



KNOW THE SYMPTOMS CALL 144

What to do in an emergency

Heart attack, stroke and cardiac arrest are the most common emergencies in Switzerland – more than 50 000 cases a year.

The aim of the Swiss Heart Foundation's HELP life-saving programme is to make sure people in Switzerland are familiar with the symptoms of a cardiac or cerebral emergency, so that they can immediately call the **emergency number 144** and save lives.



Symptoms of heart attack

- intense, restrictive pressure and vice-like pain in the middle of the chest lasting at least 15 minutes, often radiating to the shoulders and arms (usually the left), the neck, lower jaw or the upper abdomen
- nausea, weakness, sweating, possibly cold pale skin
- anxiety, breathlessness

Caution: In the case of women and elderly patients, the following symptoms are frequently the sole signs of a heart attack: breathlessness, unaccountable nausea and vomiting, pressure in the chest, back or abdomen.

Symptoms of stroke

- sudden paralysis, numbness or weakness, usually on only one side of the body (face, arm or leg)
- sudden blindness (often only in one eye) or double vision
- difficulty speaking or understanding what is being said
- intense dizziness with inability to walk
- sudden, unaccustomed, intense headache

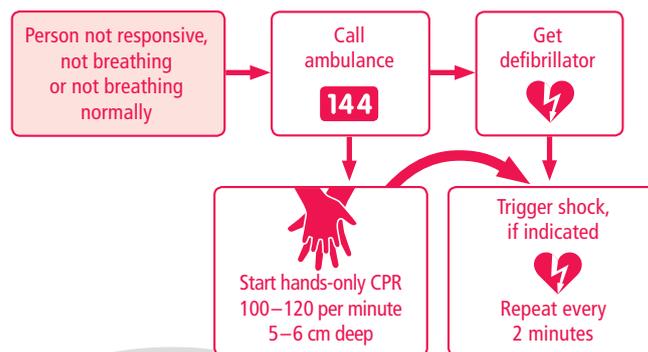
What to do in a heart attack or stroke – every minute counts!

- Call **144** (or the local emergency number when abroad).
- Give the address (location), name and age of the patient.
- Lie the stroke patient flat on his or her back or the heart attack patient with the upper body slightly raised on a hard surface or on the floor.
- Undo tight-fitting clothes, tie or bra.
- At night, switch on the lights in the apartment, the stairwell and at the front door. Ask a neighbour to direct the ambulance, while you stay with the patient for reassurance.

Symptoms of cardiac arrest

- no response when spoken to in a loud voice and shaken
- no breathing

The vital steps in the case of patients who do not respond when spoken to or shaken:



Every minute counts in an emergency!

The right pressure point is important for restoring cardiopulmonary function: in the centre of the chest, lower half of breastbone, press to a depth of 5 to 6 cm.



People experienced in First Aid are recommended to administer both chest compressions and rescue breaths (ratio of 30:2).