

NEWS FROM FORT SANDERS REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER

Cardiac rehab helps woman get heart healthy

Helen "Snooky" Ward of Knoxville loves making people smile. She and her husband, Dallas, are professional clowns, entertaining crowds at local baseball games, community events and parties. But heart disease is no laughing matter to Ward.

On Father's Day in June, Ward had her second heart attack and second cardiac stent procedure in seven years. Ward says even though she felt "heavy chested," she didn't think she was having a heart attack.

"I was at church that morning and thought I'd pulled a muscle," she remembers. "Later in the afternoon, the pain went to my neck and jaw area, and I couldn't breathe."

Ward finally went to the Fort Sanders Emergency Room that evening and was quickly diagnosed with a heart attack. "It wasn't a blockage, but my heart vessels were badly constricted," she says.

Ward's cardiologist, Dr. Mike Ayres with Knoxville Heart Group, placed a stent in her carotid artery and recommended that after her heart healed for a couple weeks, she attend the Fort Sanders Cardiac Rehabilitation Outpatient Program, also known as "CROP."

"I did heart rehab at Fort Sanders seven years ago and knew that was where I wanted to go," says Ward. "Fort Sanders has always been our hospital. My daughter was born there."



Helen "Snooky" Ward has lost 19 pounds while participating in the Cardiac Rehabilitation Outpatient Program (CROP) at Fort Sanders Regional.



The exercises and healthier habits Helen has learned at the Fort Sanders Cardiac Outpatient Rehabilitation Program gives her more energy when she "clowns around" with husband Dallas.

Over the next three months at CROP, Ward took part in health classes and exercise sessions designed to strengthen her heart muscle.

"They had me doing the treadmill, bikes, steps, weights and the arm machine," says Ward. "I feel so much better all over. I find myself wanting to take a walk at home now."

That's a big deal for Ward, who was a self-described "couch potato." Since undergoing cardiac rehab at Fort Sanders, she has lost 19 pounds and says she has more energy than ever. "I get up and do things now. I'm motivated to keep exercising."

Ward, who has now completed CROP, is continuing to pursue a healthier lifestyle. "I'm eating healthier and feel good. It's a great program. The staff cares and really takes pride in helping people like me!"

For more information about the Cardiac Rehabilitation Outpatient Program at Fort Sanders Regional, call 865-541-1250 or go to fsregional.com/cardiovascular.



Get heart healthy!

Physical exercise and a heart-healthy diet are keys to preventing and recovering from heart disease, according to the American Heart Association. Some more heart healthy recommendations:

- Don't smoke
- Maintain a healthy weight
- Get daily moderate exercise
- Eat a healthy diet, low in saturated fats, processed sugar and sodium, and high in fiber
- Eat five fruits and vegetables each day
- Know your numbers for blood pressure, cholesterol and blood sugar, and manage high levels with medication if necessary

Exercise your heart at Fort Sanders Cardiac Rehab Center

Leaving the hospital is just the first step in recovering from a heart attack, heart surgery or angioplasty. Cardiac patients often need to strengthen weakened heart muscles and learn heart-healthy practices. Fort Sanders Regional Medical Center heart patients are referred to the hospital's Cardiac Rehabilitation Outpatient Program. The three-month program offers exercise sessions and health classes to establish lifestyle changes that help reduce the patient's risk of further heart disease.

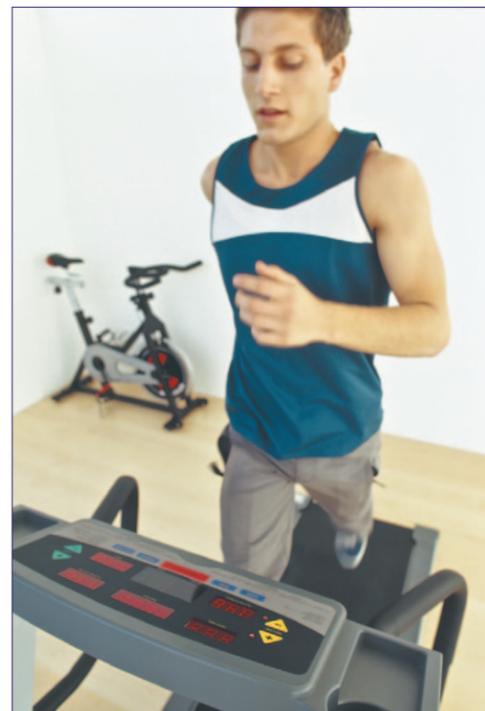
"Cardiac Rehabilitation is a multidisciplinary treatment plan which involves medication, nursing, exercise physiology, nutrition and psychology. We know it's difficult to make lifestyle change, so we try to provide people support so they can change," explains cardiac rehab nurse case manager Brenda Leuthold.

Patients exercise three times each week while hooked to a heart monitor. They also attend different classes on nutrition, stress management and medications.

"It's long enough to help form healthy habits," says Leuthold.

After completing the rehab program, patients are invited back to the center to continue exercising. The center has exercise bikes, step machines, treadmills and free weights.

"It's a wonderful support group for anybody that's had heart disease or heart procedures," says Leuthold. "We have a lot of great outcomes."



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