



American Heart Association.  
EmPOWERED to Serve™



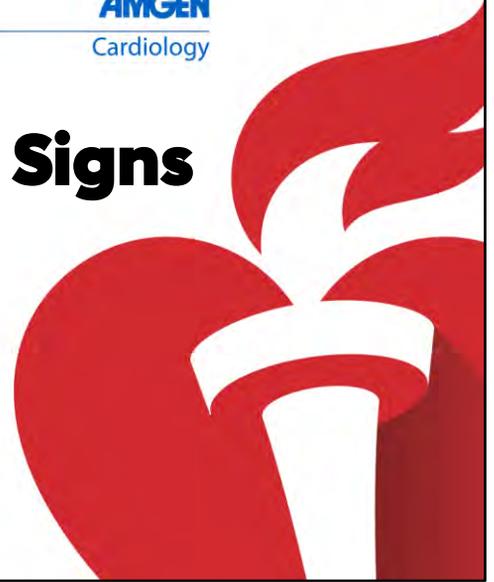
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**AMGEN**  
Cardiology

# Learn the Warning Signs of a Heart Attack

#EmPOWERChange

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Association's EmPOWERED to Serve Initiative



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Kick off your program with a warm welcome and your opening remarks. This could include an inspiring quote or reading or share with the group why this topic is important to you and your reason for offering to host this lesson.



## LEARN THE WARNING SIGNS OF A HEART ATTACK |

### Lesson Overview

#### Welcome

- What is EmPOWERED to Serve?

#### Health Lesson

- Learn the Warning Signs of Heart Attack
- Don't Wait to Call 9-1-1
- Embrace Life's Simple 7® to Reduce Risk

#### Closing Thoughts

- Create A Culture Of Health
- Online Resources



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Get everyone focused by reading through the lesson overview.

Let participants know that the lesson takes 30 minutes to complete.

**Call to action:** Learn the Warning Signs of a Heart Attack—Don't Wait to Call 9-1-1. This lesson helps empower multicultural communities by increasing awareness about heart attacks and steps to take in the event of a medical emergency.



## WHAT IS EMPOWERED TO SERVE?

**EmPOWERED to Serve is a movement inspiring those who are passionate about driving change through health justice in their communities.**

We are catalysts for change, empowering the equity equation.



**AHA's Mission Statement:**  
**To be a relentless force for a world of longer, healthier lives.**



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Read the introduction to ETS.

Share why you joined the ETS movement.

Encourage anyone who has not joined ETS to go online after the program and sign up for this national movement.

Note that ETS is a platform of the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association and works in partnership with community organizations across the country.

Highlight the American Heart Association's Mission Statement.



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## LEARN ALL YOU CAN ABOUT HEART ATTACK

about every  
**40 seconds**  
an American has  
a heart attack



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- Ask the group for a moment of silence. When it is over, note that during that time someone died from a heart attack
- Review the information on the slide.
- Explain that heart and blood vessel diseases are also called heart disease.



## THE GOOD NEWS



**Every year, tens of thousands of Americans survive heart attack and go back to work and enjoy a normal life.**



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- Ask the group:
  - Do you know anyone who has had a heart attack?
- Review the information on the slide.
- Give hope by noting that tens of thousands of Americans survive heart attack, go back to work and enjoy a normal life. You have every reason to be confident of a full recovery. Hearts can heal and with each passing day get stronger.
- That's why it is so important to know the warning signs of heart attack and call 9-1-1 for help right away. This is today's call to action and you will hear it repeated multiple times.



## PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

**By the end of this lesson, you'll be able to share with your family and friends:**

- Some of the causes and warning signs of heart attack
- What to do if you think someone is having a heart attack
- The differences between a heart attack and cardiac arrest



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- Review the program objectives.
- Explain that importance of today's lesson:
  - You need to know the warning signs of heart attack so you can get help right away, either for yourself or someone close to you.
  - Some heart attacks are sudden and intense. But most start slowly, with mild pain or discomfort.
  - Acting quickly can save many, many lives.
- Ask the group:
  - Do you know what causes a heart attack?



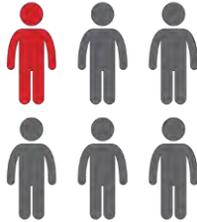
## HEART DISEASE IS...

### The #1 Killer for All Americans



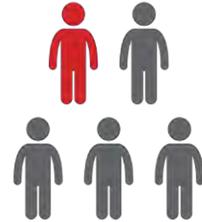
**1 in 4**

**African-Americans**  
die from  
heart disease.



**1 in 6**

**American Indians and  
Alaska Natives** die  
from heart disease.



**1 in 5**

**Latinos** die from  
heart disease.



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- Review the information on the slide.
- Emphasize the importance of members of multicultural communities to develop an awareness about heart disease and the signs of a potential heart attack.



## POINT 1: LEARN THE WARNING SIGNS OF A HEART ATTACK

- **Discomfort in the center of the chest that:**
  - Feels like uncomfortable pressure, squeezing, fullness, or pain
  - Lasts more than a few minutes
  - Goes away and comes back
- **Pain or discomfort in one or both arms, the back, neck, jaw, or stomach**
- **Shortness of breath, with or without chest discomfort**
- **Breaking out in a cold sweat, nausea, and feeling light-headed**



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- Ask for volunteers to take turns reading a symptom aloud.
- Summarize the signs that can mean a heart attack is happening:
  - Uncomfortable pressure, squeezing, fullness or pain in the center of your chest. It lasts more than a few minutes, or goes away and comes back.
  - Pain or discomfort in one or both arms, your back, neck, jaw or stomach.
  - Shortness of breath with or without chest discomfort.
  - Other signs such as breaking out in a cold sweat, nausea or lightheadedness.
- The most common heart attack symptom is chest pain or discomfort.



## WARNING SIGNS MAY DIFFER IN WOMEN

**Women can experience a heart attack without chest pressure.**

**The more common symptoms in women may be:**

- Shortness of breath
- Nausea/vomiting
- Pressure in lower chest/upper abdomen
- Jaw, neck or upper back pain
- Dizziness
- Light-headedness
- Extreme fatigue



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- Review the information on the slide
- Women are more likely than men to experience some of the other common symptoms, particularly shortness of breath, nausea or vomiting, and back or jaw pain.



## VIDEO: SIGNS OF A HEART ATTACK



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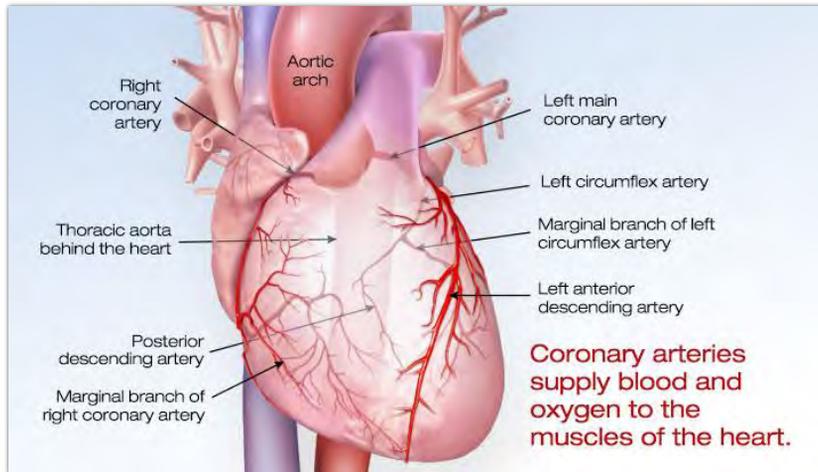
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PREP NOTE: Before the program, review the resource list for this lesson. Check the URL for the "Elizabeth Banks in "Just a Little Heart Attack" video. If you are not going to have a live Internet connection, download the YouTube video ahead of time to your computer. Or, skip this slide.

- Play the video.
- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_JI487DlGTA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_JI487DlGTA)



## WHAT CAUSES A HEART ATTACK?



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PREP NOTE: If you are going to have an Internet connection, consider playing the Heart Attack animation. Click on this image to activate the embedded link. Or, look up the URL on the resources list for this lesson and navigate to it to at this point in the lesson.

Explain to the group:

- A heart attack occurs when the blood flow that brings oxygen to the heart muscle is severely reduced or stopped.
- This happens because coronary arteries that supply the heart with blood can slowly become thicker and harder from a buildup of fat, cholesterol and other substances, called plaque.
- This slow process is known as atherosclerosis.
- If the plaque breaks open and a blood clot forms that blocks the blood flow, a heart attack occurs.





## LEARN THE WARNING SIGNS OF CARDIAC ARREST

- **Sudden loss of responsiveness**  
The person doesn't respond, even if you tap them hard on the shoulders, or loudly ask if they are OK. The person does not move, speak, blink or otherwise react.
- **No normal breathing**  
The person isn't breathing or is only gasping for air.



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(need presenter notes)



## LEARN THE WARNING SIGNS OF CARDIAC ARREST

### What to do:

- **Call 9-1-1** (or send someone to do that)
- Give **Hands-Only™ CPR**: Push hard and fast in the center of the chest
- **Whoever calls 911 should stay on the phone** until the 911 dispatcher says that it's OK to hang up



(need presenter notes)



## POINT 2: DON'T WAIT TO CALL 9-1-1

### Minutes matter. Fast action can save lives.

- **Call 911** – This is the fastest way to get lifesaving treatment
- Emergency medical services staff can begin treatment as soon as they arrive



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- Ask the group:
  - Has anyone had to call 9-1-1 for emergency care?
  - What do you recall about the experience?
- Review the information on the slide.
- Reinforce the message that if you or someone you're with has chest discomfort, especially with one or more of the other signs, don't wait more than five minutes before calling for 9-1-1.



## MANY PUT OFF GETTING HELP

### Some people having a heart attack wait before getting help.

- Some people may feel it would be embarrassing to have a “false alarm.”
- Others may be so afraid of having a heart attack that they tell themselves they aren’t having one.



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- Ask the group:
  - Do you have a tendency to brush off health problems?
- Review the information on the slide.
- Emphasize the importance of getting help right away.



## WORRY ABOUT CALLING 9-1-1?

### Many people wonder:

- Do I need to **pay up front** for the ambulance?
- Will I get in **trouble**?
- Do I need an **ID card** for emergency medical services to help me?



**No. Don't wait to call 911.**



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- Ask for volunteers to read a question, and then for another to answer “No. Don't wait to call 9-1-1.”
- Emphasize that if someone is in need of emergency services, not to wait to call for emergency help.



## TAKE THESE STEPS TODAY

### Before there is an emergency...

- Learn the symptoms of a heart attack
- Find out what hospitals in your area have 24-hour emergency cardiac care
- Remember you should always call 911 in an emergency, including situations in which someone is unresponsive and not breathing normally or only gasping



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- Review the information on the slide.
- Emphasize the importance of making time to really do these things. It can save a life.



## POINT 3: EMBRACE LIFE'S ESSENTIAL 8™ TO REDUCE RISK

### 1. Get Active

**2. Eat Better:** Choose foods that are low in saturated fat, trans fat, cholesterol, and salt.

**3. Lose Weight:** And keep your weight under control.

**4. Stop Smoking:** And avoid other people's tobacco smoke.

### 5. Control Cholesterol

**6. Control Blood Pressure:** And treat high blood pressure if you have it.

**7. Reduce Blood Sugar:** And control your blood sugar if you have diabetes.

**8. Get Adequate Sleep:** Most adults need 7-9 hours of sleep each night. Children require more and varies depending on their age.



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- Ask the group:
  - Have you heard of Life's Essential 8?
  - Do you try to live by Life's Essential 8?
- Explain that by embracing Life's Essential 8, you are also helping to avoid heart attack.
- Review the first bullet with the list of Life's Essential 8 principles.
- Note that in addition to these things, it's important to get regular check-ups and take any medicine as prescribed.



## CALL TO ACTION

- Learn the warning signs of a heart attack and cardiac arrest
- If you see someone with the warning signs of a heart attack or cardiac arrest, call 911 immediately
- Embrace Life's Simple 7® to reduce risk



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- Review the call to action on the slide.
- Ask the group:
  - What are the warning signs of heart attack?
  - How long should you wait before calling 9-1-1?



## YOUR VOICE MATTERS

**We all have the power to make a difference by speaking out for policies that help build healthier communities and healthier lives.**

Join **You're the Cure** today and be among the first to know when major policy initiatives pass or when your help is needed to advocate for a healthy future.

**Text EMPOWER to 46839 join today!**



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Say:

Thank you for joining today. Before we close this lesson, we would like to mention other ways you can continue your health journey and help others in your community.

Each of us have the power to make a difference in our community. By joining the American Heart Association's You're the Cure program, you can be among the first to know when major policy initiatives pass or when your help is needed to advocate for an issue. Text EMPOWER to 46839 to join today!



## USE YOUR VOICE TO CREATE HEALTHIER COMMUNITIES

You can help us work to draw communities together on the path to building a sustainable culture of health.

Go to [EmPOWEREDtoServe.org](https://www.EmPOWEREDtoServe.org)

Sign up to become an ambassador and learn how you can be a part of the movement!



**Join us as we impact the health of ALL in our communities!**



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Encourage everyone to be active in the EmPOWERED to Serve movement.

Share how being part of the ETS movement helps you embrace a lifestyle of health.

Encourage everyone to come to a future ETS health lesson.



## WRAP-UP

**We appreciate your thoughts!**

Tell us what you liked best.

Email us at:  
[empoweredtoserve@heart.org](mailto:empoweredtoserve@heart.org)



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Thank everyone for coming.

Thank all the volunteers who helped coordinate the program.

Take a moment to share an inspirational reading or ask the group to join you in an uplifting song.

# WE ARE EMPOWERED TO SERVE

...serve our health, serve our community



**The American Heart Association requests that this document be cited as follows:**

American Heart Association EmPOWERED to Serve Health Lessons. [EmPOWEREDtoServe.org](https://www.heart.org/emPOWEREDtoServe.org)



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Put this slide up as your closing slide and leave it up until all the participants leave the room.