

Cardiac CareKit®



Steps for
Surviving a
Heart Attack

Do Not Reproduce

Note: This CareKit® does not replace expert medical care. Follow your doctor's advice.

Minutes Matter

It's not always easy to tell if you or someone else is having a heart attack. Some people grab their chest due to extreme pain. Others have milder pain or symptoms they don't think is a heart attack.

Too often, people having heart attack signs wait too long (two or more hours) to get medical help.

Excuses they give include:

- "I would be embarrassed to have EMS at my house."
- "I probably pulled a muscle or just have heartburn."
- "I have things I need to do."



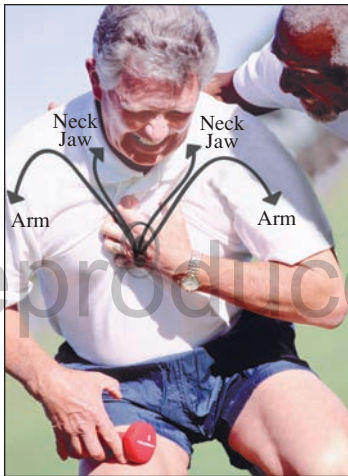
This CareKit® will help you know what signs to look for (see pages 4 to 7) and what to do (see pages 8 to 11). Acting quickly and calmly could help you save a life. Don't delay.

Heart Attack Warning Signs

Common Warning Signs

- Feeling of pain (may spread to or be felt in the arm, neck, tooth, jaw, or back), tightness, burning, squeezing, or heaviness in the chest that lasts more than a few minutes or goes away and comes back
- Chest discomfort with fainting, lightheadedness, nausea, shortness of breath, or sweating

(Continued)



Common places heart attack pain is felt.

Other Warning Signs

- Unusual chest, abdominal, or stomach pain
- Dizziness, nausea, trouble breathing, jaw or arm pain (in the absence of chest pain)
- Fast or uneven heartbeat or pulse
- Sweating for no reason; pale, gray, or clammy skin
- Any new or worsening chest pain (e.g., increased length or frequency)

Signs Women Are More Likely to Have Than Men

- An uneasy feeling in the chest with:
Unexplained or extreme anxiety, unusual fatigue or weakness; fluttering heartbeats; or severe indigestion (doesn't go away with an antacid)



Heart Attack Survival Steps

- If heart attack warning signs occur, act quickly. Call 9-1-1 or your local rescue squad right away!
- Call 9-1-1 at the onset of the warning signs. Don't wait to see if the pain subsides.
- Unlock the door to the house so EMS personnel can get in.
- If prescribed nitroglycerin, use it as directed.



- Emergency treatments given by emergency personnel increase the chances of surviving. Some heart attacks in progress can be stopped with clot-busting drugs if given soon after symptoms start. This is another reason to call 9-1-1 right away.
- If you can't call 9-1-1, have someone drive you to the hospital immediately. Don't drive yourself unless you have no other choice.

- Prompt use of aspirin may improve your chances of surviving a heart attack, too, because it helps keep blood platelets from clotting.
- Call 9-1-1 *before* taking aspirin.

Should You Take Aspirin?

- Check with your doctor ahead of time about whether you should take aspirin when having heart attack signs.
- If you don't know whether or not to take aspirin, follow the advice of the 9-1-1 operator.

- *Don't use aspirin if you are allergic to it or have a condition that makes using it risky.*



- If it is okay to take aspirin, chew and then swallow one adult aspirin (325 mg.) or 4 children's chewable aspirin (81 mg. each).
- If aspirin is okay for you, keep an adult packet in this **CareKit®**. Replace aspirin that is outdated.

Medical Information

Fill in the following information. Keep it in your wallet or purse to aid the emergency medical staff.

Doctor Information

Name: _____

Phone #: _____

Office hours: _____

Medications You Are Allergic To

Medical Conditions You Have

Medications You Take

Hospital Emergency Room

Name: _____

Phone #: _____

Emergency Contact

Name: _____

Home #: _____

Work #: _____

Cell #: _____

Health Insurance Information

Phone #: _____

Policy #: _____



Take a course to learn how to perform CPR properly and how to use an Automated External Defibrillator (AED) device. (See page 23 for information.)

Tap a collapsed person. If no response:

1. **Shout for help!**

Call 9-1-1 or get someone to call and get an AED

device (if one is close by). Follow 9-1-1 dispatcher's instructions.



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2. Until the AED can be used or until medical help takes over, do CPR.

3. Open person's airway. Gently tilt the head back and lift the chin.



4. Look, listen, and feel for normal breathing. (Do this in less than 10 seconds.) If the person is breathing, keep the airway open.



5. If not breathing, take a normal (not deep) breath; give 1 rescue breath. See if the chest rises. If it doesn't, do head tilt & chin lift again. Give 2nd rescue breath.



6. Start chest compressions on the breastbone (in line with the nipples). Push hard and push fast! Do 30 compressions; pause and give 2 breaths. Repeat. Give about 100 compressions per minute. Use AED device (if trained).



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7. Give cycles of 30 chest compressions and 2 breaths, without a break, until:



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- The person starts to move.
- The AED is used.

OR

- EMS takes over.

Your Heart Attack Risk

Discuss your heart attack risk factors and what you can do about them with your doctor.

Risk Factors You Can't Change

- You have had one or more heart attacks or strokes.
- You have had bypass surgery.
- You have angina.
- You have blockages in leg or neck arteries.

- You are a male over age 45 or a female over age 55.
- Your father or brother had heart disease before age 55; mother or sister had it before age 65.
- You have a family history of high blood cholesterol.



Risk Factors You Can Control

- High blood pressure
- High blood cholesterol
- Diabetes
- Cigarette smoking and exposure to secondhand smoke
- Being overweight
- Lack of physical activity
- Excessive stress
- Using cocaine or amphetamines

The more risk factors you have, the greater the risk. *Take the necessary steps to control all the risk factors you have.*

Follow your doctor's advice.



You can get more information on heart attacks, CPR, etc. from the organizations listed on the next page.

For More Information

American Heart Association
800.AHA.USA1 (242.8721)
www.americanheart.org

American Red Cross
www.redcross.org
(Use the online zip code locator to contact your local chapter.)

National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI)
301.251.1222
www.nhlbi.nih.gov

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