



If you witnessed a member of your family, a fellow worker, or a member of the public in cardiac arrest, would you know what to do?

It is estimated that while most people would recognize the signs, fewer than half of the population would know what to do in the event someone was having a cardiac emergency.

As more than 50,000 Canadians die of heart disease every year, a bit of knowledge can save a life.

In recent years, some instruction agencies have been teaching compression-only CPR – 100 chest compressions per minute, with no rescue breaths. Chest compressions pump the heart, circulating blood through the persons' body.

In many instances, this is suitable for an adult who collapses suddenly. It is not suitable in situations where oxygen in the body has been used up, such as drowning or respiratory emergencies. When a child's heart stops, it is usually due to a respiratory emergency, so "full" CPR with compressions and rescue breaths, would be required.

Everyone who has taken a basic first aid course has learned how to perform CPR. Here is a simple refresher:



Check for danger



Call for help



If no signs of life give CPR

Ensure no danger to yourself or others.

ABC's

Check the person's ABC's (airway, breathing, circulation). If the person is unresponsive and not breathing normally, call 9-1-1 and get an AED or have someone else do this.

If the person does not require CPR, this will likely become clear very quickly and you cannot cause any permanent damage.

Perform chest compressions

Place both of your hands on the center of the person's chest. Do 30 chest compressions; push deeply and steadily.

If you are unable or unwilling to provide rescue breaths, then do 100 chest compressions per minute (to the beat of the Bee Gee's song "Staying Alive").

Give rescue breaths

Open the airway by tilting the head back and lifting the chin (provided there has been no neck trauma). Place your barrier device over the person's mouth and nose.

Give 2 breaths.

Repeat cycles of 30 chest compressions and 2 rescue breaths, OR 100 chest compressions per minute only. Continue CPR until an AED arrives or more advanced care takes over.

Remember: if the person is not breathing, they will not survive. CPR is the best and only thing you can do.