



HEART SMART GAZETTE

Edited by KRISTINE BROCKHAGEN- January 2009

All information provided by the American Heart Association and available on their website



JUMP ROPE FOR HEART

We hope to see everyone on Friday, January 30. Thank you for your support.

WHERE DO OUR DONATIONS GO?

The Jump Rope for Heart donations we raise fund **cardiovascular research** and **education**. Education includes both the general population, but also professionals within the field.

CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE AND STROKE RISK FACTORS

1. **Smoking**
2. **High Blood Pressure**
3. **High Blood Cholesterol**
4. **Diabetes**
5. **Physical Inactivity**
6. **Obesity**
7. **Race**
8. **Family Medical History**

Act in Time

The American Heart Association and the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute have launched a new "Act in Time" campaign to increase people's awareness of heart attack and the importance of calling 9-1-1 immediately at the onset of heart attack symptoms.

Dial 9-1-1 Fast

Heart attack and stroke are life-and-death emergencies -- every second counts. If you see or have any of the listed symptoms, immediately call 9-1-1. Not all these signs occur in every heart attack or stroke. Sometimes they go away and return. If some occur, get help fast! Today heart attack and stroke victims can benefit from new medications and treatments unavailable to patients in years past. For example, clot-busting drugs can stop some heart attacks and strokes in progress, reducing disability and saving lives. But to be effective, these drugs must be given relatively quickly after heart attack or stroke symptoms first appear. So again, don't delay - get help right away!

Statistics

Coronary heart disease is America's No. 1 killer. Stroke is No. 3 and a leading cause of serious disability. That's why it's so important to reduce your risk factors, know the warning signs, and know how to respond quickly and properly if warning signs occur.

Heart Attack Warning Signs

Some heart attacks are sudden and intense — the "movie heart attack," where no one doubts what's happening. But most heart attacks start slowly, with mild pain or discomfort. Often people affected aren't sure what's wrong and wait too long before getting help. Here are signs that can mean a heart attack is happening:

- **Chest discomfort.** Most heart attacks involve discomfort in the center of the chest that lasts more than a few minutes, or that goes away and comes back. It can feel like uncomfortable pressure, squeezing, fullness or pain.
- **Discomfort in other areas of the upper body.** Symptoms can include pain or discomfort in one or both arms, the back, neck, jaw or stomach.
- **Shortness of breath.** May occur with or without chest discomfort.
- **Other signs:** These may include breaking out in a cold sweat, nausea or lightheadedness

If you or someone you're with has chest discomfort, especially with one or more of the other signs, don't wait longer than a few minutes (no more than 5) before calling for help. Call 9-1-1... Get to a hospital right away.

If you can't access the emergency medical services (EMS), have someone drive you to the hospital right away. If you're the one having symptoms, don't drive yourself, unless you have absolutely no other option.

Calling 9-1-1 is almost always the fastest way to get lifesaving treatment. Emergency medical services staff can begin treatment when they arrive -- up to an hour sooner than if someone gets to the hospital by car. The staff are also trained to revive someone whose heart has stopped. Patients with chest pain who arrive by ambulance usually receive faster treatment at the hospital, too.

As with men, women's most common heart attack symptom is chest pain or discomfort. But women are somewhat more likely than men to experience some of the other common symptoms, particularly shortness of breath, nausea/vomiting, and back or jaw pain.

Stroke Warning Signs

The American Stroke Association says these are the warning signs of stroke:

- Sudden numbness or weakness of the face, arm or leg, especially on one side of the body
- Sudden confusion, trouble speaking or understanding
- Sudden trouble seeing in one or both eyes
- Sudden trouble walking, dizziness, loss of balance or coordination
- Sudden, severe headache with no known cause

If you or someone with you has one or more of these signs, don't delay! Immediately call 9-1-1 or the emergency medical services (EMS) number so an ambulance (ideally with advanced life support) can be sent for you. Also, check the time so you'll know when the first symptoms appeared. It's very important to take immediate action. If given within three hours of the start of symptoms, a clot-busting drug can reduce long-term disability for the most common type of stroke.

Cardiac arrest strikes immediately and without warning. Here are the signs:

- Sudden loss of responsiveness (no response to tapping on shoulders).
- No normal breathing (the victim does not take a normal breath when you tilt the head up and check for at least five seconds).

If these signs of cardiac arrest are present, tell someone to call 9-1-1 and get an AED (if one is available) and *begin CPR immediately*.

STORIES FROM THE HEART

How many of you do your homework?

Every year I invite a guest speaker to kick off our upcoming JRFH event. One year, I invited Dr. Melissa Carry, a young cardiologist from our own school community. She asked me what would I like for her to speak about. I told her I wanted her to tell the children how she, a cardiologist, benefits from students participating in the JRFH program. She responded, "Well that request is going to be easy." The day of her visit, she brought along one of her patients, Mr. Peter Danna. Dr. Carry began her talk by saying, "How many of you do your homework?" The children all grudgingly raised their hand, while she went on to say, "This man standing would not be here today if I had not done my homework." She showed the students a book she receives from the American Heart Association on a monthly basis. This book describes the latest research regarding new drugs and treatments for CVD. Inside the book, Dr. Carry discovered there was a new drug that was just developed to help people in Mr. Danna's condition. She told the children that the money they raised helped make this information readily available to physicians. Mr. Danna is now well enough to return to teaching math. He also had the unique opportunity to say thank you to the students, as he put it, for saving his life. I recently spoke to Mr. Danna at the Dallas AHA Heartwalk, in which he was a participant.

Did you know?

- **Angioplasty** is the repair of blood vessels affected by disease (usually atherosclerosis). It may be performed in the blood vessels supplying the heart or in the arteries of the limbs, brain or kidneys.
- **Stents** are tiny metal "scaffolds" that are inserted and erected in a collapsing artery to keep it open in a manner similar to the way construction workers might use to prop up a collapsing tunnel.
- **Stents** were developed by cardiovascular researchers and now are used in many other areas of the body.
- **Pacemakers** are implantable electronic devices that treat both abnormally slow heart rates and excessively rapid heart rates.
- **AED- Automated External** is a lightweight, portable device that delivers an electric shock through the chest to the heart.