Cardiac rehabilitation programs (CRP) improve functional capacity in post operated complex congenital heart disease (CHD) patients. We implemented a multidisciplinary CRP for children and adults with complex CHD and their families to assess its safety and to quantitatively determine its impact on perception of health, and quality of life.

**RESULTS**

After a mean of 21.5 ± 4 training sessions, we found statistically significant improvement in:

- forced vital capacity (FVC, +5.6% improvement respect to baseline; p<0.01)
- maximal inspiratory pressure (MIP, +14.4%; p<0.05)
- effort time (ET, +12.7%; p<0.01)
- real metabolic equivalents (METs, +11.3%; p<0.05)
- VO₂ %predicted (+3.3%; p<0.05), VO₂ at anaerobic threshold (AT, +5.8%; p<0.05)
- decreased VE/VCO₂ slope (p<0.02)

6-minute-walk test (6MWT) mean distance increased from initial 541 ± 94 meters to final 642.5 ± 87m (+18.8%; p<0.01).

Echocardiography did not show significant changes. No adverse effects described.

**CONCLUSIONS**

Tailored CRP are safe and capable to improve cardiorespiratory function in children and young adults with complex CHD. We suggest the implementation of these programs as an useful therapeutic tool.

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