

The facts!

What should I do if I think I am having a heart attack?

- Dial 000
- Ask for the ambulance service
- Say you think you are having a heart attack
- Do not drive yourself
- Take aspirin, unless you're allergic to it.

Too many Aboriginal people die each year because they did not recognise the warning signs.

IF YOU ARE NOT SURE,
No shame Get help.



Heart attack

Every second counts

NSW Chronic Care for Aboriginal People Program

For more information

Contact your local **Aboriginal Medical Service** or **Health worker**. Aboriginal Chronic Care workers are located in NSW Health Services and some Aboriginal Medical Services.

Chronic Care for Aboriginal People Program:
www.health.nsw.gov.au/initiatives/chronic_care/aboriginal/index.asp

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*Chronic Care
for Aboriginal People*



What is a heart attack?

- The heart works 24 hours a day, pumping oxygen and blood to all parts of the body
- Blood is supplied to the heart through its coronary arteries (blood vessels)
- In heart disease, fatty (cholesterol) stuff builds up inside the walls of the arteries, making it more difficult for the blood to get through. This is called atherosclerosis
- Blood clots can also occur in the arteries
- If a blood clot suddenly cuts off the blood supply to the heart, a heart attack results.



Reduce your risk of a heart attack

- Keep blood pressure normal (120/80–130/80)
- Stop smoking
- Keep a check on cholesterol levels.

(Ask for pamphlet in this series on heart disease.)

Treatments for a heart attack include medication to dissolve the blood clot.

These treatments must be given fast—within one hour of the start of heart attack symptoms. Acting fast can save your life and reduce damage to your heart.

What are the warning signs of a heart attack?

- Squeezing, pressure, a sharp or dull pain, or stabbing feeling in the chest area lasting more than 10-15 minutes
- Discomfort in neck, arms, shoulders, back, jaw or stomach
- Shortness of breath
- Feeling sick in the stomach
- Dizzy
- Sweaty and pale.

It is important to quickly get the blood flowing back to the heart again.

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