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## CPR Training Can Help Save Lives

Cardiopulmonary resuscitation, or CPR, is a life-saving method that has prevented the deaths of scores of individuals. CPR is often used to keep a person alive until more in-depth medical attention can be provided. It's an essential skill to know and can be a lifesaver for people of all ages.

The American Heart Association reports that effective bystander CPR, provided immediately after sudden cardiac arrest, can double or triple a victim's chance of survival. Despite these statistics, less than one-third of out-of-hospital sudden cardiac arrest victims receive bystander CPR. It could be because many people still do not know how to perform it.

It's important to keep in mind that while CPR can keep a person alive, Automated External Defibrillators (AED) devices are needed to restore a natural heart rhythm to an individual who has suffered from cardiac arrest. Unless resuscitation is provided within minutes of collapse, an individual can rarely be saved.

CPR training courses are provided for individuals at many places. Check with a hospital, medical provider or police station on where CPR can be learned.

**Performing CPR**

For those who want to know the basics of CPR, follow these guidelines, courtesy of The Mayo Clinic.

Think ABC -- airway, breathing and circulation -- to remember the steps explained below. Move quickly through airway and breathing to begin chest compressions.

**Airway: Clear the airway**

1. Put the person on his or her back on a firm surface.
2. Kneel next to the person's neck and shoulders.
3. Open the person's airway using

the head-tilt, chin-lift maneuver. Put your palm on the person's forehead and gently tilt the head back. Then with the other hand, gently lift the chin forward to open the airway.

4. Check for normal breathing, taking no more than five or 10 seconds. Look for chest motion, listen for normal breath sounds and feel for the person's breath on your cheek and ear. Gasping is not considered to be normal breathing. If the person isn't breathing normally and you are trained in CPR, begin mouth-to-mouth breathing. If you believe the person is unconscious from a heart attack and you haven't been trained in emergency procedures, skip mouth-to-mouth rescue breathing and proceed directly to chest compressions.

**Breathing: Breathe for the person**

Rescue breathing can be mouth-to-mouth breathing or mouth-to-nose breathing if the mouth is seriously injured or can't be opened.

1. With the airway open (using the head-tilt, chin-lift maneuver), pinch the nostrils shut for mouth-to-mouth breathing and cover the person's mouth with yours, making a seal.

2. Prepare to give two rescue breaths. Give the first rescue breath -- lasting one second -- and watch to see if the chest rises. If it does rise, give the second breath. If the chest does not rise, repeat the head-tilt, chin-lift maneuver and then give the second breath.

3. Begin chest compressions to restore circulation.

**Circulation: Restore blood circulation with chest compressions**

1. Place the heel of one hand over the center of the person's chest, between the nipples. Place your other

hand on top of the first hand. Keep your elbows straight and position your shoulders directly above your hands.

2. Use your upper body weight (not just your arms) as you push straight down on (compress) the chest 2 inches (approximately 5 centimeters). Push hard at a rate of 100 compressions a minute.

3. After 30 compressions, tilt the head back and lift the chin up to open the airway. Prepare to give two rescue breaths. Pinch the nose shut and breathe into the mouth for one second. If the chest rises, give a second rescue breath. If the chest doesn't rise, repeat the head-tilt, chin-lift maneuver and then give the second rescue breath. That's one cycle. If someone else is available, ask that person to give two breaths after you do 30 compressions. If you're not trained in CPR and feel comfortable performing only chest compressions, skip rescue breathing and continue chest compressions at a rate of 100 compressions a minute until medical personnel arrive.

4. If the person has not begun moving after five cycles (about two minutes) and an automatic external defibrillator (AED) is available, apply it and follow the prompts. Administer one shock, then resume CPR -- starting with chest compressions -- for two more minutes before administering a second shock. If you're not trained to use an AED, a 911 operator may be able to guide you in its use. Use pediatric pads, if available, for children ages 1 to 8. Do not use an AED for babies younger than age 1. If an AED isn't available, go to step 5 below.

5. Continue CPR until there are signs of movement or until emergency medical personnel take over.

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