



Press Release
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Cardiac Rehabilitation: A Vital Tool in Reducing Future Heart Attacks

KNOX CITY, Texas (**Feb. 16, 2024**) – Every 40 seconds, someone in the United States experiences a heart attack. For those fortunate enough to survive their first heart attack, lifestyle changes and a specialized rehabilitation program are important ways to recover cardiovascular health and reduce the risk of a second episode.

“Heart attacks are always serious and can have a big effect on your life,” explains Calder Cude, Cardiac Rehab Director of Knox County Hospital and a paramedic of KCHD EMS team. “If you survive your first heart attack, you can go on to live a full and productive life, but you will likely need to make major lifestyle changes and undergo a rehabilitation program to improve your overall health.”

Heart disease remains a prevalent threat in the United States, affecting an estimated 92 million Americans. “As the leading cause of death in Texas, heart disease demands our attention,” said Cude. “Surviving a heart attack and entering a cardiac recovery program, like ours at KCHD, can significantly mitigate the risk of future heart attacks while enhancing overall cardiovascular well-being.”

Heart disease manifests in various forms, including congestive heart failure, coronary heart disease, stroke, or high blood pressure. Understanding one's risk factors and adopting preventive measures are crucial steps in thwarting the severity of heart-related complications.

Common among both men and women, the symptoms of heart disease often depend on the type of condition. According to Cude, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, smoking and lack of regular exercise are all deadly elements that can contribute to complications.

“A critical aspect of addressing cardiovascular disease is early intervention and understanding individual risk factors,” Cude emphasized. “Engaging in dialogue with your primary care provider regarding family history and current health status can provide valuable insights into preventive measures and potential interventions.”

Prevention is always the key, Cude noted. “A thorough physical exam of your weight, blood pressure and cardiovascular fitness can help identify possible complications,” Cude explains. “Based on your medical history and current condition, your medical provider can advise whether you might benefit from an electrocardiogram, a test that allows providers to take a closer look at your heart.”

Survivors of heart attacks or strokes often necessitate tailored rehabilitation programs in controlled environments to regain cardiovascular strength effectively. KCHD's cardiac rehabilitation program offers a conducive setting for patients to interact with professionals attuned to their needs.

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Under the consultation of a healthcare provider, the program incorporates comprehensive exercises with cardiac monitoring, dietary education, and counseling to formulate a personalized treatment regimen, fostering safe improvement in physical fitness while alleviating cardiac symptoms.

Research by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) underscores the efficacy of cardiac rehabilitation, indicating a 30% reduction in subsequent heart attacks among participants. Regular attendance, typically three times weekly for 12 weeks, ensures gradual yet steady progress under vigilant supervision.

“Any program that can potentially improve your chances of reducing future heart attacks while improving your physical health is a plus in my book, Cude said.”

Cude says that easing into activities that do not overstimulate the heart is important to recovery. Overexerting can cause physical harm, but underperforming can prevent the body from successfully healing.

Medicare and most private insurance plans cover all or part of cardiac rehab programs. Patients typically qualify if their medical history or condition includes a heart attack, congestive heart failure, or heart surgery, to name a few.

For more information about cardiovascular disease and whether the cardiac rehabilitation program may benefit you, talk with your cardiologist or primary care provider. To learn more about local medical services, contact Knox County Hospital at 940-657-3535.

About Knox County Hospital District

Founded in 1926, Knox County Hospital District provides healthcare for residents of Knox County and surrounding areas. The district offers a wealth of medical services, including 24-hour emergency care, advanced radiology services, a clinical laboratory, home health, physical therapy, long-term care, patient education and more. For additional information, please call 940-657-3535 or visit www.knoxhospital.org.

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