



Learn the Warning Signs of a Heart Attack

#EmPOWERChange



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Kick off your program with a warm welcome and your opening remarks. This could include an inspiring quote or reading, or you may want to share with the group why this topic is important to you and your reasons for offering to host this lesson.



American Heart Association.

EmPOWERED to Serve™

LEARN THE WARNING SIGNS OF A HEART ATTACK |

Lesson Overview

Welcome

- What Is EmPOWERED to Serve?

Health Lesson

Learn the Warning Signs of a Heart Attack

- Learn the Warning Signs and Causes
- Don't Wait to Call 911
- Embrace Life's Simple 7® to Reduce Risk

Closing Thoughts

- Create a Culture of Health
- Online Resources



American Heart Association.

EmPOWERED to Serve™

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Get everyone focused by reading through the lesson overview.

Let participants know that the lesson takes 30 minutes to complete.

In this lesson we will be learning the warning signs of a heart attack and why its important to call 9-1-1 immediately. Through this lesson, we will empower our community by increasing awareness about heart attacks and the steps to take during a medical emergency.



WHAT IS EMPOWERED TO SERVE?

EmPOWERED to Serve is a movement inspiring those who are passionate about driving change through health justice in their communities.

We are catalysts for change, empowering the equity equation.

AHA's Mission Statement
To be a relentless force for a world of longer, healthier lives.



Read the introduction to ETS.

Share why you joined the ETS movement.

Encourage anyone who has not joined ETS to go online after the program and sign up for this national movement.

Note that ETS is a platform of the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association and works in partnership with community organizations across the country.

Highlight the American Heart Association's Mission Statement.

LEARN ALL YOU CAN ABOUT HEART ATTACK

about every
40 seconds
an American has
a heart attack



Ask the group for a moment of silence. When it is over, note that during that time someone had a heart attack



THE GOOD NEWS



Every year, tens of thousands of Americans survive a heart attack and go back to work and enjoy a normal life.



Ask the group: Do you know anyone who has had a heart attack?

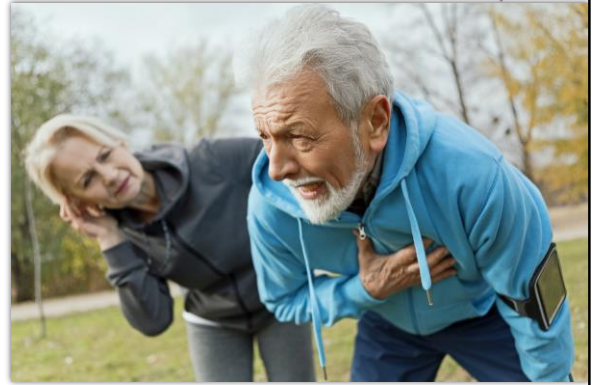
Give hope by noting that tens of thousands of Americans survive heart attack, go back to work and enjoy a normal life. You have every reason to be confident of a full recovery. Hearts can heal and with each passing day get stronger. That's why it is so important to know the warning signs of heart attack and call 911 for help right away. These are today's calls to action, which you will hear repeated multiple times.



PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

By the end of this lesson, you'll be able to share with your family and friends:

- Some of the causes and warning signs of a heart attack
- What to do if you think someone is having a heart attack
- The differences between a heart attack and cardiac arrest



Review the program objectives.

Explain that importance of today's lesson:

- You need to know the warning signs of heart attack so you can get help right away, either for yourself or someone close to you.
- Some heart attacks are sudden and intense. But most start slowly, with mild pain or discomfort.
- Acting quickly can save many, many lives.



HEART DISEASE IS...

The #1 Killer for All Americans



1 in 4

African Americans
die from
heart disease



1 in 6

**American Indians and
Alaska Natives** die
from heart disease



1 in 5

Latinos die from
heart disease



Review the information on the slide.

Emphasize the importance of members of multicultural communities to develop an awareness about heart disease and the signs of a potential heart attack.



POINT 1: LEARN THE WARNING SIGNS AND CAUSES

- **Discomfort in the center of the chest** that:
 - Feels like uncomfortable pressure, squeezing, fullness or pain
 - Lasts more than a few minutes
 - Goes away and comes back
- **Pain or discomfort in one or both arms, the back, neck, jaw or stomach**
- **Shortness of breath**, with or without chest discomfort
- **Breaking out in a cold sweat, nausea and feeling light-headed**



Summarize the signs that can mean a heart attack is happening:

- The most common heart attack symptom is uncomfortable pressure, squeezing, fullness or pain in the center of your chest. It lasts more than a few minutes, or it goes away and comes back.
- Pain or discomfort in one or both arms, your back, neck, jaw or stomach.
- Shortness of breath with or without chest discomfort.
- Other signs such as breaking out in a cold sweat, nausea or light-headedness.



WARNING SIGNS MAY DIFFER IN WOMEN

Women may experience a heart attack without chest pressure.

The more common symptoms in women include:

- Shortness of breath
- Nausea/vomiting
- Pressure in lower chest/upper abdomen
- Jaw, neck or upper back pain
- Dizziness
- Light-headedness
- Extreme fatigue



Review the information on the slide

- Women are more likely than men to experience shortness of breath, nausea or vomiting, and Jaw, neck or upper back pain

VIDEO: JUST A LITTLE HEART ATTACK



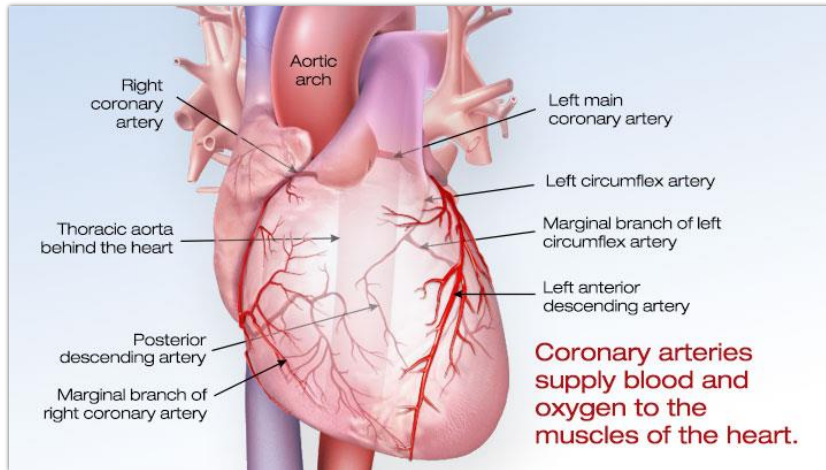
PREP NOTE: Before the program, review the resource list for this lesson. Check the URL for the Elizabeth Banks in "Just a Little Heart Attack" video (lasts 3:13). If you won't have an Internet connection, download the YouTube video ahead of time to your computer. Or skip this slide.

This video is available in English only.

Play the video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jl487DlqTA>



WHAT CAUSES A HEART ATTACK?



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PREP NOTE: If you will have an Internet connection, consider using the AHA's interactive heart attack. Click on this image during the presentation to activate the embedded link or visit

<https://watchlearnlive.heart.org/index.php?moduleSelect=hrtatk>.

Explain to the group:

- A heart attack occurs when the blood flow that brings oxygen to the heart muscle is severely reduced or stopped.
- This happens because coronary arteries that supply the heart with blood can slowly become thicker and harder from a buildup of plaque made of fat, cholesterol and other substances.
- This slow process is known as atherosclerosis.
- If a blood clot forms and blocks the blood flow in an already narrowed artery, a heart attack occurs.

IS IT A HEART ATTACK OR CARDIAC ARREST?

Heart attack is a circulation problem.
Blood flow to the heart is blocked.

Cardiac arrest is an electrical problem.
The heart malfunctions and suddenly stops beating.

A heart attack may **CAUSE** cardiac arrest.

CARDIAC ARREST VS. HEART ATTACK
People often use these terms interchangeably, but they are not the same.

WHAT IS CARDIAC ARREST?	WHAT IS A HEART ATTACK?
<p>CARDIAC ARREST occurs when the heart malfunctions and stops beating unexpectedly. Cardiac arrest is triggered by an electrical malfunction in the heart that causes an irregular heartbeat (arrhythmia). With no pumping action throughout, the heart cannot pump blood to the brain, lungs and other organs.</p> <p>WHAT HAPPENS Seconds later, a person becomes unresponsive, is not breathing or is only gasping. Death occurs unless someone performs CPR or an Automated External Defibrillator (AED) is used as soon as possible. These people are usually taken to the hospital, but few survive.</p> <p>WHAT TO DO Cardiac arrest can be reversible in some cases if it's treated within a few minutes. First, call your local emergency number and start CPR right away. Then, if an Automated External Defibrillator (AED) is available, use it as soon as possible. These people are usually taken to the hospital, but few survive.</p> <p>CARDIAC ARREST IS A LEADING CAUSE OF DEATH. Cardiac arrest affects thousands of people annually, with about three quarters of them occurring in the home.</p> <p>Fast action can save lives.</p>	<p>A HEART ATTACK occurs when blood flow to the heart is blocked. A blocked artery prevents oxygen-rich blood from reaching a section of the heart. If the blocked artery is not reopened quickly, the part of the heart normally nourished by that artery begins to die.</p> <p>WHAT HAPPENS Symptoms of a heart attack may be immediate and may include chest pain or discomfort that may last several minutes or come and go. It may also include shortness of breath, nausea, lightheadedness or sweating. Most often, though, symptoms start slowly and persist for hours, days or weeks before a heart attack strikes with sudden onset. The heart usually does not stop beating during a heart attack. The longer the person goes without treatment, the greater the damage.</p> <p>WHAT TO DO Start CPR if you're not sure if a heart attack, call your local emergency number. Every minute matters! It's best to get to the emergency room right away. Emergency medical services (EMS) staff can begin treatment when they arrive—up to an hour before their departure gets to the hospital by car. EMS staff are also trained to make compressions when their first-responded patients with chest pain are taken by ambulance usually receive faster treatment at the hospital, too.</p>

For more information on American Heart Association CPR training classes to get ready to help, visit us. Follow us: www.heart.org #AHA/CPR

Review the difference between a heart attack and cardiac arrest. Summarize by saying this: "Cardiac arrest is when the heart stops beating. It is not a heart attack. But a heart attack may cause cardiac arrest."

Reference the handout "Cardiac Arrest vs. Heart Attack" infographic. If time allows, ask for volunteers to take turns reading sections of the infographic.



LEARN THE WARNING SIGNS OF CARDIAC ARREST

- **Sudden loss of responsiveness**
The person doesn't respond, even if tapped hard on the shoulder or loudly asked, "Are you OK?" The person does not move, speak, blink or otherwise react.
- **No normal breathing**
The person isn't breathing or is only gasping for air.



Review the information on the slide and ask whether anyone remembers the warning signs for a heart attack.

If necessary, return to slides 8 and 9 and review the warning signs for a heart attack. Then return here and contrast the warning signs above with those for a heart attack.



LEARN THE WARNING SIGNS OF CARDIAC ARREST

What to do:

- **Call 911** (or tell someone else to call)
- Give **Hands-Only™ CPR**: Push hard and fast in the center of the chest
- **Whoever calls 911 should stay on the phone** until the 911 dispatcher says that it's OK to hang up



Calling 911 and starting CPR should both happen ASAP.



POINT 2: DON'T WAIT TO CALL 911

Minutes matter.
Fast action can save lives.

- **Call 911** – the fastest way to get lifesaving treatment
- Emergency medical services staff can begin treatment as soon as they arrive



Review the information on the slide.

Reinforce the message that if you or someone you're with has chest discomfort, especially with one or more of the other signs, don't wait to call 911.



MANY PUT OFF GETTING HELP

Some people having a heart attack wait before getting help.

- Some people may feel it would be embarrassing to have a false alarm
- Others may be so afraid of having a heart attack that they tell themselves they aren't having one



Ask the group: "Do you tend to brush off health problems?"

Review the information on the slide.

Emphasize the importance of getting help right away.



WORRIED ABOUT CALLING 911?

Many people wonder:

- Do I need to **pay up front** for the ambulance?
- Will I get in **trouble**?
- Do I need an **ID card** for emergency medical services to help me?



No. Don't wait to call 911.

Review the information on the slide.

Emphasize that people should NOT wait to call for emergency help if someone needs emergency care.



TAKE THESE STEPS TODAY

Before there is an emergency...

- Learn the symptoms of a heart attack
- Find out which hospitals in your area have 24-hour emergency cardiac care
- Remember you should always call 911 in an emergency, including situations in which someone is unresponsive and not breathing normally or only gasping



Review the information on the slide.

Emphasize the importance of taking time to do each of these things. You could save a life.



POINT 3: EMBRACE LIFE'S SIMPLE 7® TO REDUCE RISK

- 1. Get Active**
- 2. Eat Better:** Choose foods that are low in saturated fat, trans fat, cholesterol and salt.
- 3. Lose Weight:** And keep your weight under control.
- 4. Stop Smoking:** And avoid other people's tobacco smoke.
- 5. Control Cholesterol**
- 6. Control Blood Pressure:** And treat high blood pressure if you have it.
- 7. Reduce Blood Sugar:** And control your blood sugar if you have diabetes.



Review the information on the slide.

Explain that by embracing Life's Simple 7, you are also helping to avoid a heart attack.

Note that it's also important to get regular checkups and take any medications as prescribed.



CALLS TO ACTION

- Learn the warning signs of a heart attack and cardiac arrest
- If you see someone with the warning signs of a heart attack or cardiac arrest, call 911 immediately
- Embrace Life's Simple 7® to reduce risk



Review the calls to action on the slide.



YOUR VOICE MATTERS

We all have the power to make a difference by speaking out for policies that help build healthier communities and healthier lives.

Join **You're the Cure** today and be among the first to know when major policy initiatives pass or when your help is needed to advocate for a healthy future.

Text EMPOWER to 46839 join today!



Say: Thank you for attending today. Before we close this lesson, I would like to mention other ways you can continue your health journey and help others in your community.

Each of us has the power to make a difference in our community. By joining the American Heart Association's You're the Cure program, you can be among the first to know when major policy initiatives pass or when your help is needed to advocate for an issue. Text EMPOWER to 46839 to join today!

USE YOUR VOICE TO CREATE HEALTHIER COMMUNITIES

You can help us work to draw communities together on the path to building a sustainable culture of health.

Go to [EmPOWEREDtoServe.org](https://www.EmPOWEREDtoServe.org)

Sign up to become an ambassador and learn how you can be a part of the movement!



Join us as we improve the health of ALL in our communities!

Encourage everyone to be active in the EmPOWERED to Serve movement.

Share how being part of the ETS movement helps you embrace a lifestyle of health.

Encourage everyone to come to a future ETS health lesson.



WRAP-UP

We appreciate your thoughts!

Tell us what you liked best.

Email us at:
empoweredtoserve@heart.org



Thank everyone for coming.

Thank all the volunteers who helped coordinate the program.

Take a moment to share an inspirational reading or ask the group to join you in an uplifting song.

WE ARE EMPOWERED TO SERVE

...serve our health, serve our community



The American Heart Association requests that this document be cited as follows:
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Put this slide up as your closing slide and leave it up until all the participants leave the room.