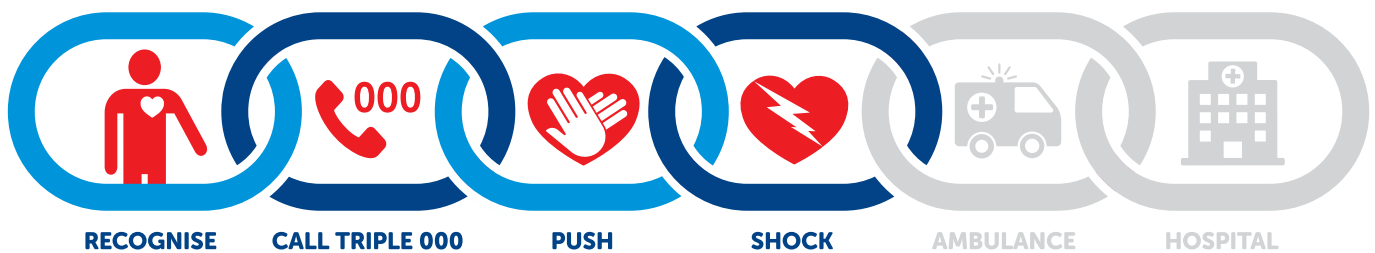




Frequently asked questions

Cardiac arrest can happen to anyone, anytime, anywhere, which is why it is vital that we all know how to take lifesaving action. Call Push Shock is all about building confidence on when to call Triple Zero (000), how to perform CPR and use an AED.

Ambulance Victoria promotes the **Chain of Survival**, the worldwide guideline for response to sudden cardiac arrest. A cardiac arrest patient's chance of survival increases dramatically for each link that is actioned in the chain. By knowing and following the **Chain of Survival**, we can save a life.



Chain of Survival: The community can make a dramatic difference to cardiac arrest survival by actioning these four links.

Cardiac arrest vs heart attack

Q. What is a cardiac arrest?

A cardiac arrest occurs when your heart stops pumping effectively, resulting in a lack of blood and oxygen to your brain and other organs. A person in cardiac arrest is unconscious and not breathing normally, or not at all. As soon as you recognise a cardiac arrest, call Triple Zero (000), start CPR immediately and use an AED, if available.

Q. What is a heart attack?

A heart attack occurs when a blockage of an artery stops blood from reaching the heart muscle. As a result, the part of your heart muscle that is not getting enough blood starts to die.

Symptoms of a heart attack may include pain, pressure, heaviness or tightness in the following areas:

- chest
- shoulder(s)
- neck
- arm(s)
- jaw
- back

The symptoms may vary from person to person and some people may not have chest pain at all. A heart attack may lead to a cardiac arrest.



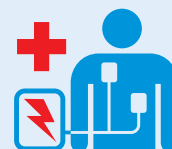
! IF YOU HAVE ANY OF THE WARNING SYMPTOMS OF A HEART ATTACK CALL TRIPLE ZERO (000) IMMEDIATELY.

Call Push Shock

Q. What is the Call Push Shock Kit?

In partnership with the Heart Foundation, Ambulance Victoria has developed a new cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and automatic external defibrillator (AED) practice kit. The Call Push Shock Kit builds willingness and capability to recognise a cardiac arrest

and take action in three simple steps: Call Triple Zero (000), start CPR immediately, and use an AED, if available.



The Triple Zero (000) call

Q. Why do I call Triple Zero (000) first?

It is important that you make the Triple Zero (000) call first to ensure the paramedics are on their way. When you call Triple Zero (000) first, the call taker can provide you with instructions to help the patient before the ambulance arrives. Putting these actions into place immediately may help save the patient's life.

Q. Why does the Triple Zero (000) call taker ask so many questions?

As soon as the call taker has confirmed the location of the emergency and what the emergency is, this information is sent to an ambulance dispatcher. The dispatcher then directs an ambulance to the emergency.

The call taker will continue to ask questions to collect as much patient information as possible for the paramedics. **THIS DOES NOT DELAY THE AMBULANCE.** This will enable the best care for the patient in the shortest time possible.

The fire service, an Ambulance Victoria Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) or a GoodSAM* responder may be the

first to respond. They are trained and equipped to provide the right care to a cardiac arrest patient.

* See below for further information on GoodSAM.

Q. How can I help the ambulance locate the house?

The ambulance will locate the emergency as quickly as possible if you can give the exact location, including the nearest intersecting street and landmarks.

If you are travelling away from home or in a rural or remote area, download the Emergency + app before leaving home. This will enable you to provide the GPS coordinates to the call taker anywhere in Australia.

If the cardiac arrest is in a residence, make sure the street number is visible, the front door is unlocked and the outside light is on at night.

Ask a family member to lock up your pets and clear a path to the patient. If possible, have someone meet the paramedics at the front of the location.



CPR

Q. What is CPR?

CPR stands for cardiopulmonary resuscitation. It is the technique used to pump oxygenated blood around the body by pushing on the chest. Effectively, CPR does the job of the heart.

To perform effective CPR:

Kneel up straight with your knees next to the person's chest. Knees should be as wide apart as your shoulders. Put the heel of your hand in the middle of the chest right between the nipples. Now place your other hand on top and lock your fingers. Try and keep your fingers off the chest. Lean over the chest with your arms straight and elbows locked.

Push on the chest between the nipples, hard and fast.

Q. Why is CPR necessary?

When performing CPR you are pumping oxygenated blood through the body to the brain and other body organs. It is essential to maintain this blood flow until the paramedics arrive and take over.

Q. Why 'straight arms' when pumping the chest?

CPR is strenuous. If you pump the chest using straight arms you will use the weight of your upper body and you will find it easier and less tiring. If there is another bystander, ask them to help and take over the CPR when you tire. Keeping hands on the chest, continue to rotate when each person tires, until the paramedics arrive.

Q. Why do we no longer do breaths in CPR?

Mouth-to-mouth (breaths) is one of the key barriers to bystanders starting CPR in a cardiac arrest. Leading global resuscitation organisations support compression only CPR* as it increases bystander CPR rates and consequently cardiac arrest survival

rates. Removing this barrier has simplified CPR without compromising health outcomes.

* Compression only CPR is the term given to CPR that does not include mouth-to-mouth (breaths).



Q. Why do you no longer check for a pulse?

Finding a pulse before starting CPR is no longer considered necessary. It can be difficult to find a pulse in a stressful situation and doing so can waste vital time. Recognising if the person is unconscious and not breathing normally is far more reliable. If you start CPR on someone who has a pulse, it is highly unlikely you will do any harm. If in doubt, it is better to start CPR than not to.

Q. Is there an easy way to open the mouth to check that the airway is clear?

If the call taker instructs you to check the airway, place one hand on the patient's forehead and with the other hand put your thumb between the lower lip and point of chin. Grip the chin with your index finger underneath. Gently lever the mouth open and look inside. It is best to roll your remaining fingers into a fist to avoid pushing on the windpipe.

Q. What if the patient has food or other matter in their mouth when you check the airway?

In consultation with the call taker, if food or other matter is present in the mouth, gently roll the patient onto their side first, then tilt the head back, open the mouth and remove the foreign matter. This is important if the patient has drowned. The airway may need to be assessed and cleared at several stages if signs of food and fluid are present. Once the airway is clear, roll the patient onto their back to commence CPR. Remember, the call taker will guide you.

CPR continued

Q. What if the patient has dentures?

If the patient has dentures and they are in place, there is no need to remove them. However, if the dentures have fallen to the back of the throat, remove them as soon as possible. If the dentures have fallen out of the mouth then leave them out.

Q. How do you perform CPR on a baby?

The technique is basically the same. For babies (up to 1 year old), keep the head in the neutral position, push on the chest with two fingers in the centre of the chest. If instructed by the call taker, cover both the mouth and nose with your mouth to deliver small breaths.

For children under 10 years, use one hand instead of two and follow the call taker's instructions.

Q. Can I break the patient's ribs while performing compressions?

Yes, there is a chance you could break ribs during CPR. This is not unusual. If you feel a rib break, re-check your hand position, but don't stop. A broken rib can heal if the patient can be resuscitated.

Q. When do I stop CPR?

Only stop CPR when the paramedics arrive and are ready to take over from you or when the patient starts to breathe on their own. Every minute CPR is performed can make a difference to the patient's survival and minimises the risk of brain damage and/or death.

Q. If I do CPR correctly can I actually expect the patient to start breathing or recover before the ambulance arrives?

CPR buys time for the patient. Very rarely will a person who has been in cardiac arrest start breathing spontaneously. However, if bystanders use a publicly accessible AED

before the paramedics arrive, the patient's condition may change. Tell the call taker and follow their instructions.



Q. What if the patient is in a bed or on a chair?

You need to move the patient to a hard surface. Performing CPR on a soft surface is ineffective. A person slumped in a chair or in a car seat who is not conscious and breathing normally will need to be placed on a hard surface to allow for effective CPR. Remember, a bruise is nothing in the context of a person who is not breathing.

Q. I can't get on the floor – how could I help?

Do the best you can within your own limitations – anything is better than doing nothing at all. Adrenaline may also allow you to get to the floor to perform CPR. When medical assistance arrives, they will be able to help you get up from the floor.

Q. What legal issues could I face performing CPR?

The risk of being sued for providing first aid or CPR is very low. There are no reported cases of anyone being sued for this in Australia.

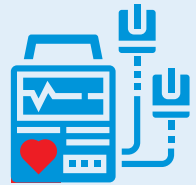
In Victoria (and all Australian states and territories), good Samaritan laws protect people who provide assistance, advice or care in good faith at the scene of an emergency or accident.

Under the *Wrongs Act 1958*, legal protections from civil liability apply if:

- the patient is injured or appears to be at risk of injury or death.
- the good Samaritan acts with honest intent and didn't expect any financial reward for providing assistance.

These laws seek to reassure people that if they step up to help in an emergency, they will not be liable for their honest attempts to help, regardless of the outcome.

Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs)



Q. What are Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs)?

AEDs are automated devices that are used during a cardiac arrest to shock the patient's heart back into normal function. AEDs analyse a heart's rhythm and only shock when it is necessary.

CPR, together with the use of an AED in the critical minutes before paramedics arrive, dramatically increases the patient's chance of survival. If no AED is available, continue CPR until the ambulance paramedics arrive and are ready to take over.

If an AED is available, send a bystander to retrieve it while you start CPR. Place the AED close to the right upper side of the upper chest, open the AED and follow the instructions. If unsure the call taker will assist you to use the AED.

ANYONE CAN USE AN AED. NO TRAINING IS NECESSARY.

Q. What is the AED register?

All AEDs should be registered on the AED Register: registermyaed@ambulance.vic.gov.au. This will allow the Triple Zero (000) call taker to 'see' AEDs near a cardiac arrest and direct bystanders to them. AED owners are encouraged to make their AED publicly accessible 24 hours a day. This may dramatically increase the survival chances of cardiac arrest patients in the community. If AEDs are not registered, the Triple Zero (000) call taker will not be able to direct bystanders to the closest AED.

If AEDs are registered and used in an emergency, Ambulance Victoria will check the AED afterwards to ensure it is ready to save another life.

Saving lives is a team effort

Q. How do you manage the telephone call, CPR and using an AED at the same time?

Ambulance Victoria recommends that households use a cordless or mobile phone to contact Triple Zero (000). Put the phone on loudspeaker, take the phone to the patient and follow the call taker's instructions.

If you do not have a mobile phone, you can listen to the instructions and then put the phone down as you carry out the instructions. Then, return to the phone for the next set of instructions.

Alternatively, if someone else is present they can relay the instructions from the call taker to you. Do not hang up from the call taker unless asked to do so. Leaving the phone line open will allow you to return to the phone to get reassurance or update the call taker of any changes to the patient's condition.

The ambulance will not be delayed by leaving the phone line open – and remember, any CPR is better than no CPR.

Q. What is GoodSAM?

Ambulance Victoria introduced GoodSAM in 2018.

It is a lifesaving app that connects registered adults to people nearby who are in cardiac arrest. The app is connected to Triple Zero (000) and allows Ambulance Victoria to alert local GoodSAM responders to offer assistance at the emergency in the first critical minutes, while the ambulance is on the way. GoodSAM is now open to any adult who is confident and willing to perform CPR and use an AED.

Since the launch of GoodSAM in 2018, the lives of many neighbours, strangers and friends have been saved because of the actions of GoodSAM Responders.

To sign up to GoodSAM please visit heartrestarter.com.au.



Ambulance Victoria Membership



Q. Do Centrelink Pensioner Concession cards and Health Care cards cover ambulance transport?

Eligible Victorians who hold a Pensioner Concession card or Health Care card receive free ambulance cover throughout Australia.

In all cases, transport is provided to the nearest and most appropriate medical facility and must be medically required.

There are some exclusions:

- Transport from a private healthcare facility (the private facility may choose to pass the cost on to you).
- Commonwealth Seniors Health card does not cover ambulance services.
- Transport used for social or convenience reasons (such as choosing your own location of treatment).
- Another party is responsible for payment (such as TAC, WorkCover).

Ambulance Victoria Membership is available to help in situations where your fund will not cover you.

Ambulance Victoria will require evidence of your concession entitlements at the time of transport. Therefore you may receive an invoice. You will need to contact Ambulance Victoria and provide evidence.

The card must also be valid at the time of transport or the invoice will remain the responsibility of the relevant individual, hospital or chargeable authority as detailed in the Ambulance Payment Guidelines.

Q. Am I covered for ambulance costs by my private health fund?

Private health insurers set their own terms and conditions of what they will and will not cover.

Sadly, we see cases every day where members of private health funds have used the service and then found out that the fund's terms and conditions do not cover them in particular circumstances, such as air ambulance transport or non-emergency transport.

Ambulance Victoria recommends you contact your fund to determine if you have sufficient ambulance cover. You can find more information and a checklist to use as a guide via the FAQs at ambulance.vic.gov.au/membership.

Q. How do I become an Ambulance Victoria member?

There are a number of ways you can join:

Online: ambulance.vic.gov.au

Phone: 1800 64 84 84
(translator services are available).

Mail: send your application form to Ambulance Victoria, Po Box 278, South Melbourne VIC 3205.

Australia Post: take your application form and pay over the counter at any Australia Post branch.

Application forms can be downloaded from the Ambulance Victoria website or requested over the phone on **1300 366 141**.

What next?

Q. Where can I get a Call Push Shock Kit?

If you are living in Victoria and you wish to champion the non-certified Call Push Shock program in your community, please contact community.engagement@ambulance.vic.gov.au.

Q. Is the Call Push Shock Kit suitable for someone who needs a CPR certificate for work?

No, it is not a substitute for accredited training that a person requires for professional responsibilities. For accredited training, please contact your local first aid provider.

Remember to....



Ambulance
Victoria



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Foundation