

HEART ATTACK

Management of a heart attack

Signs & symptoms

The warning signs of heart attack vary and usually last for at least 10 minutes.

The patient may get more than one of these symptoms:

- discomfort or pain in the centre of the chest. It may come suddenly or start slowly over minutes. It may be described as tightness, heaviness, fullness, squeezing.
- the pain may be severe, moderate or mild.
- pain may spread to the neck, throat or jaw, shoulders, the back, and either or both arms.

Other signs and symptoms:

- shortness of breath
- sweating
- nausea / vomiting
- dizziness

Management

1. Follow DRSABCD
2. Advise the patient to immediately stop activity, and sit or lie down.
3. If any symptoms are severe, get worse quickly, or last for 10 minutes
 - ensure call for an ambulance has been made
 - do not hang up
4. Loosen tight clothing.
5. Give the conscious patient 300 mg (one tablet) of aspirin in water.
 - Do not give aspirin to:
 - those allergic to it
 - or if their doctor has warned them against taking aspirin.
 - If patient has been prescribed medication such as a tablet or oral spray for angina, get it and assist the patient in taking it as they have been directed.
6. Stay with the patient
 - monitor response and breathing
 - be prepared to give CPR

See the Heart Foundation's Heart Attack Action Plan for further information: www.heartattackfacts.org.au

In an emergency, call triple zero (000) for an ambulance

For more information on St John first aid training and kits, visit www.stjohn.org.au or freecall 1300 360 455