

WHERE CLASSICAL WISDOM MEETS INTELLIGENT LEARNING

Chapter 6. Part 2. Cardiovascular Emergencies

Chapter 6: Handling Medical Emergencies

Part 2: Cardiovascular Emergencies

(How to recognize and respond to heart attacks, strokes, shock, and fainting)

1 Recognizing and Managing a Heart Attack (Myocardial Infarction)

What is a Heart Attack?

A **heart attack** happens when blood flow to part of the heart muscle is blocked, usually by a clot in a coronary artery. This deprives the heart of oxygen and causes damage or death of heart tissue.

Common Symptoms:

- Chest pain or pressure (tight, squeezing, heavy feeling)
- Pain may radiate to left arm, jaw, neck, or back
- Shortness of breath
- Cold sweat, nausea, lightheadedness
- Denial or anxiety

Not all heart attacks cause chest pain. Some patients—especially women, elderly, and diabetics—may only feel fatigue, indigestion, or dizziness.

First Aid for Heart Attack:

- 1. Call 112 (EMS) immediately.
- 2. **Keep the person calm and seated**—do not allow them to walk or lie flat.
- 3. **Loosen tight clothing** and reassure them.
- 4. Give aspirin (150-300 mg) if the person is not allergic and is conscious (it thins the blood).
- 5. Monitor pulse and breathing.
 - Be ready to start CPR if the person becomes unresponsive.

2 Recognizing and Managing a Stroke (Brain Attack)

What is a Stroke?

A **stroke** occurs when blood supply to a part of the brain is interrupted (ischemic stroke) or a blood vessel ruptures (hemorrhagic stroke). Brain cells begin to die within minutes.

Use the FAST Test for Quick Recognition:

F - Face Ask the person to smile. Does one side droop?

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- **A** Arms Ask them to raise both arms. Is one arm weak or drifting?
- **S** Speech Ask them to speak. Is speech slurred or strange?
- **T** Time If **any** signs are positive → **call 112 immediately!**

Other Possible Stroke Signs:

- Sudden **confusion** or trouble understanding speech
- Sudden vision problems
- Sudden severe headache
- Sudden loss of balance or coordination

First Aid for Stroke:

- 1. Call 112 immediately—time is brain!
- 2. Keep the person still and seated or lying slightly on their side.
- 3. Do NOT give food, drink, or medication.
- 4. Monitor breathing and be prepared to give CPR.
- 5. Note the **time of symptom onset**—critical for hospital treatment like thrombolysis.

3 First Aid for Shock

What is Shock?

Shock is a life-threatening condition where the body's organs don't get enough blood flow. It can result from trauma, heart failure, allergic reaction, or blood loss.

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Signs of Shock:

- Pale, cool, clammy skin
- Rapid breathing and pulse
- Weakness or confusion
- Bluish lips or fingernails
- Drop in blood pressure
- Unconsciousness (in severe cases)

First Aid for Shock:

- 1. Call 112 immediately.
- 2. Lay the person down flat on their back.
- 3. **Elevate their legs** 6-12 inches (unless there's injury to head, neck, back, or legs).
- 4. **Keep the person warm** with a blanket or clothing.
- 5. Do not give anything to eat or drink.
- 6. Monitor vital signs. If they stop breathing or lose pulse, start CPR.

4 First Aid for Fainting (Syncope)

What is Fainting?

Fainting is a temporary loss of consciousness due to a sudden drop in blood flow to the brain. It usually recovers within

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seconds to minutes.

Causes:

- · Standing too long
- Dehydration
- Sudden emotional shock or pain
- · Low blood sugar
- Sudden change in position (postural hypotension)

Warning Signs Before Fainting:

- Dizziness or light-headedness
- Nausea
- Sweating
- · Blurred vision or "tunnel vision"
- Pale skin

First Aid for Fainting:

- 1. Lay the person flat on their back.
- 2. **Elevate legs** slightly to increase blood flow to the brain.
- 3. Loosen tight clothing, especially around the neck.
- 4. Ensure fresh air—open windows or move to a cooler area.
- 5. If unconscious for **more than 1 minute**, or if injured from falling \rightarrow **call 112**.

After regaining consciousness, let the person lie down for 10-15 minutes before standing slowly.

5 Self-Check Questions

- 1. What does FAST stand for in stroke recognition?
- 2. When should aspirin be given during a heart attack?
- 3. Why is it important to elevate the legs in shock?
- 4. Name two early signs of fainting.
- 5. What should you avoid giving to a person in shock or during stroke?
- 1. Face drooping, Arm weakness, Speech difficulty, Time to call emergency.
- 2. If the person is conscious and not allergic to it.
- 3. To improve blood flow to the brain and vital organs.
- 4. Light-headedness, sweating, nausea, blurred vision.
- 5. Food, drink, or oral medication.

☐ Key Take-Home Points

- **Heart attack** = chest pain + shortness of breath \rightarrow call 112, give aspirin.
- **Stroke** = sudden weakness or speech trouble → use **FAST**, get emergency help.
- **Shock** needs immediate help—lie down, elevate legs, don't give food/drink.
- Fainting is brief—ensure the person lies down and recovers slowly.

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Let me know if you'd like diagrams of heart attack zones, stroke types, or a one-page CPR + cardiovascular emergency aid poster!

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