



Do you know the signs and symptoms of a heart attack and what to do if someone experiences these? Recognizing and responding immediately to the warning signs of a potential heart attack may significantly improve survival and recovery. February is Heart Month: take the time to be heart safe and learn how you can reduce your risk.

## Common signs of a heart attack

(Any, or all, of these signs & symptoms *may* occur)

- Chest discomfort described as simply a mild pressure up to a 'crushing' pain; may also be 'squeezing' or a 'heavy' sensation;
- Discomfort may move to the shoulders, arm, neck, or jaw;
- May include shortness of breath, sweating, or nausea / vomiting.
- Signs may vary person to person and can differ between men, women & the elderly.

## Heart attack Risk Factors

- Obesity\*
- Sedentary lifestyle\*
- Smoking\*
- High cholesterol\*
- Age / gender
- Family history

Speak with your doctor about how to treat your modifiable (\*) risk factors and learn to be heart safe.

## What to do when seconds count

- Call 9-1-1, immediately. Early treatment can greatly reduce heart damage and be the difference between life & death;
- Treatment starts the moment EMS arrives. Paramedics can provide oxygen, start an intravenous and perform an electrocardiogram (ECG);
- Paramedics can also administer important medication(s) in the early minutes of a heart attack to lessen heart damage;
- During transport, EMS will share information with the hospital so that definitive treatment can begin immediately upon arrival;
- Take a CPR / AED course. Training is widely available from many reputable organizations. It's easy and could make a significant difference in the outcome of someone experiencing a heart attack.