
Compression-only CPR — September 2009

- **General Statement**

Compression-Only CPR involves simply giving continuous chest compressions. The Red Cross recognizes that providing instruction on giving quality Compression-Only CPR encourages and enhances the capacity of bystanders to react and respond when they witness an adult or adolescent suddenly collapse.

- Emergencies can happen when you least expect them. Red Cross CPR/AED and first aid training, can give you the skills and confidence you'll need to respond until a trained responder arrives. It's easier than you think to learn how to save a life and the Red Cross can help you be ready to respond!
- In a life-threatening cardiac emergency, every second counts. If you see an adult or adolescent suddenly collapse, there are two simple things that you can do to make a real difference in someone surviving a cardiac arrest:
 - Call or have someone call 9-1-1 or the local emergency number.
 - Give continuous chest compressions until emergency medical help arrives and takes over.
- Continuous chest compressions help keep blood containing oxygen circulating throughout the body for someone whose heart has stopped beating. Compression-Only CPR takes a few minutes to learn, is easy to remember and can help save a life.
- If you see an adult (or adolescent) suddenly collapse:
 1. Check the scene for safety and then see if the person responds to you, by tapping on the person's shoulder and shouting, "Are you okay?"
 2. If the person does not respond, call 9-1-1 or the local emergency number. Even if you are alone, make the call right away.
 3. Open the airway (tilt head, lift chin) and briefly check for normal breathing:
 - Look to see if the chest rises and falls
 - Listen for breathing
 - Feel for breathing on the side of your face
 4. If, no breathing, give continuous chest compressions.
 - Kneel beside the person and place the heel of one hand on the center of the chest.
 - Place the other hand on top and lace your fingers together.
 - Position your shoulders directly over your hands, keeping your arms straight and fingers off the chest.
 - Push down on the chest fast and deep (about 2 inches) and let the chest rise completely before pressing down again. Don't take your hands off the chest, just your weight.
 5. Do not stop or interrupt compressions until:

- You see an obvious sign of life such as normal breathing
 - The scene becomes unsafe
 - An AED is ready to use
 - You are too exhausted to continue
 - A trained responder arrives and takes over.
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- Doing something is better than nothing at all. In a cardiac arrest, giving chest compressions can improve a person's chance of survival.

 - Every household should have at least one person trained in lifesaving skills. Additional courses offered by the Red Cross teach you how to help someone who is choking, how to give full CPR (compressions *and* rescue breaths) and use an AED. Knowing full CPR will enable you to help in other emergencies, such as those that involve infants and children. Visit RedCross.org to find your local Red Cross chapter. Sign up for training today!