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Care

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SPECIALISTS IN FIRST AID, SAFETY, SPILL & FIRE EQUIPMENT FOR OVER 56 YEARS.

November is CPR Month

Did you know that 'cardiac arrest' is not the same thing as a heart attack?

A heart attack refers to when an artery becomes blocked, preventing oxygenated blood to be distributed to different areas of the body. Cardiac arrest is the term given to describe when the heart develops an irregular rhythm or stops beating altogether, which stops the heart's ability to distribute the oxygen-rich blood throughout the body. Essentially, you can have a heart attack that causes cardiac arrest but not the other way around. Other causes of cardiac arrest could be strokes, drowning, drug overdoses and other severe trauma and shock to the body.

November is CPR month in Canada and aims to bring awareness and education to the public about the importance and effectiveness of CPR. If you know how to perform CPR, you could very well save a life as it can double or sometimes triple the chances of survival when someone suffers cardiac arrest.

The following procedure, courtesy of St. John Ambulance, describes the process that should be considered when an adult victim may require CPR. Please note that proper CPR training is needed.

1. Survey the victim's surroundings. Make sure that nothing in the area can harm you before entering the scene.
2. Assess the victim's responsiveness. Ask him if he or she is okay. If he does not respond, tap the shoulders firmly and shout in both ears to see if the victim wakes up and responds to you.
3. If there is still no response, get medical help (911) and an AED, if you have one available to you. It is helpful if you have a friend with you for this step, since you can continue performing CPR while he or she gets medical help and an AED.
4. Do a primary survey by following the mnemonic ABC: airway, breathing and circulation. Open the airway and check for breathing. Listen for breathing and check to see if the victim's chest is rising and falling. Do this for no less than 5, and no more than 10 seconds.
5. If they are not breathing, begin chest compressions (CPR).
6. Kneel so that you can easily place your hands, one over the other, over the center of the upper chest. Position your shoulders so that they are directly over your hands. It is important to keep your elbows locked at this time to apply the greatest possible concentrated pressure onto the chest in the next steps.
7. Use your body's weight and your own physical strength to push down on the chest in a smooth rhythmic fashion. Push down at least five centimetres, or 2 inches. Fully release so that your hands rise back to your starting position. This is called a compression. Complete 30 compressions at a rate of at least 100 - 120 per minute, while allowing enough time for the heart to refill with blood between each compression. It is helpful at this point to count them out loud, so you can keep a steady rhythm. Another way to keep the rhythm is by doing compressions to the beat of Staying Alive by the Bee Gees, since it runs at 100 bpm.
8. Open the airway by tilting the head and lifting the chin.
9. Using a face shield or CPR Pocket Mask, gently blow 2 breaths into the victim. The chest should rise with each gentle breath. Each breath should take 1 second.
10. Repeat steps seven to nine until either an AED is applied or emergency medical services arrive. If neither happens but you feel yourself reaching exhaustion, it is okay to stop. You should always consider your own life before the victim's.



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To read the full article from St. John Ambulance, please visit <http://bit.ly/2jASRcV>