



# Warning Signs For Heart Attack And Stroke

## HEART ATTACK WARNING SIGNS

Some heart attacks are sudden and intense, but most heart attacks start slowly, with mild pain or discomfort. Often people affected aren't sure what's wrong and wait too long before getting help. Here are signs that can mean a heart attack is happening:

**Call 911** if you have heart attack warning signs. It's almost always the fastest way to get lifesaving treatment.

- **Chest pain or discomfort.** Most heart attacks involve discomfort in the center of the chest that lasts more than a few minutes, or that goes away and comes back. It can feel like uncomfortable pressure, squeezing, fullness, heaviness, or pain.
- **Pain or discomfort in other areas of the upper body.**
  - ◇ Arms (one or both)
  - ◇ Back
  - ◇ Neck
  - ◇ Jaw
  - ◇ Stomach
- **Shortness of breath** may occur with or without chest discomfort.

## Other possible symptoms:

- ◇ Breaking out in a cold sweat
- ◇ Nausea
- ◇ Rapid or irregular heartbeat
- ◇ Feeling unusually tired
- ◇ Feeling lightheaded

**As with men, women's most common heart attack symptom is chest pain or discomfort. But women may have other symptoms not usually linked to heart attack:**

- Anxiety
- Shortness of breath
- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Upset stomach
- Pain in the shoulder, back, or arm
- Unusual tiredness or weakness

Symptoms can occur with exercise or exertion, stress related situations, exposure to cold weather, after eating, or at rest.

If you can't access the emergency medical services (EMS), have someone drive you to the hospital right away. If you're the one having symptoms, don't drive yourself, unless you have absolutely no other option.

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## STROKE WARNING SIGNS

(FROM THE AMERICAN STROKE ASSOCIATION)

- **F = Face Drooping:** Does one side of the face droop, or is it numb? When you smile, is it uneven?
- **A = Arm Weakness:** Is one arm weak or numb? If you raise both of your arms, does one drift downward?
- **S = Speech Difficulty:** Is your speech slurred?
- **T = Time to call 911:** Stroke is an emergency, and every minute counts. Note the time when any of the symptoms start to appear.

**If you or someone with you has one or more of these symptoms, don't delay!**

Immediately call 911 or the emergency medical services (EMS) number so an ambulance (ideally with advanced life support) can be sent for you.

Also, check the time so you'll know the last time you didn't have symptoms. It's very important to take immediate action. Treatment for stroke is time-sensitive. The sooner to get medical attention, the better chance you have of reducing long-term disability.

## OTHER STROKE SYMPTOMS

Sudden onset of:

- Numbness or weakness in face, arm, leg—especially on one side of the body
- Confusion, trouble speaking, or understanding speech
- Sudden change of vision in one or eyes
- Trouble walking, dizziness, loss of balance or coordination
- Severe headache with no known cause