

Act in Time to Heart Attack Signs

Use the **T.I.M.E.** Method to Help Your Patients Make a Heart Attack Survival Plan



Why Your Patients Need to Act in Time to Heart Attack Signs

Coronary heart disease is the leading killer of both men and women in the United States. Each year, about 1.1 million Americans suffer a heart attack. About 460,000 of those heart attacks are fatal. Disability and death from heart attack can be reduced with prompt thrombolytic and other artery-opening-therapies ideally given within the first hour after symptom onset. Patient delay is the largest barrier to receiving therapy quickly.

Heart Attack Warning Signs

- ▶ **Chest discomfort** (pressure, squeezing, fullness, or pain in the center of the chest)
- ▶ **Discomfort in one or both arms, back, neck, jaw, or stomach**
- ▶ **Shortness of breath** (often comes with or before chest discomfort)
- ▶ **Breaking out in a cold sweat, nausea, or lightheadedness**

Women May Experience:

- ♀ Shortness of breath without chest pain
- ♀ Pain in lower part of chest
- ♀ Fatigue

Uncertainty Is Normal

Most people think a heart attack is sudden and intense, like a "movie heart attack." The fact is many heart attacks start slowly as mild pain or discomfort. People who feel such symptoms may not be sure what is wrong.

Delay Can Be Deadly

Most heart attack victims wait 2 or more hours after symptoms begin before they seek medical help. People often take a wait-and-see approach or deny that their symptoms are serious. Every minute that passes without treatment means more heart muscle dies. Calling 9-1-1 saves lives.

Use the T.I.M.E. is Life Method:

Talk with your patients about -

- ▶ Risk of a heart attack.
- ▶ Recognition of symptoms.
- ▶ Right action steps to take/rationale for rapid action.
- ▶ Rx-give instructions for when symptoms occur (based on patient history).
- ▶ Remembering to call 9-1-1 quickly within 5 minutes.

Investigate -

- ▶ Feelings about heart attack.
- ▶ Barriers to symptom evaluation and response.
- ▶ Personal and family experience with AMI and emergency medical treatment.

Make A Plan -

- ▶ Help patients and their family members to make a plan for exactly what to do in case of heart attack symptoms.
- ▶ Encourage patients and their family members to rehearse the plan.

Evaluate -

- ▶ The patient's understanding of risk in delaying.
- ▶ The patient's understanding of your recommendations.
- ▶ The family's understanding of risk and their plan for action.



Web Sites:
www.QMO.amedd.army.mil
www.OQP.med.va.gov