

Heart attack

FIRST AID FACT SHEET

How to treat a heart attack

A heart attack is a pain caused by a blockage of an artery that supplies blood to the heart and causes damage or death of the heart muscle.

What to do

Unconscious casualty

1. Follow DRSABCD St John Action Plan (<https://stjohnwa.com.au/online-resources/first-aid-information-and-resources/drsabcd-action-plan>).
2. Locate the nearest defibrillator and keep it on standby
3. Place casualty in recovery position
4. Urgent medical aid. Call Triple Zero (000) for an ambulance
5. Stay with the casualty and monitor breathing
6. Be prepared to give CPR and administer defibrillation if symptoms worsen.

Conscious casualty

1. Follow DRSABCD St John Action Plan (<https://stjohnwa.com.au/online-resources/first-aid-information-and-resources/drsabcd-action-plan>).
2. Locate the nearest defibrillator and keep it on standby
3. Advise the casualty to immediately sit down to rest and reassure them
4. If the casualty has been prescribed medication such as a tablet or oral spray for angina, assist them to take it as they have been directed
5. If symptoms last for ten (10) minutes or become worse quickly or are severe, call **Triple Zero (000)** for an ambulance immediately
6. Give 300mg (one tablet) of aspirin with water. DO NOT give aspirin to those allergic to it or if their doctor has advised them against taking aspirin
7. Stay with the casualty and monitor consciousness and vital signs. Be prepared to give CPR and administer defibrillation if symptoms worsen.

Signs and symptoms

Pain in the chest may be:
+ Tight, gripping or squeezing

- + Mild to severe
- + Felt in the centre of the chest, shoulders, back, neck or jaw.
- Breathlessness
- Dizzy, lightheaded
- Feel sick or may vomit
- Pale, cold, clammy skin
- May collapse and suffer a cardiac arrest.

Caused by

- Narrowing of the arteries
- A diet high in saturated fats
- Smoking
- High blood pressure.