



CPR With cardiacSTAR™: Questions + Answers

The best person to start CPR is the closest person. With cardiacSTAR™, you play the game, get CPR certified and stay ready to save lives. Commit these to memory, or keep this guide on hand. You'll be confident in crisis and join a life-saving community worldwide. Please note: The following recommendations are only for adults and teens.

What does CPR stand for?

CPR is short for cardiopulmonary resuscitation. Cardiac arrest happens when the heart stops beating and can't pump blood to the brain and organs vital for life. CPR is a practical, medically proven response to cardiac arrest that can save lives.

What signs do I look for before starting CPR?

For an adult or teen experiencing cardiac arrest, first see if they respond to you. Shout their name. Tap their shoulder. If someone is (1) unconscious and won't wake up, (2) not responding and (3) not breathing or is gasping irregularly, then begin CPR immediately.

When do I call 9-1-1?

As you check for responsiveness, call 9-1-1 immediately. Put it on speaker phone, so you can talk and listen to emergency services as you perform CPR.

Do I have to give mouth-to-mouth CPR?

No. You do not need to provide mouth-to-mouth resuscitation. While trained healthcare professionals give "rescue breaths," you can focus on giving lifesaving, hands-only CPR.

What is "hands-only" CPR?

It's just like it sounds. You only use your hands to perform CPR. You may do compressions and, as available, use an AED. It's just as effective as CPR with mouth-to-mouth.

How do I remember the right pacing for CPR?

Many popular songs have the right beat. In advance, find them online and choose one you know well. Or download a mobile app for a metronome to keep the beat. When in doubt, repeat: Two inches, two inches, two inches. It'll remind you of the depth for compressions and guide your rhythm.

What if I get tired while doing CPR?

Doing CPR is hard, even for a trained athlete. It's important to keep up high quality CPR. So, if someone else is nearby, take turns doing CPR until help arrives.

What if it's only me doing CPR and I'm alone?

Call 9-1-1 to get help on the way. Then, if you know there is an AED nearby, go get it. Start CPR after you follow the AED's instructions. If an AED isn't nearby or you aren't sure, don't waste time looking for it. Start CPR, and don't stop until help arrives. Even if you get tired, some CPR is better than no CPR. Keep going!

Where can I find an AED?

An AED (automated external defibrillator) can be found in many public places, like retail stores, malls, police or fire stations, sporting complexes, and even some gyms and schools. Ask your workplace or school if there is an AED onsite. Also, practice noticing AEDs in public to stay prepared.

What if the person is wet from a pool?

Before you attach an AED pad, make sure the area is dry. Use a towel or dry clothing to fully dry the person's chest. Then, apply the pad and follow instructions from the AED.

Will I remove clothing, piercings or a bra for an AED?

While it is required to remove a shirt, you can place AED pads beneath and beside a bra (in the places illustrated on the AED). This will do the job and deliver an effective shock. Piercings can also be left in place, if the AED pad is not directly touching metal.

Will using an AED hurt a person?

Using an AED is the best chance to save this person's life. You might find it alarming to watch a person's body react, but remember: The AED only instructs you to push the button and deliver a shock after it analyzes the person's heart rhythm. The AED will not hurt them. When used properly, it can only help.

Will I get in trouble if I perform CPR?

Across the United States, Good Samaritan laws protect people, like you, who act in good faith to perform CPR to save lives. In advance, check your local and state laws. In crisis, don't worry about damages (e.g. cracked ribs) from CPR or AED use. Instead, focus on giving the best first aid response you can.

Where can I find out if the person died or survived?

Due to privacy laws in U.S. healthcare, no hospital or doctor's office will be legally allowed to give you information about that person's condition. You can know you did everything possible to ensure their survival. You are part of a vital response.

How do I deal with the emotional impact of CPR?

Both a witness and a rescuer performing CPR will experience stress. Expect strong emotions in the moment, which can linger long after the event. Seek emotional support for yourself, and make a plan for mental health care. Take care of yourself!

