

## Safety Bulletin 75

# Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR)

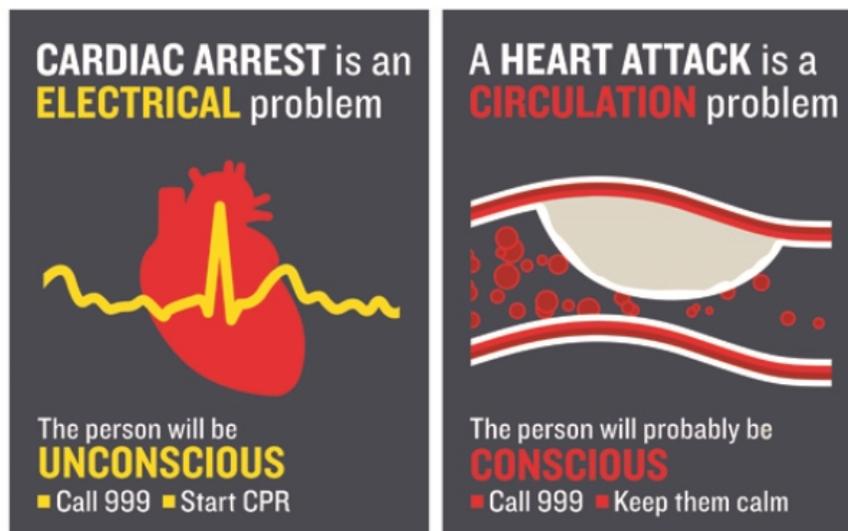
## What is CPR?

It's a life saving medical procedure which is given to someone who is in cardiac arrest. It helps to pump blood around the person's body when their heart can't.

To carry out CPR a person presses up and down on the casualty's chest (chest compressions) and gives them a series of rescue breaths to help save their life when they are in cardiac arrest.

## What is a cardiac arrest?

A cardiac arrest is caused by an electrical problem in the heart. This electrical problem causes the heart to stop pumping blood around the body and to the brain.



It causes the person to fall unconscious and stop breathing. Without CPR the person will die within minutes.

CPR should only be used if someone is:

- unconscious and not breathing
- unconscious and not breathing normally

If you witness a cardiac arrest, it's crucial to call 999 and start CPR **immediately**.

To learn how to perform CPR, follow these simple steps:

- Step 1: Shake and shout
- Step 2: Check for normal breathing
- Step 3: Call 999
- Step 4: Give 30 chest compressions
- Step 5: Give two rescue breaths
- Step 6: Repeat until an ambulance arrives

Remember – even if you haven't been trained in CPR with rescue breathing, you can still use hands-only CPR.

## Step 1: Shake and shout

If you come across someone who is unconscious, always check for danger and look for risks before you start helping.



- **Check for a response** – gently shake the person's shoulders and ask loudly 'are you alright?'
- **Shout for help** – if someone is nearby, ask them to stay as you might need them. If you are alone, shout loudly to attract attention, but don't leave the person.

## Step 2: Check for normal breathing

Someone having a cardiac arrest won't be breathing, or won't be breathing normally. They also won't be conscious. Keeping their head back, check if the person is breathing normally by looking for:



- **regular chest movements**
- **listening for breathing**
- **feeling for breath on your cheek**

Look, listen and feel for no more than 10 seconds. Don't confuse gasps with normal breathing. If you're not sure if their breathing is normal, act as if it's not normal.

- If you're sure the person is breathing normally, then put them in the recovery position and call 999.
- If breathing isn't normal, open their airway. Place one hand on the person's forehead, gently tilt their head back, then lift their chin using two fingers of your other hand under their chin – when you do this you open their airway.

### Step 3: Call 999



If the person is not breathing or not breathing normally:

- Ask someone to **call 999 immediately** and ask for an ambulance
- Ask someone for a public access defibrillator (PAD)

If you can't find anyone to help, call 999 before you start CPR.

### Step 4: Give 30 chest compressions



- Kneel next to the person
- Place the heel of one hand in the center of their chest
- Place your other hand on top of the first. Interlock your fingers
- With straight arms, use the heel of your hand to push the breastbone down firmly and smoothly, so that the chest is pressed down between 5–6 cm, and release
- Do this at a rate of 100 to 120 chest compressions per minute – that's around 2 per second
- Give **30 chest compressions**

### Step 5: Give two rescue breaths



- Open the airway again by tilting the head back and lifting the chin. Pinch the soft part of the person's nose closed.
- Take a normal breath, make a seal around their mouth and breathe out steadily.
- The person's chest should rise and fall. Keeping the person's head back and the chin lifted, take your mouth away, take another normal breath, and give a second rescue breath. The two breaths should take no longer than five seconds.

### Step 6: Repeat until an ambulance arrives

- Repeat 30 compressions and two rescue breaths.



If you'd rather not give rescue breaths then call 999 and deliver hands-only CPR. That's better than doing nothing.

Keep going until professional help arrives and takes over, or the person starts to show signs of regaining consciousness, such as coughing, opening their eyes, speaking, or breathing normally.

If you're feeling tired, and there's someone nearby to help, instruct them to continue.

You can find the relevant guidance including a CPR Demonstration Video [here](#).

**Should you require any further assistance or a First Aid Course including administering CPR, please contact us on [info@wpsafety.co.uk](mailto:info@wpsafety.co.uk) or 01268 649006**



**Source: The British Heart Foundation (BHF)**