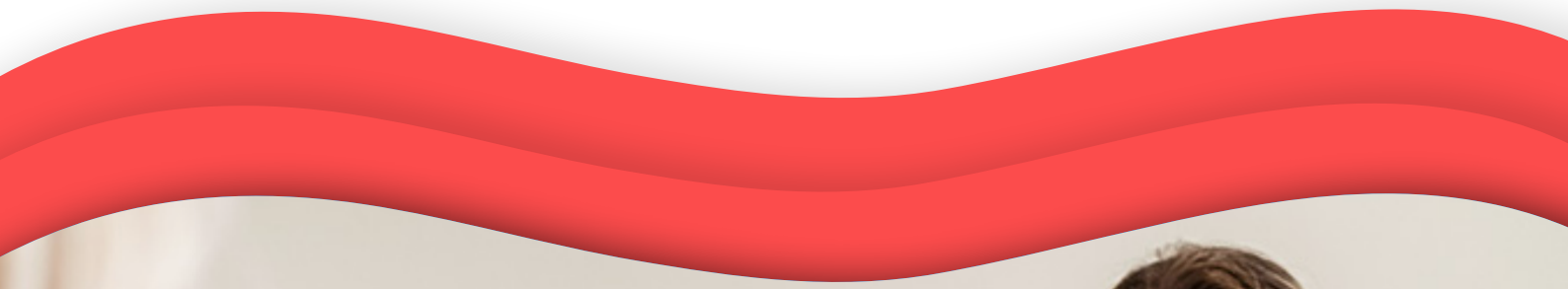




Strength Training for Heart Health



General Information

Strength training is exercise with the use of resistance which helps improve your muscle strength. Our strength peaks in our 20's and 30's, then we get a slow but natural decline. From ages 50 to 70 there is an accelerated loss reaching 15% per decade. Strength training is part of most cardiac rehab programmes.

Benefits

- Improves muscle strength, mass and endurance.
- Improves physical function and mobility.
- When our muscles are strong they reduce the work that our hearts have to do when we are physically active.
- Improves body composition.
- Helps improve blood pressure.
- Helps improve glucose and insulin sensitivity.
- Improves our well-being and quality of life
- It compliments your aerobic exercise enabling you to gain additional health benefits.

How often should I train (Frequency)?

You should aim to do strength training twice a week allowing 48 hours between sessions and no more than 4 times per week. Your muscles need a rest day to avoid over use of muscles and to aid with repairing of muscle tissue. It is recommended that strength training is done in addition to your aerobic exercise (this is your walking, swimming, cycling).



How much do I lift (Intensity)?

Aim to use a weight that will allow you to complete 12 -15 repetitions without too much straining, you should be able to breathe normally throughout the set. If you find that you can't complete 12 repetitions then the weight you have chosen is too heavy, try a lighter one.

Use slow, smooth motion through each movement.

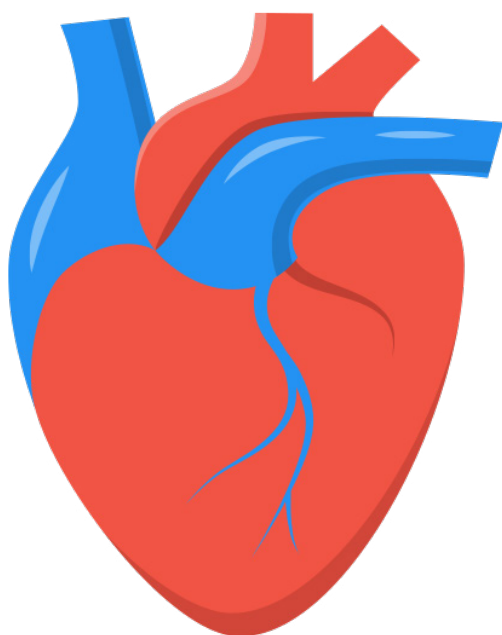
Do not let the weights drop, or use fast motions.

If you find that the weights are dropping or that you are having to do the movement quickly, it may be that the weight is too heavy for you, try a lighter weight. Start by completing one set of each exercise, aim to add a set when you can tolerate more, building up to 3 sets of each exercise.

You can increase the weight you are lifting after you are able to do 3 sets of an exercise.

You can also use the Borg scale of perceived exertion to help you maintain the right exertion level.

***Target zone 11-14.**



| Borg RPE Scale | Description |
|----------------|--------------------|
| 6 | No exertion at all |
| 7 | |
| 8 | |
| 9 | Very light |
| 10 | |
| 11 | Fairly light |
| 12 | |
| 13 | Somewhat light |
| 14 | |
| 15 | Hard |
| 16 | |
| 17 | Very hard |
| 18 | |
| 19 | Extremely hard |
| 20 | Maximal |

Type

There are lots of household items that you can use for your strength training for example water bottles, milk bottles, tinned food. You can also use gym equipment such as dumbbells and machines. Theraband can also be used.

Your Chartered Physiotherapist can guide you through a selection of exercises that will help you target muscles you may need to strengthen.

Warm up and cool down

If you are doing strength training and an aerobic workout, it won't be necessary to warm up, you could do half of your cool down from your aerobic workout before you commence your strengthening exercises, at the end of your workout you can finish your cool down, you should include some stretches of the muscle groups that you have used. If you are doing strength training alone, it is best to warm up. You can do this by performing the movements without weights or with a very light weight. Repeat 10 times.

There are some situations where strength training might not be recommended. If you are concerned or unsure whether you should commence strength training you should speak to your Chartered Physiotherapist.

Tips

- Use a mirror to check your posture.
- Avoid a tight grip, or strain.
- Only use a weight/resistance band through a comfortable range of movement.
- Remember to breathe, don't hold your breath while you are lifting aim to breathe out for the hard part.

Disclaimer

This advice is based on available evidence and expert opinion. It is not intended to replace advice that your medical healthcare professional that has given you or is not meant to replace a physiotherapy or medical consultation.