



Is it a heart attack? Know the signs and symptoms—and take action!

Time is muscle. Those three words are incredibly important to remember if you or someone around you begins to show the signs of a heart attack. That's because the longer you wait to get help for a heart attack, the more likely your heart will be damaged—and heart muscle never grows back once it is lost.

There are several signs or symptoms that might indicate a heart attack is beginning or may begin soon. Every person will experience a heart attack in a different way. Some may show all or most of these symptoms. Others may have just one or two symptoms—or none at all.

Most heart attack symptoms can also be a sign of something else going on in the body. However, you should never take a risk. If you see or feel any of these signs, always call for medical help right away.

Signs and symptoms of heart attack

Discomfort in the chest. The feeling in your chest may or may not be painful, like the pain you'd feel from a toothache or a punch. Most

people describe the feeling as pressure, like there is a tight band around their chest or someone is sitting on their chest. This pressure may last for several minutes, or it may go away and come back in a while.

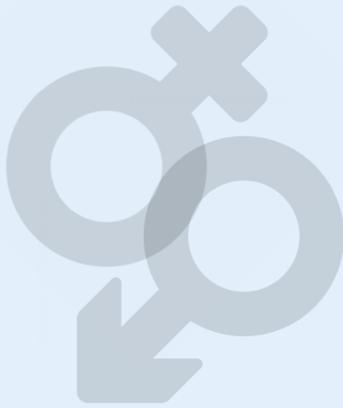
Discomfort other places in the upper body.

Pain may begin in the jaw and travel down the arm. There may be pain or discomfort in either arm without jaw pain. Note that, even though people often say only pain in the left arm is a concern, you may actually have pain in either or both arms. The pain or discomfort may also happen in the upper back (often between the shoulder blades) and/or the neck.

Shortness of breath. It may feel difficult to get your lungs full of air or to catch your breath. You may also feel chest discomfort, and you may sweat more than normal.

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Common Symptoms in Men and Women



Lightheadedness

You may feel dizzy or feel like you might pass out.

Shortness of Breath

You may pant for breath or try to take deep breaths.

Upper Body Pain

Radiating pain in the left or both arms, upper back, neck or jaw.

Stomach Pain

Pain may extend downward into abdominal area and may feel like heartburn.

Nausea and Vomiting

You may feel sick to your stomach or vomit.

Sweating

Paleness or you may suddenly break into a sweat with cold, clammy skin.

Inability to Sleep

You may experience insomnia.

Unusual Fatigue

You may feel more tired than usual or for no apparent reason.

Chest Discomfort

Sharp pain or pressure that may last more than a few minutes or goes away and returns.

Every person is unique and can experience the signs and symptoms of a heart attack differently. People may experience only one or two symptoms, may experience multiple symptoms at different times and can have symptoms over a period of time.

Nausea, indigestion or upset stomach.

Heart attack can sometimes feel like your last meal didn't set well with you—like discomfort or heaviness in your stomach. It may even cause you to vomit. But if it has been hours since you last ate, you are sweating along with the feeling of indigestion, and/or you're feeling pain in your jaw or arm, you should be particularly aware of these signs. Women, this is even more important for you, since many women don't experience the chest discomfort that most people associate with heart attack.

Heart attack symptoms? take action now!

If any heart attack symptoms are present, do not wait to see if they will go away! Don't give in to any embarrassment you may feel about asking for help or calling 911. Get help immediately.

Important: Always call 911 if you or someone around you is showing the signs of heart attack. Never drive yourself to the hospital, and don't have someone else drive you. Why?

- If you drive yourself and you are truly experiencing a heart attack, there's a good chance you'll lose consciousness and cause an accident.
- If someone else drives you, they may be so emotionally stressed that they cause an accident, or they may not remember or know where the nearest hospital is located.
- By calling 911, you'll have safe, quick and accurate transportation to the medical facility that can best care for you. Also, the paramedics will begin sending information to the hospital immediately, so doctors and nurses will be ready to care for you the moment you arrive.

If you're experiencing the signs of a heart attack, call 911 immediately!

Do not call your doctor, the hospital, or a friend or family member.