

First Aid - Heart Problems



A heart attack occurs when there is a sudden interruption of blood supply to part of the heart. This is usually caused by a blood clot.

According to the British Heart Foundation:

Today, **460 people** will die from heart or circulatory disease, and around **130** of those people will be **under 75**

260 hospital admissions will be due to a heart attack

In the UK more than half of the population will get a heart or circulatory condition in their lifetime

Around twice as many people are living with heart and circulatory diseases in the UK than with cancer and Alzheimer's disease combined

Around **80% of people** with heart and circulatory diseases have at least one other health condition.

Signs and Symptoms:

Chest pain:

They may complain of feeling sick, indigestion, crushing, heaviness or similar

Breathing problems:

Fast, shallow breathing, breathless or gasping

Sweating or clammy skin

Looking very pale

Possibly with a blue tinge to the lips

Rapid, erratic or weak pulse

Drowsy, weak or sudden collapse



What to Do:

1

Phone 999 (landline) or 112 (mobile)

For the emergency services and tell them you think the person is having a heart problem.



Position Your Casualty:

Support them into a comfortable, safe position if they are responsive. The best place is on the floor against a wall or chair, with their knees bent towards their chest and their head and shoulders supported. This is known as the 'W' position. Place cushions, duvets, or pillows under their knees to support.

2

Medication:

Follow instructions from the emergency services about giving any medication, such as aspirin or the person's own angina medication.



Monitor:

Stay with your casualty and monitor their level of responsiveness and breathing, until further help arrives. Prepare to start CPR should they become unresponsive and stop breathing.

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