

Facts about Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR)

- Cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) is the method of providing oxygen and blood circulation through the delivery of rescue breathing and chest compressions to victims in cardiac arrest.
- Cardiac arrest is most often caused by an abnormal heart rhythm called ventricular fibrillation (VF), whereby the heart loses the ability to pump blood and distribute oxygen through the blood.
- While no one knows precisely how many patients go into sudden cardiac arrest (SCA), Arrhythmia Alliance estimates that SCA claims the lives of 250 people every single day in the UK.
- According to the British Heart Foundation, immediate CPR is of utmost importance as it more than doubles a person's chances of survival by helping to maintain vital blood flow to the heart and brain.¹
- The Resuscitation Council (UK) is responsible for issuing CPR guidelines in the UK. These are updated every five years to help improve training and performance of CPR, which in turn will improve survival rates. The UK guidelines are based on those issued by the European Resuscitation Council (ERC), which are derived from research and in association with the International Liaison Committee on Resuscitation (ILCOR). Updated guidelines on CPR techniques are due to be published in October 2010.
- According to the Resuscitation Council (UK), trainees will retain less than 10% of CPR skills just a few weeks after attending a course.
- Research has demonstrated that data on CPR performance, as well as feedback to rescuers, can be critically important in achieving successful outcomes during resuscitation.²
- CPR saves lives every day. In 2000 a six-month study of 49 UK hospitals found that 240 of 1,368 patients (just over 17%) who suffered an in-hospital cardiac arrest were discharged alive following CPR.³
- If effective CPR is not provided immediately, a sudden cardiac arrest victim's chance of survival falls 14% for every minute of delay until defibrillation.⁴

¹ British Heart Foundation – Heartstart UK

http://www.bhf.org.uk/get_involved/other_ways_to_get_involved/heartstart_uk_training.aspx.

² Edelson, Dana, et al. (2008), *Archives of Internal Medicine*, 'Improving In-Hospital Cardiac Arrest Process and Outcomes using Performance Debriefing'.

³ Gwinnutt, C. (2000), *Resuscitation*, 'Outcome after cardiac arrest in adults in UK hospitals: effect of the 1997 guidelines'.

- According to the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, CPR performed both outside and inside the hospital setting often does not meet or adhere to standard guidelines.^{5,6}
- Research shows that the quality of CPR has a direct impact on the victim's chance of survival.⁷

⁴ British Heart Foundation Defibrillators,

http://www.bhf.org.uk/research_health_professionals/non-research_grants/defibrillators.aspx

⁵ Abella et al. (2005), *JAMA*, 'Quality of Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation During In-Hospital Cardiac Arrest'.

⁶ Wik et al. (2005), *JAMA*, 'Quality of Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation During Out-of-Hospital Cardiac Arrest'.

⁷ Ko et al. (2005), *Resuscitation*, 'Evaluating the Quality of Prehospital Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation by Reviewing Automated External Defibrillator Records and Survival for Out-of-Hospital Witnessed Arrests'.