

# SMART about Cardiac Signs and Symptoms

## **S- Signs and symptoms** of angina, heart attack and stroke.

**Angina** is your hearts way of telling you that it is not getting enough oxygen via blood flow to the heart muscle. Angina is a warning sign and does not cause permanent damage to the heart. With a heart attack there is damage to the heart due to *prolonged* lack of oxygen to the heart.

Signs and symptoms of angina can include:

- Chest pain or discomfort
- Pain or numbness in your arms, neck, jaw, shoulder or back
- Shortness of breath
- Fatigue
- Symptoms generally last a few minutes and may come and go

If you have been prescribed nitroglycerine take as prescribed. If angina is still present or if you have any other symptoms such as nausea and sweating you must call 9-1-1.

**Heart attack** signs and symptoms can include:

- Uncomfortable pressure, squeezing, fullness or pain in the center of the chest that lasts more than a few minutes or goes away and comes back.
- 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
- Angina is not relieved after taking 3 nitroglycerine tablets

CALL 9-1-1 if you have heart attack symptoms or angina is not relieved after 3 nitroglycerine tablets

**Stroke** signs and symptoms can include:

- **F**ace – does the face look uneven? Ask the person to smile
- **A**rm – does the arm drift down? Ask the person to raise both arms
- **S**peech – does the speech sound strange? Ask the person to repeat a simple phrase
- **T**ime – If you observe these symptoms CALL 9-1-1

**M- Make sure you call 9-1-1** and get help immediately if you or someone else has Heart attack or stroke symptoms. A heart attack or stroke is a medical emergency. Review these symptoms and action plan with your family.

## **A- R Always Report these changes**

- Any new chest discomfort OR any change in how often, how intense or how long you have angina
- Any new shortness of breath
- Feeling extremely tired, dizziness or fainting

**T- Take time to learn** about additional symptoms related to your specific medical conditions.( Some common conditions include, **Diabetes** (too high or too low blood sugar), **Congestive Heart Failure** (Check weight daily, check for swelling, shortness of breath etc), **Irregular Heart rhythm** ( e.g. atrial fibrillation), Valve disorders, **Depression/Anxiety, COPD/asthma** ) **Take time to complete the activities on the next page and attend the group Heart Smart classes on Mondays and Wednesdays at 11 am. Check schedule for specific topic dates.**

**1. Check off all of the signs and symptoms of angina**

- Uncomfortable pressure, squeezing, fullness or pain in the center of the chest
- Pain or discomfort in one or both arms, the back, neck, jaw or stomach.
- Shortness of breath with or without chest discomfort.
- Symptoms lasting a few minutes and then resolve without nitroglycerine or up to 3 nitroglycerine tablets.

**2. Check off all of the signs and symptoms of heart attack (Myocardial Infarction)**

- Uncomfortable pressure, squeezing, fullness or pain in the center of the chest
- Symptoms that last more than a few minutes or goes away and comes back.
- 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 cold sweat, nausea, or lightheadedness
- Angina that is not relieved after taking 3 nitroglycerine tablets

**3. Check off all of the signs and symptoms 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 walking, dizziness, loss of balance or coordination.
- Sudden trouble seeing in one or both eyes.

4. If you think you are having angina, follow these steps: Stop what you are doing and rest for \_\_\_\_\_ minutes. If angina is still present, take \_\_\_\_\_ (#) nitroglycerine. Wait \_\_\_\_\_ minutes and take another nitroglycerine. You can take up to \_\_\_\_\_ (#) nitroglycerine in total. If angina is not resolved after 3 nitroglycerine the next step would be to \_\_\_\_\_.

5. If you have had angina, what symptoms did you have?

6. If you had a heart attack, what symptoms did you have?

**7. Check off all of the changes to report to your doctor.**

- Any new chest discomfort (angina) OR any change in how often, how intense and how long you have it for
- Any new shortness of breath
- Feeling extremely tired, dizziness or fainting