



Taking Control: Programs to Help You Manage Diabetes and Heart Disease

Although diabetes and heart disease are two of the most prevalent, potentially life-altering diseases affecting Americans, there are steps you can take to successfully manage them. University Medical Center at Princeton's Diabetes Management Program and Cardiac Rehabilitation Program offer education,

therapy and support to help keep your blood sugar under control and your heart pumping well.

"We serve patients who are recovering from some type of cardiac procedure, even heart transplants," says Mary Ricci, MSN, RN, BC, Nurse Manager, Cardiac and Pulmonary Rehab, Cardiac Catheterization Lab, and Cardiac Diagnostics. "Our rehab program not only provides post-procedure exercise and therapy, we also teach people how to manage their disease over the long term for optimum results."

Specialized cardiac nurses help patients regain improved efficiency of the heart; lower blood pressure and heart rate; and increase strength and stamina. Under careful EKG monitoring, patients use a variety of exercise equipment including treadmills, stationary bikes and free weights.

Self-Management Tips Are Key

UMCP's Diabetes Management Program offers a similar approach to disease self-management.

"We teach our patients how to control their blood sugar levels through a combination of good nutrition, glucose monitoring, exercise and, often, medication management," says Nancy L. Rhodes, RN, MA, CDE, Diabetes Clinician/Educator with Princeton HealthCare System. "We see patients with both type 1 and 2 diabetes, as well as those with pre-diabetes."

Because many patients with diabetes also have heart disease, patients from these two nationally certified programs are often referred to each program as the need arises. Both programs offer:

- Personalized assessments
- Individualized plan for self-management
- Patient education
- Multidisciplinary teams
- Services for children and adults
- Medication, weight and stress management
- Nutritional guidance

For more information about University Medical Center at Princeton's Diabetes Management Program and cardiac-related services, including UMCP's Cardiac Rehabilitation Program, call **1.888.PHCS4YOU (1.888.742.7496)** or visit **www.princetonhcs.org**.

Medication Reconciliation: Avoid Dangerous Drug Interactions

Taking charge of your health includes knowing—and accurately communicating to your health provider—what medications you're taking at any given time. It sounds simple, but one omission can have negative implications on your health.

"Medication reconciliation is the process of comparing a patient's medication orders to all of the medications that the patient has been taking," says Geri Karpiscak, RN, MSN, NEA-BC, Director, Professional Practice, Education and Customer Service at Princeton HealthCare System. "The goal is to avoid duplication, incorrect dosing or timing, and adverse drug interactions."

The Joint Commission, a nonprofit organization that accredits and certifies more than 18,000 healthcare organizations and programs in the United States, named medication reconciliation as a National Patient Safety Goal to ensure a high level of awareness of the importance of proactive and detailed medication management. University Medical Center at Princeton (UMCP) participates in this initiative and is accredited by The Joint Commission.

As a patient, you have an important role to play in medication reconciliation. The first step to medication safety is to make a complete and accurate list of all prescriptions, over-the-counter medications, vitamins and supplements you are taking. Include dosing amount and frequency for each product. This list should be kept up to date and shared with all of your healthcare providers and pharmacists.

"It's critical that at every level of care, the provider and pharmacist be aware of all current medications, so a comparison can be made before dispensing a new prescription," says Karpiscak. "Awareness and communication are key to avoiding errors that could put a patient's health at risk."

To request a complimentary Emergency Health Information Card to help you track medications and other healthcare information, call **1.888.897.8979** or visit **www.princetonhcs.org** and select the box in the Contact Us form.

