

The Importance of Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR)

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The number one cause of death in the United States is heart disease with a half a million people dying every year of cardiac arrest. Cardiac arrest in adults is most often caused by a disturbance in the electrical rhythm of the heart called ventricular fibrillation. This heart rhythm is ineffective in pumping blood through the body. Without the oxygen and nutrients that blood delivers to the vital tissues and organs of the body, these tissues begin to die. Without proper care, brain death will occur in less than ten minutes in individuals in cardiac arrest. Proper care involves the use of an electric shock to correct the ineffective heart rhythm. Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) are devices that assess and deliver this electrical shock when appropriate to people experiencing ventricular fibrillation. The availability of these devices is becoming and will continue to become more widely accessible in schools, shopping areas, businesses and any location where large numbers of people gather.

When someone is experiencing cardiac arrest, the most important action that can be taken is the activation of EMS and early defibrillation. If an AED is not immediately available to deliver this defibrillation, Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) can help buy time by providing artificially breathing and circulation. The earlier CPR is initiated the greater the chance of a successful resuscitation. Up to 80% of all cardiac arrests occur in the home, meaning that having the knowledge of how and when to provide CPR can help you save a life of a family member or loved one.

The American Red Cross and the American Heart Association are organizations that offer CPR certification courses. St. Francis Physical Therapy is an Authorized Provider of American Red Cross Health and Safety Courses. Adult CPR, Child CPR, Infant CPR, Adult AED, Child AED, and Standard First Aid courses are offered throughout the year at St. Francis Physical Therapy. If you are interested in becoming certified, re-certifying, or just refreshing your skills please contact St. Francis Physical Therapy at ph #763-753-8804. Group courses are also available.