



Issue 2

March 2010

East Lothian Cardiac Rehab Group

Dates for your Diary

Saturday 10 July
ELCRG Coffee Morning,
Hope Rooms,
North Berwick.
Lorraine would be grateful for baking and any other help.
If you have any more fundraising ideas, the Committee would be glad to hear from you

Gordon Cochrane (North Berwick Group) and Lorraine scaled two Munros one Saturday last year and raised £1,200 for ELCRG coffers! Well done, both!



Fruit and vegetables—a great snack!

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Thanks to BHF and CHSAS for some of the content

More of the "Ten common dieting myths"

As reported by the British Heart Foundation (BHF), glossy magazines are often full of the latest faddy diets from Hollywood – with A-listers seemingly shedding their body weight in days. But if you want to improve your diet and manage your weight for a healthier heart, it's important to avoid the fads and lose weight sensibly.

There are lots of weight loss myths – the first five were published in the last issue—here's the truth behind the rest.

6. Certain foods, such as celery, can burn fat

No foods can actually help you to burn fat. Some foods with caffeine may speed up your metabolism slightly for a short time but they won't cause significant weight loss.

7. Carbohydrates, such as bread and pasta, are fattening

It's calories that count and gram for gram carbohydrate has less than half the calories of fat. However, carbohydrate rich foods can be fattening because of the fillings and toppings commonly added to them – such as creamy sauces on pasta and butter or cheese on baked potatoes. Some carbohydrate foods, especially wholegrain versions, are packed full of fibre which can keep hunger at bay. For example, wholegrain pasta is more filling than white pasta and will keep you satisfied for longer.

8. You shouldn't snack between meals

Eating healthy snacks between meals can actually help you to control your appetite and keep your blood sugar level steady. Fruits and vegetables are a great choice.

9. Low fat means low calorie

Replacing fat with other ingredients can still result in a product with a high calorie content. Don't be fooled – check the label. Quantity is also important – you won't cut back on calories if you eat twice of much of a low fat product as a full fat one.

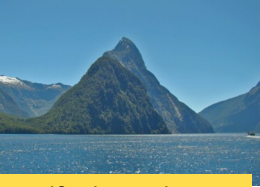
10. You have to exercise intensively to burn fat

Even low intensity exercise will burn fat. Walking, gardening or doing housework will help you to burn calories and lose weight.

More information and the whole list at:

http://www.bhf.org.uk/keeping_your_heart_healthy/

Travel tips



Milford Sound, New Zealand, the other side of the world, but not beyond your heart

Following the coldest winter for years, a touch of blue sky and sunshine seems a nice thought. Holidays are important and a break gives you the chance to relax, rest and unwind⁽¹⁾. At least two members of ELCRG have travelled as far as New Zealand since their cardiac “episodes” attesting to the fact that heart problems need not narrow our horizons.

Some extra careful thought is needed in advance, though, and both the British Heart Foundation (BHF) and Chest, Heart and Stroke Association Scotland (CHSAS) provide some useful advice (see below). Here is a distillation of some of the advice they provide. *Please bear in mind, though, that everyone’s condition is individual to them, and you must consider your own situation carefully.*

Before you book

- ♥ Wait until you feel fully well. Talk to your doctor before going on holiday. He or she will be able to give you advice which is specific to you. Discussions should include immunisations, air travel, DVT, the implications of changing time zones on your drug routine etc.
- ♥ Plan carefully to avoid any unnecessary problems. It may be helpful to go to somewhere you know, so that you are familiar with the area, and do not book somewhere if access is difficult, for example on a steep hill or well away from facilities or transport.
- ♥ It is generally advisable to choose a country with good hygiene standards and somewhere where there is good access to medical treatment, just in case it is needed. Generally, you might want to avoid countries that are too hot, too cold, or places at a high altitude. The foreign office produces a booklet on advice for travellers.
- ♥ Check your passport will be valid, preferably for around six months after your return date. Make copies of all important travel documents.



Sloth mother and baby - airport transfer by boat, Guyana, South America. Scenes not beyond you after a cardiac “episode”

Before you go

- ♥ Always, always have travel insurance, and always confirm that your policy does cover your particular condition. Always tell your insurance company if your situation changes. Insurance may be a little more difficult and expensive than previously, but it is still possible, and essential. If you have had annual cover previously, you must inform your company of your changed health status and beware that companies will probably no longer cover your heart condition, so you may have to look elsewhere and just book single trip insurance. When arranging insurance, you must declare your past and present health conditions, and you will have to answer some “medical screening” questions. Be perfectly honest answering these, because making a mistake or omission could unfortunately result in any claim you may make being refused. CHSAS have a useful factsheet on Sympathetic Insurance Companies, who provide help to people with various medical conditions, and the BHF provide information, too.
- ♥ If you are travelling in Europe, you must have a European Health Insurance Card (EHIC), available through Post Offices, by phone, or online **but this does not replace travel insurance, as it does not cover everything—so you must have both.**



Happy Landings!
Light aircraft, dirt track runway—who says a heart attack keeps you back?

- ♥ Always, always check well in advance that you have enough medication to last you before, during and a few days after your holiday. This means counting the supply you already have, then counting the days until you go, the days you will be away, and allowing for a few days after you get back. Do this in plenty of time so that you have time to order and collect any repeat prescriptions before you go. It is a good idea to keep a copy of your prescription with you. Check airline regulations about what you can carry onboard, and make any arrangements necessary.
- ♥ Always check immunisation advice, and allow yourself plenty of time to get the relevant treatment before you depart. Seeking professional advice will help clarify, for example, which anti-malarials might not suit your particular drug "regime" and which ones will.
- ♥ Check all possible advice on flying, from your doctor, BHF and CHSAS, airlines and airports. It may be possible to make special arrangements about transport within airports, so do check this. But also remember long walks between terminals and gates are opportunities to stretch your legs and get some exercise, provided you have plenty of time between connecting flights.
- ♥ Allow yourself plenty of time to pack, and do all of the other things necessary before you leave, e.g. cancelling papers, taking pets to kennels etc. Remember that you may need more time than you used to! Lists are useful!

When you are on the way

- ♥ Keep your medication with you, and easily available. You could possibly think of ways of splitting it, so that, should some go missing (hopefully temporarily) you would still have an extra supply. Keep your copy prescription with you.
- ♥ If you are flying, adhere to advice on avoiding DVT, in-flight exercises, regular non-alcoholic fluid intake, and wearing support stockings if advised.

When you are there

- ♥ The advice given at rehab classes: "Pace Yourself" - is still relevant! Take time to acclimatise, then relax, and enjoy!

References and further information

1. British Heart Foundation : Holidays and Travel (see website below)

NHS leaflet "Health Advice for Travellers" - available many places, including Post offices and Travel Agents

British Heart Foundation Scotland:

Website: <http://www.bhf.org.uk/> (from home page click: About us / BHF around Britain / Scotland ; or enter "travel" in the search box) Some publications available in charity shops.

Chest, Heart & Stroke Association Scotland:

Factsheets— telephone 0131 225 6963 , or e-mail: admin@chss.org.uk

Website: <http://www.chss.org.uk/> (enter "travel " in the search box)

Immunisation and other advice:

Website: <http://www.fitfortravel.scot.nhs.uk/>

Foreign & Commonwealth Office:

Website: <http://www.fco.gov.uk/travel>

European Health Insurance card:

Website: <http://www.ehic.uk/com/> (or ask at your Post Office)

Above is for information only—always consider your individual circumstances



Pace yourself!

Local News

The new circuit *(thanks to Lorraine for information)*

Many members will by now have had the chance to "puff" around the new circuit. Changes were made to achieve some compatibility with the current phase III arrangements, and so to provide a seamless transition for those now moving on to phase IV from phase III (though phase IV has ten stations, whereas phase III only has eight). Of course, for us, Phase IV is known as the Rest of Life Programme (ROLP). Another advantage is that less equipment is required. As always, the "traffic light" notices (red, amber and green) provide for each member to exert themselves (or not) according to their abilities, during the two circuits of one and a half minutes at each station.

A heart attack is not the end of the world; in fact, it's the beginning of a new one

General opinion (attested by pink faces and the aforementioned "puffing") is that the new arrangements, while very welcome, are a little more demanding than before, but then, maybe we were all getting a wee bit too much used to the old routine, and a bit of a challenge is no bad thing!

News from the Groups

Dunbar If you want to exercise with a view, then this is the place for you - a beautiful studio with magnificent views to the Bass Rock and Berwick Law! This group is still quite small, but growing, and enthusiastic.

North Berwick This Group, too, benefits from a huge studio space. Plenty of room for the shuttle walks here! Members were, however, recently saddened by the passing of regular participant Jim Muir. Despite all his problems, Jim had a very positive attitude to life, and his supply of "corny" jokes was unrivalled. The group was represented in the large turnout at his funeral and their condolences were conveyed to Jim's wife, Alice and their family.

Haddington The five weekly sessions held at Haddington are all well patronised and we may have to consider offering more sessions there if the present classes grow too big for comfort.

Where else would you see a group of eighty year olds enjoying themselves on exercise bikes?

Prestonpans is smaller but loyal and growing. **Musselburgh** is very small as yet, but we may consider a move to other premises if that promises to be more convenient.

Remember, if you can't make your usual group meeting, or fancy a change of scene / company, you will always be welcome at any group!

Secretary's report *(from Aileen Playfair)*

It is not too late to wish everyone A Healthy & Happy New Year. It is good to realise that we seem to have coped with all the changes and troubles we have had over the last few months. Almost feel we have reached calm waters and hopefully we can consolidate ourselves for another few months. No way can we sit back and relax but we must keep thinking of new ideas to bring in new members, encouraging members we do have and always thinking of money raising projects. Any ideas please get in touch we would like to hear from you.

Please note that this is general information only and individual circumstances should always be considered carefully.

Contributions and comments welcomed to ELCRG c/o Newtonport Surgery, Haddington, East Lothian, EH41 3NF or janicewhite@btinternet.com