



## Walking guidelines during the early phase of recovery

Regular physical activity is important during the early phase of recovery after a cardiac event. Most people often wonder how active they can be when discharged from the hospital. These guidelines have been developed to help you recover as quickly and as fully as possible.

### Home exercise guidelines

- Make sure that you are well rested prior to walking. Mid-morning or mid-afternoon sessions often make people feel better.
- Regularly performing any activity is important. It helps to do the activity at the same time each day.
- Your exercise intensity (how hard you work) is based upon heart rate and whether you took an exercise test prior to your hospital discharge.
  - Your exercise intensity is based on your resting heart rate plus 20. During exercise, your heart rate should not be more than 20 beats over your resting heart rate:

Your resting heart rate = \_\_\_\_\_  
beats/min.

Your exercise level = **up to**  
\_\_\_\_\_ beats/min, or \_\_\_\_\_  
beats/10 seconds.

- Begin by walking on level ground at a comfortable pace for 5 to 10 minutes twice per day. Increase your walk by 1 to 2 minutes a day until you reach 15 to 20 minutes twice a day. Walk before eating or wait at least two hours after meals.
- If you develop any chest discomfort, dizziness, shortness of breath, or unusual fatigue, STOP exercising and report these symptoms to your doctor or nurse. Do not exercise if you feel ill. Use your nitroglycerin tablets for chest discomfort as directed by your physician or nurse.

After the first two to three weeks of walking at home, you may choose to participate in a more vigorous physical activity. Be sure to check with your doctor or *MULTIFIT* nurse for more specific information about other exercises, such as biking, jogging, swimming, or sports. Most importantly, have fun and keep fit!