

HEART ATTACKS AND STROKES: KNOW THE SIGNS

February 2013

NEWS YOU CAN USE

Do Not Forget These Other Great Resources:

Healthwise® Handbook, the 24-Hour Nurse Line, Nurse Online Chat, Audio Health Information Library® and you can go online to www.express-health.com for links to reliable health information.

Challenge:

Share this information with friends, coworkers and loved ones in your life. You never know whose life it could save.

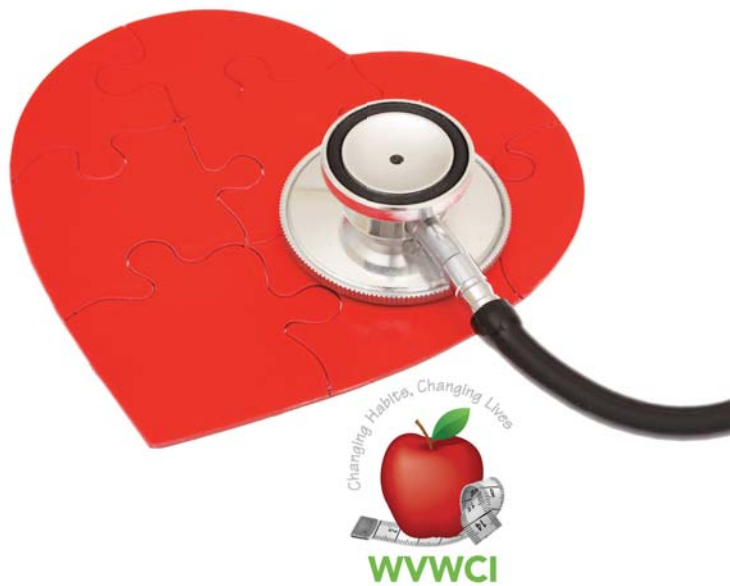
www.heart.org
www.mayoclinic.com
www.womenheart.org/
www.who.int/en/

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In honor of American Heart Month, we want to remind you of the warning signs of a sudden heart attack or stroke. Early recognition could save yourself or a loved one.

Every second counts when experiencing a heart attack or stroke. Many people die before even reaching the hospital. Often times it is because symptoms go unrecognized and are attributed to simply not feeling well. It is critical to take any signs, no matter the severity of the symptoms, very seriously and call 9-1-1 immediately.

A heart attack occurs when blood supply to the heart is suddenly blocked. Without normal blood flow, the lack of oxygen and nutrients will damage the heart and the heart will begin to die. With a stroke, the same event occurs impacting the brain tissue instead of the heart.

HEART ATTACK WARNING SIGNS:

Heart attack symptoms vary widely. Do not wait more than five minutes for symptoms to subside. If you suspect a heart attack, call for emergency help immediately.

- Chest discomfort or pain
- Upper body pain; such as, discomfort in one or both arms, the back, neck or jaw
- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- Other symptoms may include: Anxiety, cold sweat, nausea, vomiting, lightheadedness and unusual or unexplained fatigue

Be aware that symptoms may initially show up differently for women than men. Women may experience all, some or none of the typical heart attack symptoms. Therefore, it is particularly important for women to pay attention to changes in how they are feeling and not delay seeking medical care. Your doctor can help you determine whether additional testing is necessary.

The American Heart Association uses the, “**Spot a stroke F-A-S-T**”, acronym to help recognize stroke warning signs.

- **Face Drooping:** Does one side of the face droop or is it numb? Ask the person to smile.
- **Arm Weakness:** Is one arm weak or numb? Ask the person to raise both arms. Does one arm drift downward?
- **Speech Difficulty:** Is speech slurred, are they unable to speak, or are they hard to understand? Ask the person to repeat a simple sentence, like “The grass is green.” Is the sentence repeated correctly?
- **Time to call 9-1-1:** If the person shows any of these symptoms, even if the symptoms go away, call 9-1-1 and get them to the hospital immediately.