

Health Tip: Life After a Heart Attack

General suggestions for your recovery

(HealthDay News) -- Life usually doesn't return to the way it was before a heart attack. You'll probably need to make changes to your daily way of life, including taking new medication.

The American Heart Association offers this advice for people who are resuming life just after a heart attack:

- Establish a good balance between rest time, exercise and social time. Take a nap when you feel tired, but interact with friends and family again as soon as you can.
- Give yourself sufficient time before you return to work. Speak with your doctor about an appropriate amount of time. It can take three months to recover for someone who has had a significant heart attack, or as little as two weeks for someone who's had a less severe one.
- Feeling depressed after a heart attack is very common. Seek help from your doctor, friends, family or a counselor and talk about your emotions.
- Understand that your heart attack has impacted your family, too. Since loved ones will be dealing with their own emotions, consider counseling for the whole family.
- Talk to your doctor about any chest pain or other symptoms that you experience after your heart attack. Chest pain doesn't necessarily mean another attack, but it must be checked out.
- Your doctor probably will recommend cardiac rehabilitation and lifestyle changes, to include a healthier diet, exercise and cutting out alcohol and tobacco.