attack or surgery. Starting physical activities early is important to help the heart recover faster, but overstraining the heart should be avoided.

### EXERCISE-BASED CR CAN:



HELP WITH  
WEIGHT LOSS



IMPROVE  
CHOLESTEROL  
LEVELS



LOWER RISK OF  
DEPRESSION



REDUCE  
STRESS



IMPROVE THE  
QUALITY OF  
LIFE

### PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES CAN HELP YOU BE



**30-50%**

LESS LIKELY TO BE  
HYPERTENSIVE

**1.5X**

LESS LIKELY TO DEVELOP  
HEART DISEASE



### SMOKING CESSATION

is the most important and the most cost-effective of all the lifestyle modifications recommended to prevent cardiovascular disease.



### CARDIAC REHABILITATION

was more cost-effective after a heart attack, compared to lipid-lowering drugs, clot-busting drugs, and a Coronary Artery Bypass Graft (CABG)<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup>CABG – A procedure to treat the narrowing of coronary arteries by creating a bypass of the blocked portion using a healthy blood vessel.