



February is Heart Awareness Month

The recent celebrity deaths related to heart disease should prompt us all to evaluate our own heart health and potential risks for heart disease. According to the American Heart Association, if you experience the following symptoms, report them to your health care professional. If the symptoms become severe, do not hesitate to call 911:

1. Chest Discomfort, the most common sign, is pain, tightness, or pressure in your chest, which does not go away. If the pain increases or lasts for several minutes, you need to call 911.
2. Nausea, Indigestion, Heartburn, or Stomach Pain may occur during a heart attack. Women may report these symptoms more than men.
3. Pain that spreads to the left arm.
4. If you feel dizzy or lightheaded suddenly and have chest discomfort or shortness of breath, call a doctor right away or 911.
5. Throat or jaw pain that radiates from your chest to your jaw or throat.
6. If you get exhausted easily, have extended shortness of breath, tiredness, or unexplained weakness for days at a time, especially if you are a woman, notify your health care professional.
7. Loud Snoring, gasping for air or choking can be a sign of sleep apnea, which means episodes of not breathing for brief moments several times at night while you are still sleeping. You may need to have a sleep study and your doctor may want you to have a CPAP machine to smooth out your breathing.
8. Breaking out in a cold sweat for no obvious reason could signal a heart attack. If this happens along with any of these other symptoms, call 911 to get to a hospital right away. Don't try to drive yourself.
9. Your Legs, Feet, and Ankles Are Swollen which may indicate your heart is not working properly.
10. Irregular Heart Beat which means the heart is beating out of time for more than just a few seconds.

The good news is you can start taking better care of your health and heart in the following ways:

Get physical exercise, start with 15 minutes a day and build up to 30 minutes to 60 minutes a day.

Drink more water

Eat Healthy

Control Cholesterol-eat low fat foods, vegetables, take medication as ordered

Limit salt, read labels for salt content, do not add salt to foods

Quit smoking

Maintain a healthy weight by watching diet and exercising

Keep a positive attitude

For additional information on how to have a healthy heart, go to: <http://www.heart.org/HEARTORG>