FEBRUARY IS AMERICAN HEART MONTH

Heart attack symptoms are not created equal

The American Heart Association urges everyone to learn the signs of a heart attack – your own or another’s. However, years of studies have concluded that heart attack symptoms may be different for men and women. Some heart attacks are sudden and intense. Most start slowly, with mild pain or discomfort. Even if you’re unsure if it’s a heart attack, DO NOT hesitate to call 911 immediately.

General warning signs of heart attack in men and/or women

- Chest discomfort. Most heart attacks involve discomfort in the center of the chest that lasts more than a few minutes – or it may go away and then return. 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. This can occur with or without chest discomfort.
- Other signs. Other possible signs include breaking out in a cold sweat, nausea or lightheadedness.

More subtle warning signs of heart attack in women

- Women sometimes have a tendency to think these signs are less life-threatening.
- Uncomfortable pressure, squeezing, fullness or pain in the center of the chest. It may last more than a few minutes, or goes away and comes back. Some women experience no chest discomfort.
- Pain or discomfort in one or both arms, the back, neck, jaw or stomach.
- Shortness of breath with or without chest discomfort.
- Other signs such as 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.

To learn more about heart attack symptoms, visit https://www.heart.org/en/health-topics/heart-attack/warning-signs-of-a-heart-attack