



# Act in Time to Heart Attack Signs

## Heart disease is the top killer of men and women.

Learn the signs of a heart attack and the steps to take if one happens. You can save a life—maybe your own.

## Treatments can stop a heart attack in its tracks.

Clot-busting drugs and other artery-opening treatments work best to stop a heart attack if given within 1 hour of the start of symptoms.

### Know the warning signs:

- ▲ Discomfort or pain in the center of the chest.
- ▲ Discomfort in the arm(s), back, neck, jaw, or stomach.
- ▲ Shortness of breath.
- ▲ Breaking out in a cold sweat, nausea, or light-headedness.

### Uncertainty is normal.

Heart attacks are not always sudden and intense. Many start slowly, with only mild pain or discomfort. You may not be sure what's wrong—even if you've had a heart attack. Each heart attack can have different signs. When in doubt, check it out.

### Don't delay. Call 9-1-1.

Minutes matter! Don't wait more than a few minutes—5 minutes at most—to call 9-1-1.

### Plan ahead.

- ▲ Learn the warning signs.
- ▲ Talk with family and friends about the warning signs and the need to call 9-1-1 quickly.
- ▲ Talk with your health care provider about factors that increase your chance of having a heart attack—and how to reduce your risk.



In partnership with: **American Heart Association**  
Fighting Heart Disease and Stroke

This material is based on original content developed as part of the Rapid Early Action for Coronary Treatment (REACT) research program, funded by the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute, National Institutes of Health, Bethesda, Maryland.



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES  
Public Health Service  
National Institutes of Health  
National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute  
NIH Publication No. 01-3646  
September 2001

