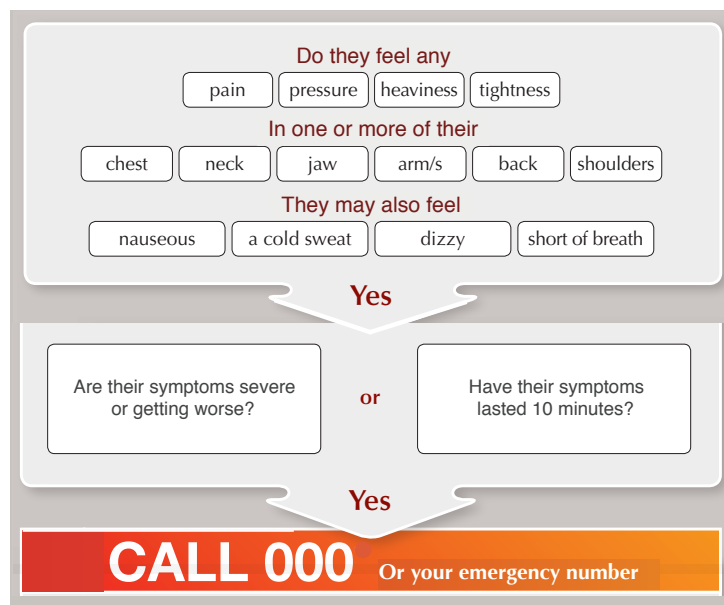


CHEST PAIN



Heart attack? (based on Australia Heart Foundation)

The symptoms of a heart attack are not always obvious. The onset may not be sudden and the pain can be in the arms, neck or upper abdomen rather than the chest. There may not even be pain. Some people say they feel nauseous, lightheaded or simply very unwell. So be very cautious. If patients meet the criteria above, call an ambulance. Even if their pain is mild and lasts less than ten minutes, speak to a doctor before releasing the patient.

Scenario

A 47 year old engineer presents to the clinic with a squeezing pain in his chest and right shoulder. He is sweaty and a little pale. He had similar, but less intense pains over the last week. He put them down to muscle pain as he has recently joined a gym to lose weight. He asks for a pain tablet and an ice pack.

Task

Some of you will be asked to tackle a similar practice scenario this month.

Discuss your approach with your colleagues before then.

Question

What complications can occur in the first few hours to a person suffering a heart attack?

Step-by-step

- ★ **Call 000 or your emergency number.**
- ★ **Call for the defibrillator and other resuscitation gear.**
- ★ **Give oxygen 8 L/min by face mask.**
- ★ **Record pulse, blood pressure and oxygen saturation. Monitor heart rhythm. Take an electrocardiogram trace when possible.**
- ★ **If pain continues and systolic blood pressure is greater than 110 mmHg, give half an anginine tablet under the tongue. This may be repeated in 15 minutes.**
- ★ **Give 300 mg aspirin, when convenient**
- ★ **Insert intravenous line, if able.**
- ★ **If the patient becomes hypotensive, and their lungs are clear, elevate the legs.**
- ★ **If the patient becomes unresponsive, check ABC and start cardiac arrest protocol.**

