

Is It A Heart Attack?

More than a million Americans have heart attacks each year. Nearly half of them die. This happens because people don't always take action quickly enough – or at all.

A heart attack occurs when blood flow to part of the heart muscle is blocked. If blood flow isn't restored quickly to that part of the heart muscle, it lacks nutrition and dies. That's why it's so important to seek medical help right away.

If you or someone you're with may be having a heart attack, call 911 for an ambulance. If you get caught driving in traffic, you can lose valuable minutes. To help you visualize the urgency of the situation, think of a heart attack as a gunshot to the heart. If symptoms stop within five minutes or come and go, don't just thank your lucky stars. Call your doctor and describe what happened. A blood vessel could be on its way toward blockage.

Cardiologists call the 60 minutes after a heart attack the "golden hour." This is the narrow window of time when treatment can open arteries and prevent permanent heart damage. There are two methods for doing this -- doctors can use a clot-dissolving drug or they can perform an angioplasty, procedure to open blocked heart arteries.

Heart attack symptoms can begin quickly or slowly and can be severe or mild. They may come and go. They can even vary from one time to the next. And some people may have no clear symptoms at all. These are called "silent heart attacks" and are more common in people with diabetes.

Chest discomfort or pain may be a hallmark of heart attack. But it can feel more like pressure than pain. It may be a squeezing or heaviness, making it difficult to catch your breath. Or, you may have a feeling of fullness or indigestion, resembling heartburn.

Other warning signs of a heart attack include:

- Discomfort in one or both arms, back, neck, jaw, or stomach
- Nausea, vomiting, lightheadedness, or fainting
- Sweating

If you or someone you know experiences these symptoms, will you take the needed action? Or will you be afraid you're being an alarmist and worry that the symptoms were nothing but a case of indigestion? If so, remember this: You can't die of embarrassment. But a heart attack can most definitely kill you.

Doctors often prescribe medications to prevent a second heart attack. The medications work in various ways to prevent blood clots, lower cholesterol, or lower blood pressure.

Reference:

National Heart Lung and Blood Institute. "What Is a Heart Attack?" http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/dci/Diseases/HeartAttack/HeartAttack_WhatIs.html

National Heart Lung and Blood Institute. "Heart Attack: Key Points." http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/dci/Diseases/HeartAttack/HeartAttack_Summary.html

National Heart Lung and Blood Institute. "Heart Attack Warning Signs." <http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/actintime/haws/haws.htm>

WebMD: "Heart Attacks and Heart Disease." http://www.webmd.com/heart-disease/guide/heart_disease_heart_attacks

Go Ahead and Enjoy Some Chocolate on Valentine's Day. Just Make Sure It's of the Dark Variety.

Dark chocolate is good for your heart. Two heart health benefits of dark chocolate are:

- Lower Blood Pressure: Studies have shown that consuming a small bar of dark chocolate everyday can reduce blood pressure in individuals with high blood pressure.
- Lower Cholesterol: Dark chocolate has also been shown to reduce LDL cholesterol (the bad cholesterol) by up to 10 percent.

Dark Chocolate also holds benefits apart from protecting your heart:

- it tastes good
- it stimulates endorphin production, which gives a feeling of pleasure
- it contains serotonin, which acts as an anti-depressant
- it contains theobromine, caffeine and other substances which are stimulants

So, go ahead and enjoy (in moderation, of course)!

Reference:

About.com "Health Benefits of Chocolate" by Mark Stibich, Ph.D
<http://longevity.about.com/od/lifelongnutrition/p/chocolate.htm>

Welcome!!

We have added some new faces to the Hawthorne family.

Pharmacist John Floyd, Rph. and **Pharmacy Technician Chris Loveland, CPhT.** have joined us at our Sunset Blvd. location, and **Pharmacy Technician Linda Dickerson, CPhT.** has joined us at our Taylor St. location.

We would like to welcome them to the team!

Check out www.getwellquicker.com today!

Visit Hawthorne Pharmacy at www.hawthornesc.com