

How Long Can CPR Take to Work?

Why Every Minute Counts: Saving Lives with CPR

Do you know the difference between sudden cardiac arrest and a heart attack? Though people often use the two terms interchangeably, they're different emergencies that require separate responses and treatment. Learn the difference, related statistics, what you can do, and how you can help with this downloadable PDF.

Sudden Cardiac Arrest vs. Heart Attack

Understanding the distinctions between sudden cardiac arrest and a heart attack can empower you to take swift, decisive action when faced with a cardiac emergency. While both conditions demand urgency and intervention, recognizing their unique characteristics is essential for providing the correct assistance.

So, when it comes to sudden cardiac arrest and heart attacks what are the differences?

Cardiac arrest symptoms are obvious, while heart attack symptoms can be ambiguous.

Heart Attack

Heart attacks happen when at least one area of the heart doesn't get enough oxygen. When blood flow to the heart muscle is blocked, oxygen-rich blood is unable to circulate properly. If the blocked artery is not unblocked quickly, that oxygen-deprived section of the heart begins to die.

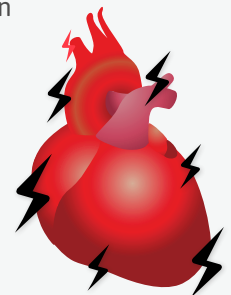
Heart attack symptoms can include:

- intense discomfort or pain in the chest
- Pain in other areas of the upper body (e.g., the shoulder).
- Pain accompanied by cold sweats, shortness of breath, and/or nausea and vomiting.

Cardiac Arrest

Cardiac arrest is when the heart stops beating suddenly. It's caused by an electrical malfunction within the heart. Seconds after cardiac arrest takes place, the victim falls unconscious, becomes unresponsive, and is not breathing or is only gasping. Death occurs quickly if the person does not receive immediate CPR.

Immediate CPR is needed to help prolong biological death before advanced providers attempt to get the heart pumping again.



Statistics to Know

For sudden cardiac arrest...

- 7 in 10 cases happen at home.
- Survival rates can be as high as 50% when bystanders use CPR and AEDs.
- Survival rates for out-of-hospital events are around 10%.
- Less than 40% of adults receive layperson-initiated CPR, and fewer than 12% have an AED applied before EMS arrival.



For heart attacks...

- Early treatment of symptoms can lead to a 50% increase in survival rates.
- On average, someone in the U.S. has a heart attack every 40 seconds.
- Approximately 50% of Americans have 1 of the 3 primary risk factors associated with heart disease, which increases likelihood of having a heart attack.

What Can You Do?

In both medical emergencies, the first step is crucial: Call 911.

Prompt medical intervention is vital for the best possible outcome for heart attacks and cardiac arrest.

For cardiac arrest, you must act quickly.

Once you've called 911, immediately begin CPR. If an Automated External Defibrillator (AED) is nearby, use it without delay. Remember, every passing minute without CPR results in a 10% decrease in survival rates for people experiencing cardiac arrest.

For heart attacks, you should not use an AED.

After calling 911, follow the guidance of the dispatcher of keeping the victim calm and comfortable. Aspirin might be suggested if it is available and the patient can take it. If an AED is available, keep it nearby in case the victim becomes unresponsive.

Why Every Minute Counts

Every minute during a cardiac emergency holds immense significance. The urgency lies in preventing irreversible damage to vital organs. Swift intervention can be the difference between life and death, or between a full recovery and a long-term disability.

As a CPR provider, you may not always achieve a successful outcome. But your dedication to administering CPR until professional help arrives ensures that you've done everything within your power to save a life.

Consistent CPR delivery until paramedics arrive can supply sufficient oxygen levels to vital organs – the brain, heart, and lungs – increasing the likelihood for a complete recovery.

By building your knowledge about CPR training and AED use, you can be a beacon of hope for someone facing a cardiac crisis.

Your actions, fueled by education and readiness, can empower you to be a life-saver.



Have Questions?

Our Group Solutions Team helps you find the best solution for your training needs (even if we aren't the answer!).

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