

# Lifestyle Re-design

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**NG: Lifestyle Re-design.** This article gives an introduction on the roles of occupational therapy in lifestyle re-design for patients suffering from cardiovascular diseases. Lifestyle re-design in cardiac rehabilitation aims at helping the patients to select and engage in their meaningful and enjoyable occupations; to restructure the routine of occupations; to equip the patients with skills and knowledge for participating in occupations; and to modify the environment for the patients to engage in occupations. (*J HK Coll Cardiol* 2006;14(Suppl 2):B89-B91)

*Cardiac rehabilitation, lifestyle re-design, occupational therapy*

## 摘要

本文介紹職業治療如何為心臟病患者重新設計生活模式。在心臟病復康治療中，生活模式重整協助患者選擇及參與他們認為有意義和喜愛的日常活動、重新規劃參與日常活動的時間、使患者掌握參與日常活動時需要的技巧和知識、及建議改變環境來配合日常活動需要，繼續優質生活。

關鍵詞：心臟病復康 重新設計生活模式 職業治療

## Introduction

Occupational therapy, a holistic health care profession, helps persons to participate in "meaningful, productive and satisfying occupations".<sup>1</sup> Occupational therapist believes that patients can achieve rehabilitation through active participation in different purposeful occupations. Occupations are defined as "the chunks of culturally and personally meaningful activity in which humans engage that can be named in the lexicon of the culture".<sup>2</sup> Occupations include activities of daily living, work tasks and leisure activities. The goals of occupational therapy are to i) maximize the independence of activities of daily living, work tasks and leisure activities; ii) promote and maintain healthy lifestyle; iii) enhance the quality of life of the patients.

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## Lifestyle Re-design in Cardiac Rehabilitation

Lifestyle, associated with cultures, gender, personalities and other personal characteristics, is "a distinctive mode of living that is both observable and recognizable and over which the individual has choice."<sup>3</sup> Lifestyle is found to be associated with life expectancy, well-being, and health.<sup>3</sup>

"Lifestyles re-design is a process of occupational self-analysis."<sup>4</sup> Through occupational self-analysis, the patients understand how the characteristics of occupations influence their health and life satisfaction.<sup>4</sup> After acquisition of skill and knowledge, and with guidance from therapist, patients can modify their daily routines to achieve a better quality of life.<sup>4</sup>

Lifestyle modification in cardiac rehabilitation always refers to dietary modification, smoking cessation, weight control and exercise.<sup>5-7</sup> These modifications prevent worsening of cardiac problems and improve physical health after the onset of cardiac diseases. Lifestyle re-design aims at helping patients suffering from cardiovascular diseases to i) select and engage in their meaningful and enjoyable occupations;

ii) restructure the routine of occupations; iii) equip the patients with skills and knowledge for participating in occupations; iv) modify the environment for the occupations.<sup>1</sup>

### **Select and Engage in Meaningful and Enjoyable Occupations**

Therapist educates the patients how their daily occupations influence their physical, emotional, mental, social and spiritual health and quality of life.<sup>4</sup> The patients are educated with the physical requirements of different occupations and understand the meanings of those occupations to them. Guided by therapists, the patients can choose their occupations according to their physical capacity, interests, needs and life roles. They are suggested to avoid risk taking occupations that are in excess of their physical capacities and those activities that induce stress, such as gambling.

Persons gain enjoyment in leisure activities. In addition, leisure activities promote health and well-being of the persons.<sup>8</sup> In an exploratory study, it stated that the activity pattern and the variety of leisure activities were different between the matched groups of cardiac and non cardiac subjects.<sup>9</sup> Leisure activity exploration provides information for them to choose leisure activities and to establish the leisure habit.

### **Restructure the Routine of Occupations**

The importance of a balanced occupations and lifestyle is emphasized throughout the program. "A balance of occupations promotes a healthy and satisfying life."<sup>10</sup> A balance in occupation can be understood as i) the perceived or actual time use of the person; ii) their routines in daily pattern of occupations; and iii) their allocation of time on occupations having different value to the persons.<sup>10</sup>

The goals in restructuring the routine of occupations are: i) to assist the cardiac patients to review their patterns of occupations; ii) to establish a balanced pattern of occupations according to their needs, interests

and roles and; iii) to promote and maintain an active lifestyle according to their physical capacities.

The daily routine of the patients is assessed for the imbalance of self-care activities, work activities, leisure activities and rest. Their life roles are identified. The patients require prioritizing the importance of occupations that they are participating in and planning for their future roles. Therapist discusses with the patients and guides the patients in role selection and establishing a balanced lifestyle.

### **Equip Skills and Knowledge for Participating in Occupations**

Persons require different skills in participating in different occupations. Therefore, skills training are included in lifestyle re-design. The gap between the physical capacity of the patients and the occupation requirement can be bridged by remedial activity training, energy conservation skills and task simplifications.

Stress management skills with relaxation technique, problem solving skills and time management skills are introduced to patients to overcome the stressful situations in engaging occupations.

### **Modify the Environment for the Occupations**

Human interacts with the environment. Therapist provides home environment assessment to the patients if indicated. Home modifications, e.g. handrail installation, and assistive devices enable the patients to participate actively and independently in daily living activities.

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