



# Heart attack symptoms: Know what's a medical emergency

By Mayo Clinic staff

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## Typical heart attack symptoms

Symptom	Description
Chest discomfort or pain	This discomfort or pain can feel like a tight ache, pressure, fullness or squeezing in the center of your chest lasting more than a few minutes. This discomfort may come and go.
Upper body pain	Pain or discomfort may spread beyond your chest to your shoulders, arms, back, neck, teeth or jaw. You may have upper body pain with no chest discomfort.
Stomach pain	Pain may extend downward into your abdominal area and may feel like heartburn.
Shortness of breath	You may pant for breath or try to take in deep breaths. This often occurs before you develop chest discomfort or you may not experience any chest discomfort.
Anxiety	You may feel a sense of doom or feel as if you're having a panic attack for no apparent reason.
Lightheadedness	In addition to chest pressure, you may feel dizzy or feel like you might pass out.
Sweating	You may suddenly break into a sweat with cold, clammy skin.
Nausea and vomiting	You may feel sick to your stomach or vomit.



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Most heart attacks begin with subtle symptoms — with only discomfort that often is not described as pain. The chest discomfort may come and go. Don't be tempted to downplay your symptoms or brush them off as indigestion or anxiety.

Don't "tough out" heart attack symptoms for more than five minutes. Call 911 or other emergency medical services for help. If you don't have access to emergency medical services, have someone drive you to the nearest hospital. Drive yourself only as a last resort, if there are absolutely no other options.

Heart attack symptoms vary widely. For instance, you may have only minor chest discomfort while someone else has excruciating pain. One thing applies to everyone, though: If you suspect you're having a heart attack, call for emergency medical help immediately.

### **Additional heart attack symptoms in women**

Women may have all, none, many or a few of the typical heart attack symptoms. For women, the most common heart attack symptom is still some type of pain, pressure or discomfort in the chest. But women are more likely than are men to also have heart attack symptoms without chest pain, such as:

- Neck, jaw, shoulder, upper back or abdominal discomfort
- Shortness of breath
- Nausea or vomiting
- Abdominal pain or "heartburn"
- Sweating
- Lightheadedness or dizziness
- Unusual or unexplained fatigue