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# ${f FEBRUARY}$ IS ${f HEART}$ &



### Four out of 10 Canadians will develop heart disease

It's a sobering thought but almost four out of ten Canadians will develop some form of heart disease or stroke.

Most people know someone close who has succumbed to the disease.

With Canada's aging population, it is even more critical that we understand the root causes of these diseases. This knowledge allows for earlier diagnosis and better treatments, while providing Canadians with critical information on how to protect their health.

What if we could stop a heart attack or stroke before it starts? Impossible? Not necessarily. The solution can be summed up in two words: Research and you.

Research: Finding answers. For life.

The Heart and Stroke Foundation leads the way in protecting the health of Canadians at risk of developing heart disease and stroke, through research,

health promotion and advocacy efforts. Through the generosity of its donors, they are a leading funder of heart and stroke research in Canada.

But we're only half-way there.

More Canadians today are recovering from a first attack. Yet half of them still have high risk of a second one. There's more work to be done.

The good news is that we can expect to reap the benefits of more life-saving advances in the next decade or two than in the last century. But the cost of this research continues to balloon. Finding even more funds to support critical research is a challenge.

Thanks to research and new treatments, odds of survival from heart attack today are now better than they were a generation ago.

#### Recognize signals of impending heart attack

die from heart attacks every year because they don't get medical treatment quickly enough. Learn to recognize the signals of heart attack so you can react quickly to save

Pain – sudden discomfort or pain that does not go away with rest; pain that may be in the chest, neck, jaw, shoulder, arms or back; pain that may feel like burning, squeezing, heaviness, tightness or pres-

Thousands of Canadians sure; in women, pain may be more vague; chest pain or discomfort that is brought on with exertion and goes away with rest.

> Shortness of breath – difficulty breathing.

> Nausea - indigestion; vomiting. Sweating – cool, clammy skin. Fear – anxiety, denial.

If you are experiencing any of these signals, you should:

Call 911 or your local emergency number immediately, or have someone call for you.

Stop all activity and sit or lie down, in whatever position is most comfortable.

If you take nitroglycerin, take your normal dosage.

If you are experiencing chest pain, chew and swallow one adult 325mg ASA tablet (acetylsalicylic acid, commonly referred to as aspirin) or two 80 mg tab-

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lets. Pain medicines such as acetaminophen (eg. Tylenol) or ibuprofen (eg. Advil) do not work the same say as ASA (dg. Aspirin) and therefore will not help in the emergency situation described above.

Rest comfortably and wait for emergency medical services (EMS) to arrive.

Are the warning signs of heart attacks the same for women? In the past, it was believed that women have different warning signals than men. That may not be the case. Both women and men may experience typical or non-typical systems such as nausea, sweating, pain in the arm, throat, jaw or pain that is unusual. However, women may describe their pain differently than men. Nevertheless, the most common symptom in women is still chest pain.

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