



HOT NEWS

CPR Training Saves Lives

It can happen anytime, anywhere and to anybody: sudden cardiac arrest. In sudden cardiac arrest, a disturbance occurs in the electrical system of the heart. This causes a life-threatening condition called ventricular fibrillation. The victim's heart stops beating, their breathing ceases and they collapse, unconscious. Unless CPR (*cardiopulmonary resuscitation*) is immediately performed by a bystander, the victim's chance of survival quickly diminishes and death becomes certain.

Is Sudden Cardiac Arrest rare?

Heart disease is the number one global cause of death with 17.3 million deaths each year. That number is expected to rise to more than 23.6 million by 2030 and is the primary cause of sudden cardiac arrest. The American Heart Association estimates that approximately 326,000 Americans suffer out-of-hospital-cardiac-arrests every year. This statistic is even more alarming in light of the fact that 1 out of 4 victims had *no symptoms prior to the event*. Moreover, approximately 88 percent of sudden cardiac arrests occur *at home*, highlighting this statistical fact: the life you save with CPR is most likely to be someone you love.

What is CPR and how does it work?

Simply put: cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) is the process whereby a rescuer externally mimics the workings of a victim's heart and lungs. A normal, healthy heart is tasked with pumping oxygen-rich blood to the brain and other organs. When a victim suffers a sudden cardiac arrest, their heart can no longer provide this critical task. The circulation of blood and nutrients in their arteries and veins comes to an abrupt standstill. Because of this, their brain and other vital organs immediately begin to fail. Within 4 to 6 minutes, irreversible brain damage and eventual death follows. By quickly and deeply compressing a victim's chest and breathing into their lungs, a rescuer forces oxygen-carrying blood through the victim's body and into their brain. This may buy just enough time for EMS to reach the victim and identify

and address the *cause* of their sudden cardiac arrest and perform a process called *defibrillation*. Furthermore, if an Automated External Defibrillator (AED) is readily available, a trained bystander might be able to restart the dying person's heart before EMS even arrives. Research confirms that this significantly improves outcomes in sudden cardiac arrest.

The importance of defibrillation

CPR alone rarely restarts a victim's heart; it only keeps the brain and organs from being destroyed by the cardiac arrest. It is *defibrillation* that actually causes the heart to once again beat on its own. Defibrillation is accomplished with a small, portable, battery-powered device called an Automated External Defibrillator (AED). This simple machine delivers an electric shock into the heart through adhesive pads that a rescuer has applied to the person's bare chest. This electric shock corrects the electrical malfunction occurring in the heart of the victim, allowing it to regain its normal function. In sudden cardiac arrest, the combination of immediate, high-quality CPR and defibrillation has been shown to double and even triple a person's chance of survival. Sadly, only 32 percent of cardiac arrest victims receive bystander CPR. Because of this, less than 8 percent of these people survive the event. It is for this reason that Camano Island Fire and Rescue encourages *everyone* to learn these basic, life-saving skills.

Is it difficult learning to do CPR or use an AED?

The fundamentals of adult CPR are quite simple. Short, instructional videos illustrating these steps can be accessed on the internet and require no special skills to learn. Often, "hands-only" CPR can be learned in less than 10 minutes. That being said, a formal classroom instruction provides a more in-depth learning experience. Through the combination of lecture and ample "hands-on" practice, a person with no medical experience can, over the course of 3 hours, learn to provide high-quality CPR to infants, children and adults. As well, certification in the use of an AED and how to manage choking in all age groups is included in this class. Camano Island Fire and Rescue is committed to providing this training to our community members. We offer a positive learning environment, have friendly, highly skilled instructors and use modern, quality equipment. Please contact Camano Island Fire and Rescue at (360) 387-1512 or visit Camanofire.com to learn more.

Serve on the CAG?

Our newly formed Citizen's Advisory Group has begun meeting but there are still open positions. If interested, please contact Assistant Chief Levon Yengoyan at 360-387-1512 for further information.

Sign up for our E-Newsletter

Do you know anyone else that would like to receive our E-Newsletter and other information from CIFR? Please have them sign up for our Email list at

New Volunteers Start Training

At their first meeting of 2016, the Board of Fire Commissioners swore in 14 new volunteer recruits. Since that meeting, these recruits have started the training they need to serve our community by training to become Emergency Medical Technicians and Firefighters.

Hazardous Materials Awareness, CPR, Incident Command Systems, driver and traffic safety, and personal protective equipment are among some of the topics that have been covered.

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Our website contains the latest information regarding your fire department. Please visit us at www.camanofire.com

Next they will begin a three month Emergency Medical Technician course that will certify them in providing basic life support skills.

