

Mobilizing Help for Sudden Cardiac Arrest

MOBILE PHONES USED TO SPEED HELP TO CARDIAC ARREST VICTIMS

Communities nationwide should consider using mobile phones and apps to connect people in **cardiac arrest** with nearby CPR-trained rescuers, say new guidelines from the American Heart Association.

The guidelines estimate that such community programs could increase bystander CPR. Bystander CPR is performed in 10 percent to 65 percent of the roughly 326,000 cardiac arrests that happen outside the hospital each year.

Accessing people through a mobile network can get help to the scene faster, said Raina Merchant, M.D., director of the Social Media and Health Innovation Lab at Penn Medicine.

“While emergency system personnel are on their way, bystanders can come by and start helping out,” said Merchant, an assistant professor of emergency medicine at the University of Pennsylvania Perelman School of Medicine. She was not involved in writing the new guidelines.

The new recommendation is largely based on a Swedish study that tested a mobile alert system in Stockholm. The study found that bystander CPR was initiated in 62 percent of cardiac arrests among the group who received cellphone alerts. In the group that did not receive alerts, CPR was performed 48 percent of the time.

About 1,400 U.S. communities are implementing a CPR mobile alert program developed by the nonprofit [PulsePoint Foundation](#), said President Richard Price. When a cardiac arrest

happens, 911 dispatch centers alert responders within a quarter mile of the patient.

Potential responders register through a free mobile app, which alerts them when an emergency occurs, maps directions and reminds them how to give chest compressions. After the emergency, the system sends the local EMS agency a detailed report about the incident and surveys responders about their actions.

“By directly alerting those who are qualified and nearby, maybe in the business next door or on the floor above, PulsePoint is able to put the right people in the right place at the right time,” Price said.

Cellphones also allow people at the scene of a cardiac emergency to get CPR instructions from 911 dispatchers without leaving the victim’s side.

The AHA recommends that anyone who sees a teenager or adult suddenly collapse call 911 and push hard and fast on the center of the chest, a technique known as [Hands-Only CPR](#).

However, the new guidelines recommend that if a bystander is trained in CPR and can perform breaths, he or she should add breaths in a cycle of 30 compressions and two breaths.

Bystanders should use mobile phones to immediately call 911, placing the phones on speaker so the dispatcher can help bystanders check for breathing, get the precise location and provide instructions for performing CPR. **HI**

Source: [American Heart Association News](#) and [American Heart Association News Blog](#)

