

National CPR/AED Awareness Week Fact Sheet

Out-of-Hospital Cardiac Arrest

- Each year, about 310,000 coronary heart disease deaths occur out-of-hospital or in emergency departments in the United States. Of those deaths, about 166,200 are due to sudden cardiac arrest – nearly 450 per day.
- Sudden cardiac arrest can happen to anyone at any time. Many victims appear healthy with no known heart disease or other risk factors.
- Sudden cardiac arrest is not the same as a heart attack. Sudden cardiac arrest occurs when electrical impulses in the heart become rapid or chaotic, which causes the heart to suddenly stop beating. A heart attack occurs when the blood supply to part of the heart muscle is blocked. A heart attack may cause cardiac arrest.

Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR)

- Less than one-third of out-of-hospital sudden cardiac arrest victims receive bystander CPR.
- Effective bystander CPR, provided immediately after sudden cardiac arrest, can double or triple a victim's chance of survival.
- The American Heart Association trains more than 10 million people in CPR annually, including health professionals and members of the general public.
- The most effective rate for chest compressions is 100 compressions per minute – the same rhythm as the beat of the BeeGee's song, "Stayin' Alive."

Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs)

- Unless CPR **and** defibrillation are provided within minutes of collapse, few attempts at resuscitation are successful.
- Even if CPR is performed, defibrillation with an AED is required to stop the abnormal rhythm and restore a normal heart rhythm.
- New technology has made AEDs simple and user-friendly. Clear audio and visual cues tell users what to do when using an AED and coach people through CPR. A shock is delivered only if the victim needs it.
- AEDs are now widely available in public places such as schools, airports and workplaces.

CPR/AED Awareness Survey

- Eighty-nine percent of respondents said they were willing and able to do something to help if they witnessed a medical emergency.
- Few Americans (12%-20%) are confident that they would know when it is appropriate to perform CPR or use an AED.
- At most, roughly four in ten are extremely or very likely to perform CPR on an adult (39%) or child (37%) they know personally.
- Less than 17 percent of Americans believe they are at risk for sudden cardiac arrest.
- The survey was conducted online within the United States by Harris Interactive on behalf of the American Heart Association between January 8, 2008 and January 21, 2008 among 1,132 U.S. residents aged 18 and older.

Public Policy for CPR/AEDs

- The American Heart Association supports state public policy initiatives that:
 - Promote the access and use of AEDs and establish quality AED programs in high-risk locations
 - Encourage bystander CPR and CPR training for professionals who may need to respond to medical emergencies
 - Promote increased quality and appropriate use of 9-1-1 systems
 - Extend Good Samaritan legal liability protection to all users of AEDs
- The American Heart Association also supports increased funding for the Rural and Community Access to Emergency Devices Program, which gives communities funding to place automated external defibrillators (AEDs) in rural areas and trains lay rescuers and first responders to use AEDs.