

Sudden Cardiac Arrest (SCA) & CPR Fast Facts

- Every year in the US, EMS treats almost 383,000 out-of-hospital sudden cardiac arrests – that's more than 1,000 a day.
- Almost 80 percent of sudden cardiac arrests happen at home and are witnessed by a loved one. Put very simply: The life you save with CPR is mostly likely to be the life of someone you love.
- Currently, less than 12 percent of victims survive sudden cardiac arrest. Effective bystander CPR provided immediately after sudden cardiac arrest can double or triple a victim's chance of survival, but only 41 percent of cardiac arrest victims get CPR from a bystander.
- Sudden cardiac arrest can happen to anyone at any time. Many victims appear healthy with no known heart disease or other risk factors.
- Sudden cardiac arrest is not the same as a heart attack. Sudden cardiac arrest occurs when electrical impulses in the heart become rapid or chaotic, which causes the heart to suddenly stop beating. A heart attack occurs when the blood supply to part of the heart muscle is blocked. A heart attack may cause cardiac arrest.
- African-Americans are almost twice as likely to experience cardiac arrest at home, work or in another public location than Caucasians, and their survival rates are twice as poor as for Caucasians.
- The AHA trains 13 million people in CPR annually, to equip Americans with the skills they need to perform bystander CPR.
- The most effective rate for chest compressions is greater than 100 compressions per minute – the same rhythm as the beat of the BeeGee's song, "Stayin' Alive."