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Daryl Cole: 706-272-6168

Cardiac rehab staff taking extra precautions to keep patients safe

DALTON, Ga. (January 27, 2021) – Hamilton Medical Center’s (HMC) Cardiac Rehabilitation Program has continued to provide safe services throughout the pandemic.

“We certainly understand the reluctance that some people have in coming in for rehab,” says Tina Haithcock, Cardiac Rehabilitation Program manager. “We want people to know that we’ve taken additional steps to keep everyone safe, because it’s still very important to participate in a cardiac rehab program when your condition warrants it.”

According to Haithcock, staff are screening everyone at the door, limiting class sizes, social distancing, enhancing cleaning processes and keeping exercise equipment separated by 10 feet.

“When you’ve had a cardiac event, and cardiac rehab is prescribed by your doctor, following through and participating in cardiac rehab significantly lowers your chance of having another life-threatening event,” says Jim Stewart, MD, board certified interventional and structural cardiologist. “It also lowers your chance of needing to be readmitted to the hospital and boosts your chances of getting back to an active lifestyle.”

Hamilton’s Cardiac Rehab program can help patients feel healthier and allow them to return to a full and productive life and help prevent other heart problem. Those who have had a heart attack, bypass surgery, stents, congestive heart failure or other cardiovascular disease are strong candidates for the program.

Cardiac Rehab at Bradley Wellness Center is a 12-week, medically supervised program for the recovering cardiac patient. The program includes monitored exercises, educational sessions, dietary consults and behavioral change interventions. The goal of this program is to equip the patient with the necessary tools to be able to make the appropriate choices and changes to help increase his or her physical, mental and emotional well-being.

The program includes:

- Initial interview with a cardiac rehabilitation specialist who will carefully evaluate the needs of the patient and recommend an individualized program
- Personal, supervised, monitored exercise sessions
- Patient and family education (individual and group sessions)
- Cholesterol testing
- Nutritional counseling
- Assistance in developing a safe home exercise program
- Encouragement and support from the staff.

Haithcock says patients are treated like family. “We’re going to do all we can to keep you safe,” she says.

Hamilton’s cardiac team consists of physicians, a registered nurse, exercise physiologists, and a registered dietitian who work together to provide specialized services including exercise prescriptions, dietary consults and education on various health topics for the patient and their family.

After graduating from Hamilton’s Cardiac Rehabilitation Program, each patient is encouraged to continue exercise with the maintenance program called PREP (Progressive Rehabilitation Exercise Program).

A physician’s referral is required for Cardiac Rehab and PREP. After receiving the physician’s referral, a staff member will contact the patient to set an appointment for an initial assessment. Upon completion, the program is ready to begin.

HMC’s cardiac rehabilitation is covered by most insurance plans. For more information, call 706-278-9355 or visit bradleywell.com/cardiac-rehab.

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Photo:

Jim Stewart, MD

Tina Haithcock, cardiac rehab program manager