



Heart to Heart[™] is a six week education and support program of the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada that assists cardiac survivors and their families during the recovery process.

Heart to Heart[™] was developed in Ontario in the mid 1970's, by the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Ontario and the National Council of Jewish Women. Why? Because it was felt that patients needed support and information AFTER they leave the hospital. The *Heart to Heart*[™] program is unique because it involves not only cardiac patients, but their partners as well. When a partner or caregiver is involved in the recovery process, research has shown that the cardiac patient is more likely to make the needed lifestyle changes.

During each session, the Heart and Stroke Foundation-trained facilitator emphasizes important points and assists participants in understanding the attitudes, behavior and skills necessary to help with recovery and to bring about needed lifestyle changes. The facilitator is not expected to be able to answer every question, but rather to help participants to find the information and uncover the resources available to them in their community. Facilitators are encouraged to recruit other health care professionals such as pharmacists, dietitians, and social workers as guest speakers to provide more information. Because the groups are small, participants can talk to each other comfortably and openly and often discover that the concerns they have are shared by others. Session topics include *Meet Each Other and Meet Your Heart, Procedures, Treatments, Medications and Plans, Eat HeartSmart*[™], *On The Go – Physical Activity, Stress Management and the Emotional Journey to Recovery and Community Resources and Wrap-Up*.

Heart to Heart[™] is intended for use as a supplement to a patient's medical care, not as a substitute for it. Participants are encouraged to share what they have learned in the program with their doctor, and to use the program to complement the help they have been given by health care professionals.

Heart to Heart[™] provides three important components of cardiac rehabilitation: education, risk factor assessment and group support. By learning about heart disease, patients can help slow the progression of heart disease and help prevent further heart and/or stroke events from occurring. Recent studies have shown that the *Heart to Heart*[™] program can play an important role in improving an individual's quality of life by helping them cope better with the aftermath of a cardiac event.

In Saskatchewan, facilitator training is available at minimal cost to the participant. Individuals attending the workshop will learn about planning, promoting and marketing Heart To Heart[™] as well as the practice of group facilitation.



For more information about *Heart to Heart*[™], please contact:
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