



## Speaking from Experience *Coronary Heart Disease*

### **Transcript for chapter 5 of 8: Rehabilitation**

**Barry** - The cardiac rehab course was good because you met people with the same problem. Although we're all different from different backgrounds, we all got to talk and had something in common. So you made new friends in a sense. But at the same time, you gained enough confidence to train, to lift weights - something you weren't game to do at home.

**Marc** - I went to rehabilitation at the Royal Melbourne for six weeks, which was good. I got to learn a lot of things about diet and speaking to other heart patients.

**Albie** - The rehabilitation I think was the most critical part of the whole procedure that I went through. It was essential in the fact that it gave me the confidence, under the supervision of some experienced physiotherapists and the nurses there, to be able to build up my exercise program to the state where I was able to go back and feel very confident about going out and doing the normal things I was doing.

**Helen** - I did the cardiac course afterwards and it was fantastic. They were a great group of people. At first I thought the exercises would kill you, rather than cure you, but that wasn't the case. They were terrific.

**Avis** - I attended the rehab after my stent was put in. And I found that the support that rehab gave to everyone was rather good and I would recommend that anyone that had had a heart attack or heart surgery or procedure should go.

**Jim and Julie** - Please, go and do your rehabilitation because they are wonderful people and you must do that. Don't just walk away and think, "Oh okay, I'm going to be okay." Because they teach you about diet, they teach you about exercise, and good healthy life.

**Albie** - My wife went to the rehab with me every day. She was there and supporting me in the things that I was doing. She also got a lot of knowledge from the many experienced people that came and talked about diet, what to look for in myself if I needed to have help, and I think it gave her a lot of confidence in the fact that things were going alright. She was able to ask questions where she had fears and it put those fears to rest. So, absolutely crucial for my wife to be there with me.

**Jim and Julie** - I met a wonderful group of people called Heart Support Australia, which helped Julie (my carer), and myself and our family tremendously. Because we wished we'd known about those people before this second heart attack.

**Ligita** - My husband found out that the reason why I am so short-tempered is because of the condition - the heart condition - because most of the partners' wives or husbands said exactly the same thing about their partners, and they said that it just can't be helped. So that helped actually him too.



**Jim and Julie** - The support groups offered how to cope with any stress you might have, what to do. Even just going for a walk or things might get a bit out of hand.

**Marc** - My wife went to the first rehab class, where they'll sit with all the patients. There was probably about twenty of us initially, and then they take all of the wives into a separate room. The psychologist will speak to the wives, or the spouses, to explain to them what their partner will be experiencing, to try and give them a bit of an insight. So the rehabilitation was exceptionally good.

**Helen** - My husband came along too. And there were other husbands with wives, and visa versa. And I think it inspired my husband, actually, to do some exercises, which he is doing now.

**Marc** - The healing process is a little bit different in that once you've had the heart attack and the stent inserted, you can pretty well, in the next two to three weeks, move back into doing exactly what you were prior to the heart attack, but depending on your level of fitness. You'll slowly have to build up your level of fitness to be able to perform the same tasks.

**Albie** - I was told that I couldn't play any physical sport for at least six weeks, which it was six weeks exactly to the day when I started playing a few holes of golf and building it up from there. But after that I found I recovered very, very quickly and was able to get back to doing all the things I was doing previously.