



Clallam County Fire District 3

Motto: *Serve, Respect,
Prevent and Protect*

Heart Attack & Stroke

Heart Attack – A heart attack can be a life-and-death emergency where every second counts. If you experience or see someone with any of the listed symptoms, immediately call 9-1-1. Not all these signs occur in every heart attack. Sometimes they go away and return. Heart attack victims can benefit from new medications and treatments unavailable to patients in years past. For example, clot-busting drugs can stop some heart attacks and strokes in progress, reducing disability and saving lives. But to be effective, these drugs must be given relatively quickly after heart attack or stroke symptoms first appear. So again, don't delay-get help right away! Call 9-1-1.

Some heart attacks are sudden and intense, but most heart attacks start slowly, with mild pain or discomfort. Often people affected aren't sure what's wrong and wait too long before getting help. Here are signs that can mean a heart attack is happening:

- ◆ Chest discomfort: Most heart attacks involve discomfort in the center of the chest that lasts more than a few minutes, or that goes away and comes back. It can feel like uncomfortable pressure, squeezing, fullness or pain.
- ◆ Discomfort in other areas of the upper body: Symptoms can include pain or discomfort in one or both arms, the back, neck, jaw or stomach.
- ◆ Shortness of breath: May occur with or without chest discomfort.
- ◆ Other signs: These may include breaking out in a cold sweat, nausea or lightheadedness



As with men, women's most common heart attack symptom is chest pain or discomfort. But women are somewhat more likely than men to experience some of the other common symptoms, particularly shortness of breath, nausea/vomiting, and back or jaw pain.

If you or someone with you has chest discomfort, especially with one or more of the other signs - don't delay - **call 9-1-1 immediately.**

Stroke – A stroke or "brain attack" occurs when a blood clot blocks an artery (a blood vessel that carries blood from the heart to the body) or a blood vessel (a tube through which the blood moves through the body) breaks, interrupting blood flow to an area of the brain. When either of these things happens, brain cells begin to die and brain damage occurs. When brain cells die during a stroke, abilities controlled by that area of the brain are lost. These abilities include speech, movement and memory. How a stroke patient is affected depends on where the stroke occurs in the brain and how much the brain is damaged.

Stroke is the third leading cause of death in America and the No. 1 cause of adult disability. Eighty percent of strokes are preventable; you can prevent a stroke!

Stroke Warning Signs – The American Stroke Association says these are the warning signs of stroke:

- Sudden numbness or weakness of the face, arm or leg, especially on one side of the body.
- Sudden confusion, trouble speaking or understanding.
- Sudden trouble seeing in one or both eyes.
- Sudden trouble walking, dizziness, loss of balance or coordination.
- Sudden, severe headache with no known cause.

Stroke Symptoms – If you or someone with you has one or more of these signs, don't delay! Immediately call 9-1-1. Also, check the time so you'll know when the first symptoms appeared. It is very important to take immediate action. If given within three hours of the start of symptoms, a clot-busting drug can reduce long-term disability for the most common type of stroke.



If you have experienced any of these symptoms, you may have had a TIA (Transient Ischemic Attack) or mini-stroke, consult your doctor immediately. If you think someone may be having a stroke, act F.A.S.T. and do this simple test:

Act F.A.S.T.

- ✓ **FACE** – Ask the person to smile. Does one side of the face droop?
- ✓ **ARMS** – Ask the person to raise both arms. Does one arm drift downward?
- ✓ **SPEECH** – Ask the person to repeat a simple sentence. Are the words slurred? Can they repeat the sentence correctly?
- ✓ **TIME** – If the person shows any of these symptoms, time is important.