When it comes to a heart attack, every second counts

Learn to recognize the warning signs

Call 911 immediately if you have any of these symptoms:

- Chest discomfort (pressure, squeezing, fullness or pain) in the middle of the chest that lasts longer than a few minutes or that goes away and returns
- Discomfort in one or both arms, the back, neck, jaw or stomach
- Shortness of breath, with or without chest discomfort
- A cold sweat, nausea or lightheadedness

You should know:

- Not all warning signs occur in every heart attack
- All symptoms can go away and return
- Women are more likely than men to experience shortness of breath, nausea/vomiting, and back or jaw pain, in addition to chest discomfort
- Most heart attacks start slowly, with mild pain or discomfort

What increases the chances of surviving a heart attack?

- Quicker door-to-balloon time: The time between when a patient enters an emergency room and when an angioplasty balloon or stent is inserted into a diseased artery.

How does quicker door-to-balloon time preserve quality of life for heart attack patients?

- Time is muscle: Preserving quality of life is directly related to preserving heart muscle. The faster an artery is unblocked with a stent, the more heart muscle is saved.

At Rhode Island Hospital, a national leader in acute cardiac care, we understand the importance of door-to-balloon time and have invested in reducing it for our heart attack patients by:

- Locating our cardiac catheterization laboratory directly inside our emergency department–we are one of the first in the nation to do so–allowing our physicians to rapidly prepare for angioplasty
- Instituting a one-call system, in which a central operator contacts and mobilizes an angioplasty team
- Establishing a 12-lead EKG ambulance program with the Providence, Warwick and Cranston fire departments. Paramedics transmit EKG results en route, so we can activate the cardiac catheterization laboratory before the patient arrives at the hospital.

Most people who experience a heart attack wait too long to seek medical help. If you are unsure of your symptoms, have them checked immediately.

Rhode Island Hospital

A Lifespan Partner

Advancing Medicine. *Touching Lives.*

Rhode Island Hospital is Your Complete Cardiac Care Center

Should you have any questions about our cardiac services or for physician information and referrals, please call 401-444-2728 or 1-888-401-6255.

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RHODE ISLAND HOSPITAL IS A MAJOR TEACHING HOSPITAL FOR THE WARREN ALPERT MEDICAL SCHOOL OF BROWN UNIVERSITY

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