Welcome

Welcome to the SCAD Cardiac Rehabilitation Program at VGH. This information package was written by SCAD survivors – just like you. We have a support group called, “SCAD BC” and we’ll tell you more about that at the end.

As you begin your cardiac rehab, we recognize that this is another step in your healing as you journey from feeling vulnerable from your cardiac event to gaining confidence back with your body.

In this brochure, you will learn more about what you can expect from the SCAD Cardiac Rehab Program. This complements what is available online familiarizing you to the VGH Centre for Cardiovascular Health (“Cardiac Rehab”) http://vghcardiacrehab.vch.ca/ If you haven’t already done so, you may want to review this resource as it provides information about the referral process, services offered, the length, and cost of programs.

Before you start

Your family doctor or cardiologist can refer you to this Program. Once they get your referral, they will arrange for you to have an exercise stress test, blood test, and intake assessment. If you haven’t had these tests or are unsure, please contact them.

The Clinic will contact you to arrange your start date for the Program. Here is a picture of the reception desk where you can sign in with your care card or ask for help with the clinical secretary.

SCAD survivor and cardiac rehab participant:

“I remember before I first started cardiac rehab and the lack of faith I had in my body. It had really let me down. Being able to exercise in a supervised gym surrounded by people like me was very healing for me – both in body and soul.”
Your first class

The SCAD Cardiac Rehab group meets every Friday for the educational session, followed by exercise until. There are 2 sessions – so check to see which group you’re in. Leave yourself some time to find parking, orient yourself to the Clinic and meet your case manager.

You will need to sign in at the reception desk with your care card, then walk down the hallway to the lockers (bring your own lock and water bottle). From there, enter the gym. Below is a picture of the assessment area where a team member will greet you and take your blood pressure. You will likely wear a Holter Monitor for the first two classes.

You will notice a bulletin board on the far side. This provides information on educational sessions, weekly schedules, and open sessions where you can exercise (for free) to supplement the weekly organized classes with the SCAD team. These open classes have a staff member supervising but you work independently.
What to bring

- Your care card to sign in at reception desk
- water bottle with your name on it (water cooler is available for fill ups)
- combination lock or padlock for a locker in the hallway (locks removed daily if forgotten)
- any medication that you need to take during the rehab session
- shower supplies and towel if you wish, you may use the individual shower facilities at the Centre (small towels are provided to be used while you exercise)
- optional - if you have your own heart monitor (e.g. Fitbit wristband, Polar chest band with wristwatch)

What to expect – General outline of each rehab session

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Duration</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Educational talk including Q &amp; A</td>
<td>Generally lasts about 20-30 min</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-workout assessment</td>
<td>Record blood pressure, blood sugar etc. in chart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group warm up</td>
<td>Led by a fitness instructor</td>
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<tr>
<td>Individual exercise routine (wiping down equipment after use)</td>
<td>Generally lasts about 30-45 min</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group cool down</td>
<td>Led by a fitness instructor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-workout assessment</td>
<td>Record blood pressure, blood sugar, etc.</td>
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Educational talks

- weekly schedule of talks is posted on the centre wall in the exercise area
- the sessions last approximately 30 minutes
- rotating schedule of 24+ presentations (most with handouts and some with PowerPoint available electronically)
- topics include (but are not limited to), women’s health issues, SCAD, emotional support, heart health, nutrition, etc.

Workout assessment - Individual Chart
There is one chart per person where your rehab records are kept.

All charts remain in the Clinic with the case manager.

For each session you record your blood pressure, heart rate, exercises you did (equipment used), length of time with each piece of equipment or weights. Record your weight every 4 weeks.

The chart also contains pertinent medical information, test results, target heart rate, etc. and is used as reference to design your fitness plan.

Your case manager will give you feedback periodically about how you are progressing.

Group warm-up and individual exercise routine
After the educational talk, the fitness instructor usually leads the warm up exercises with the group, and then participants begin their own routine with equipment or weights.

You will likely have time to fit in three different machines/exercises of your own choosing (treadmill, elliptical trainer, several styles of exercise bicycle (recumbent, etc.), weight training station, and balance equipment). It is your choice as to which ones you want to use and for how long. Variety helps keep the sessions from becoming repetitively boring.

Your target heart rate or range will probably be based on your pre-admission stress test and intake interview with the clinical cardiologist. Your case manager will have that information from the cardiologist’s report in your chart. If you are uncertain about anything during your session, ask the staff.

A staff member will assist you in recording details in your chart as per direction on back of sheet (usually 3 choices per
Eventually you will learn to record it on your own.

Besides cardio equipment, there are many free weights and other equipment. If you are unsure on how to use, or how to best use any equipment, please feel free to ask.

A staff member will usually speak to you individually at some point during your routine so that you can ask individual questions, give feedback, etc.

Note: Spray bottles and small towels are provided for cleaning each piece of equipment after you use it. (Please spray the towel, then the equipment so that others don’t inhale the spray.)

Special activities
Special activities are planned periodically and are scheduled outside of the regular rehab sessions (e.g. seasonal events, yoga, meditation, etc.). Details are usually shared during announcements at the end of the educational sessions. Special dietary events, information and recipes are posted outside the dietician’s office on the bulletin (located between the showers and the locker area).

After graduation
You will usually be referred to do another stress test sometime before the end of your last session.

You will receive a discharge letter sent to your family doctor and cardiologist. It also provides proof of completion of rehab if needed for medical travel insurance purposes. News to me, I never got this. (Deb)

You may continue in the on-line support group and any organized gatherings after you graduate from the class.
SCAD BC was created in November 2016 to provide social, emotional, and educational support. The purpose of this group is to welcome new participants to the SCAD Clinic, share reliable information about SCAD, and provide peer support – as you navigate your “new normal”, and to include graduates from the Program. This group meets the 2nd Friday of every month, 10:30-11:30 am, Diamond Health Care Centre, VGH before SCAD Rehab class. If you would like to join this group, please feel free to directly contact the chair, Janice Wasik: jwasik@telus.net You can also find us on Facebook under SCAD BC (https://www.facebook.com/groups/181744022478290/) and our website: www.scadbc.ca

CLINIC RESOURCES/ADVISORY GROUP FOR THE SCAD GROUP:

Rehab Clinic Case Manager: Taira Birnie, BScKin
Medical Director VGH Centre for Cardiovascular Health: Dr. Saul Isserow

Additional Cardiac Rehab Program Cardiologists:

Dr. Carolyn Taylor
Dr. Sammy Chan
Dr. Andrew Ignaszewski

SCAD study: Dr. Jacqueline Saw

Nutritionist: Michelle Blanchet, RD

Social Work/Counsellor: Gwen Bevan, MSW

Psychiatrist: Dr. Auby Axler

Fitness Instructor(s): Sufiya Buksh