

Amber Valley First Responders

Fact File: Coronary Heart Disease (CHD)

Coronary Heart Disease (CHD) is a general label for a heart attack and angina. Nearly all deaths from CHD are because of a heart attack. In the UK, around 227,000 people suffer a heart attack each year. Someone has a heart attack every two minutes and in about 30% of heart attacks, the patient dies¹.

We can all help towards a healthier lifestyle and help prevent CHD. However, there are some factors we have little control over; these include family history and any genetic problems, but by eating a balanced diet, exercising regularly, not smoking and reducing our alcohol intake we can keep CHD at bay.

What is a heart attack?

The arteries that supply blood and oxygen to the heart muscle become narrowed by the gradual build-up of fatty materials in their walls. This fatty material is called atheroma. If the atheroma becomes unstable, it may break off and lead to a blood clot forming. If the blood clot blocks the artery, the heart muscle is starved of blood and oxygen and may become permanently damaged. A heart attack is sometimes called acute coronary syndrome, myocardial infarction or coronary thrombosis.

During a heart attack, life-threatening rhythms may develop. This is why a person suffering a heart attack is a medical emergency.

What are the symptoms?

Each person is different and may experience different symptoms. Men may experience different symptoms to women.

Classic symptoms include:

- Central chest pain
- Pain in the arms, neck or jaw
- Nausea or vomiting
- Cold, clammy skin
- Shortness of breath

The chest pain has often been likened to that of indigestion that just doesn't go away. If you experience the symptoms above, dial 999 immediately.

¹ Source is www.heartstats.org



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