



womenshealth.gov

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Know the Signs of a Heart Attack

For both women and men, the most common sign of a heart attack is **pain or discomfort in the center of the chest**. The pain or discomfort can be mild or strong. It can last more than a few minutes, or it can go away and come back.

Other common signs of a heart attack include:

- Pain or discomfort in one or both arms, back, neck, jaw, or stomach
- Shortness of breath (feeling like you can't get enough air). The shortness of breath often occurs before or with the chest pain or discomfort.
- Nausea (feeling sick to your stomach) or vomiting
- Feeling faint or woozy

- Breaking out in a cold sweat

Women are more likely than men to have the "other" common signs of a heart attack, particularly shortness of breath, nausea or vomiting, and pain in the back, neck, or jaw. Women are also more likely to report having other signs of a heart attack, including:

- Heartburn
- Loss of appetite
- Feeling tired or weak
- Coughing
- Heart flutters

Sometimes the signs of a heart attack happen suddenly, but they can also develop slowly, over hours, days, and even weeks before a heart attack occurs.

The more heart attack signs that you have, the more likely it is that you are having a heart attack. Also, if you've already had a heart attack, your symptoms may not be the same for another one. Even if you're not sure you're having a heart attack, you should still have it checked out.

If you think you, or someone else, may be having a heart attack, wait no more than a few minutes—five at most—before calling 911.

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