

A 3-year follow-up of participation in the Heart & Lung School after a cardiac event

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The Swedish National Association for Heart and Lung Patients has a well-established aftercare activity programme called “The Heart & Lung School” that complements rehabilitation programmes run by the healthcare.



Aim of the study

The aim of this 3-year longitudinal study was to compare persons who have participated in the Heart & Lung School after a cardiac event and persons who have declined to attend, with regard to:

- Self-rated health, life situation and social support
- Clinical data, re-hospitalisation and mortality.

Two hundred and twenty consecutively chosen patients were included in the study. A questionnaire was answered at four times during the three years and the patients also visited a health care centre for medical examinations including blood counts (blood lipids and liver function values), blood pressure and body-mass-index.



Results

After three years 169 persons still participated in the study of which 35 participated in the Heart & Lung School. The result showed that persons who participated in the Heart & Lung School exercised more regularly, smoked less, and had a denser network and more social support from non-family members than the comparison groups. No statistical differences in clinical data, re-hospitalisation and mortality were found.