



LIVING WITH HEART DISEASE

INTRODUCTION

Was there anything in yesterday’s teaching that you did not understand or was not clear? If yes, write down your question(s) to ask the nurse or doctor on your next visit.

My question(s):	Reason why I am asking:

Today is an overview about living with heart disease. Some information will be reviewed in more detail in other modules. Refer to the Living Well With Heart Disease Book, (the book you received in the hospital, Chapter 5, part one and part two, starting on page 79 or click here: <https://tinyurl.com/ycu9bb89> (part 1) and <https://tinyurl.com/ypwsyumf> (part 2).

Let’s talk about physical activity, medications, diet, driving, return to work, and sexual activity today.

Refer to <https://mbacsnetwork.ca/education> (or scan the QR Code on the last page) or see Chapter 2, page 22, in the *Living Well with Heart Disease*: <https://tinyurl.com/yeuycsbf>

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Learn more about physical activity on Tuesday. Here are the basics:

- At this point, you should be able to all of your normal activities of daily living at home such as showering, shopping and light housework.
- We want you to exercise but start slowly and listen to your body. If you are short of breath or have chest pain or discomfort stop and let the nurse or doctor know the next time you see them.

MEDICATIONS

Learn more about medications on Friday. Here are the basics:

- Taking your medications can save your life and will lower the chance of another heart attack.

- If you think you are having a side effect such as a rash, feeling dizzy, or upset stomach let the nurse or doctor know at the next visit. Stopping medications on your own might be dangerous.

DIET

Learn more about diet on Monday. Here are the basics:

- Home cooked food made from fresh is best. In general, avoid high fat foods, highly processed foods, or salty foods.
- People with diabetes might need special diets.

DRIVING

When can you drive? This depends on the type of heart attack, the size of heart attack, if you received a stent and the type of licence you have.

- After any “STEMI” or a large “NSTEMI” heart attack, non-commercial “Class 5-7 Licence” driving is allowed in 4 weeks. Commercial “Class 1-4 licence” driving is allowed in 3 months.
- After a small “NSTEMI” heart attack treated with a stent, Class 5-7 driving is allowed after 48 hours and Class 1-4 driving in 7 days.
- After a small “NSTEMI” heart attack not treated with a stent, Class 5-7 driving is allowed after 7 days and Class 1-4 driving in 30 days.

We realize these terms may be confusing. If you are unclear what applies to you, ask your nurse or doctor at your next visit, and don't drive until you are sure where you fit in, otherwise you may not be insured to drive.

RETURN TO WORK

Returning to work may be a positive or negative in your recovery. Your return to work will depend on several factors such as:

- Physical and emotional demands of your job (example ability to modify duties)
- How you get to work (example you may not be able to drive)
- Need to work (example financial, insurance coverage, ability to retire)

It is important to think through this decision carefully. We are here to help. If you're not sure or need a return to work note, talk with your nurse or doctor at your next visit.

RETURN TO SEXUAL ACTIVITY

Resuming sexual activity is part of returning to a healthy lifestyle after a heart attack. You can have sex when:

- The site of the catheter (tube) that was put in your wrist or groin is healed (at least 48 hours and no signs of bleeding that was explained in the first teaching session).
- If you can do simple exercise walking up two flights of stairs or two blocks at a moderate pace non-stop without feeling uncomfortable.
- You are not having trouble breathing, feeling faint, or chest discomfort.

Your partner may also be afraid to resume sex. Talk through these concerns and follow the advice above. If you or your partner are not sure when the right time is to resume sex, talk with your nurse or doctor at your next visit.

LEARN MORE ABOUT LIVING WITH HEART DISEASE

At the MB ACS Network website: <https://mbacsnetwork.ca/education> or scan the QR code.

