

## Know the Signs!

### **HEART ATTACK IS AMERICA'S NUMBER ONE KILLER AND STROKE IS NUMBER THREE.**

Both conditions can place a strain, emotionally and financially, on families. Stroke is also a leading cause of disability often leading to decreased quality of life. Massachusetts has been especially hard hit. Nearly one third of all deaths in Massachusetts are due to heart attack and stroke! Do you know the signs of heart attack and stroke?

If you or someone you love were having a heart attack or stroke, would you know what to do?

Study the tips in this brochure and they may help you save a life!



*Health New England "How Can We Help?"*

*The material contained in this brochure is for general information only and is not intended to provide specific medical advice or recommendations for any individual. Your physician or other health care professional must be consulted for advice with regard to your individual situation.*

**Visit Healthy Directions at [hne.com](http://hne.com)**

### **HERE'S WHAT TO DO! DIAL 911 IMMEDIATELY - EVERY SECOND COUNTS**

#### **SUDDEN OR SLOW!**

Some heart attacks are sudden and intense. But most heart attacks start slowly, with mild pain or discomfort. Often people aren't sure what's wrong and wait too long before getting help. Not all the signs occur in every heart attack or stroke. Some signs go away and return.

#### **TIME LOST IS BRAIN LOST!**

Today heart attack and stroke victims can benefit from new medications and treatments unavailable to patients in years past. For example, clot-busting drugs can stop some heart attacks and strokes in progress, reducing disability and saving lives. But to be effective, these drugs must be given relatively quickly after heart attack or stroke symptoms first appear. So again, don't delay – get help right away!

**SIGNS TO LOOK FOR IF YOU SUSPECT SOMEONE MAY BE HAVING  
A HEART ATTACK OR STROKE...**

| <b>SIGNS OF A HEART ATTACK</b>  | <b>SIGNS OF A STROKE</b>   |
|---|--|
| <b>CHEST DISCOMFORT</b>   | <b>SUDDEN NUMBNESS OR WEAKNESS OF THE FACE, ARM OR LEG, ESPECIALLY ON ONE SIDE OF THE BODY</b> |
| <b>DISCOMFORT IN OTHER AREAS OF THE UPPER BODY - ONE OR BOTH ARMS, THE BACK, NECK, JAW OR STOMACH</b> | <b>SUDDEN CONFUSION, TROUBLE SPEAKING OR UNDERSTANDING</b>                                     |
| <b>SHORTNESS OF BREATH</b>  | <b>SUDDEN TROUBLE SEEING IN ONE OR BOTH EYES</b>   |
| <b>BREAKING OUT IN A COLD SWEAT</b>   | <b>SUDDEN TROUBLE WALKING, DIZZINESS, LOSS OF BALANCE OR COORDINATION</b>                      |
| <b>NAUSEA OR LIGHT-HEADEDNESS</b>   | <b>SUDDEN, SEVERE HEADACHE WITH NO KNOWN CAUSE</b>   |

*Source: American Heart Association and American Stroke Association  
For more information visit [americanheart.org](http://americanheart.org); [strokeassociation.org](http://strokeassociation.org); [hne.com](http://hne.com)*

**DECREASE YOUR RISK FOR HEART ATTACK AND STROKE!**

- Eat nutritious foods – more fruits and vegetables and less salt, fat and cholesterol
- Be physically active everyday – walk or exercise regularly
- Control blood sugar levels if you have diabetes
- Control high blood pressure – take medicine as prescribed
- Stop smoking
- Lose weight, if necessary