

## **S2.8**

### **Walk in the Community – A Community Partnership Cardiac Rehabilitation Program**

LEUNG KP<sup>1</sup>, CHAN KM<sup>1</sup>, TANG SW<sup>1</sup>, HUI YT<sup>2</sup>

Cardiac Rehabilitation and Resource Center, Tung Wah Eastern Hospital<sup>1</sup>,  
Care for your Heart<sup>2</sup>

#### **Introduction:**

Cardiac rehabilitation has been shown to decrease total and cardiac mortality. Current recommendation of physical activity level for secondary prevention is 30 to 60 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic activity on most days of the week. Although many cardiac patients are engaged in physical activity, it is not known whether they can achieve exercise intensity level sufficient to improve aerobic fitness or slow progression of coronary artery disease.

#### **Purpose of the Project:**

To determine the self-selected exercise intensity of cardiac patients who reported walking as their most frequent form of exercise and to examine whether a community walking class program can improve the percentage of patients who exercise at target heart rate training zone.

#### **Materials & Methods:**

Cardiac patients who participated in the ten-week community walking class (CWC) between February and June 2006 were recruited into current study. Subjects were instructed to complete eight 600-meter laps in Victoria Park at their normal brisk walking pace (field test), and heart rates (HR) were monitored using a heart rate monitor (polar). Target exercise heart rate was determined for each subject from a symptom-limited exercise treadmill test and individualized exercise prescription was given. At the end of the CWC, the field test was repeated.

#### **Results:**

40 cardiac patients (mean age =  $62.8 \pm 10.7$ ) were recruited. 35% (n=14) were referred from "Care for your Heart" of which 12 patients did not receive any cardiac rehabilitation previously. Upon completion of the CWC, the percentage of patients who were able to achieve the target exercise HR (40 to 80% HR reserve) increased significantly from 22.5% (n=9) to 82.5% (n=33) ( $p < 0.001$ ). Exercise intensity during the CWC improved from  $3.3 \pm 0.8$  METs to  $4.0 \pm 0.8$  METs ( $p < 0.001$ ). The percentage of patients who were able to establish a regular exercise habit in the community also improved significantly from 37.5% (n=15) to 82.5% (n=33) ( $p < 0.001$ ).

#### **Conclusions:**

Many cardiac patients failed to attain target exercise heart rate while walking at self-selected paces and a community walking program could increase the exercise intensity which might be associated with better health outcomes.