



FINANCIAL PREPAREDNESS

"One of life's most painful moments comes when we must admit that we didn't do our homework, that we are not prepared." ~ Merlin Olsen

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CPR

As a heart attack survivor, I can tell you that a heart attack can happen to anyone at any time. At that time in my life, I was exercising a LOT (competitive pickleball 10-12 hours per week, adult soccer, weightlifting at the gym, walking my dog, working in the yard), but I weighed about 55 pounds more than I do now. Visceral fat is deadly, especially for men.

When someone around you has a heart attack, if you can recognize the symptoms, take charge and act quickly, calmly and confidently, you could save a life, perhaps that of a friend or family member. People who've done this say it makes them feel like a superhero.

I just took a CPR/AED class, and I want to share with you what I learned in case you've never had this training or it's been a while, since *the recommended protocol changed in 2020*.

First, you should familiarize yourself with [the symptoms of a heart attack](#), and learn where any AED machines are kept in the buildings you frequent.

If someone around you becomes unresponsive, check for a pulse at their [carotid artery](#). If you can't detect a pulse, you have only a few minutes before the victim dies, so immediately start to perform CPR:

1. If other people are around, tell one to call 911, another to go get the AED machine (if you know one is nearby, as well as the accessory kit that may be next to it, and a towel if the victim is sweaty), and another to start a timer.
2. Get the victim flat on his back, find the bony tip of his sternum, go two finger widths up and put the meaty part of your dominant hand on his chest (if the victim is male, this should be between his nipples). Curl the fingers of that hand and place your other hand on top of that. Get your shoulders and body weight over the victim, fully extend your arms and begin chest compressions at the rate of 100-120 per minute (think of the beat to the song "[Stayin' Alive](#)") with a depth of two inches. Allow the chest to come all the way back up, but don't take your hands off the chest.
3. If other people know how to and are physically able to give compressions, rotate every two minutes, as it requires a lot of energy and can be exhausting.
4. Trained professionals still do 30 compressions followed by two breaths, but if you're just a bystander rescuer, only compressions are necessary.
5. Once the AED machine arrives, you need to get access to the victim's bare chest. You can either rip open their shirt or cut it open (there may be a pair of shears in the AED accessory bag). If the victim is sweaty or wet, you should dry off the top right and lower left abdomen with a towel, etc. If the victim has a lot of hair in those areas, you should quickly shave it off with the razor in the accessory bag.
6. While continuing to give compressions, open the AED and turn it on (press the green button). Listen to its instructions. It should tell you to apply the two large sticky pads at the top right of the chest and bottom left of the ribcage. (If there's a hard lump in the upper chest, that's probably a pacemaker, so don't put a pad over that.)
7. The AED should announce that it's about to analyze the victim, so everyone should clear away from the victim. After its analysis, it will either announce that a shock is advised or to continue CPR for two minutes. If a shock is advised, everyone should remain clear of the victim until the shock is delivered, then the AED should tell you to resume CPR for two minutes.
8. Continue to follow the instructions of the AED and give compressions until either the victim becomes responsive or first responders are ready to take over from you.
9. If you think someone is having a heart attack and they are still conscious, give them four chewable baby aspirin (81mg each).

Some bonus tips:

- Always have your phone and at least four baby aspirin with you. I also carry a pair of [Leatherman Raptor trauma shears](#) with me at all times (I don't mess around). These bad boys can cut through a metal can.
- Be familiar with the medical history and special medical situations of the people you associate with. Have they already had a heart attack? Do they have a pacemaker? Do they have nitroglycerin tablets?
- Be aware of the current risk. Are people exercising hard? Are people overweight, unhealthy or out of shape? Is it a [Monday morning in Winter](#) (this is when I had my heart attack)?
- Have good situational awareness and keep an eye on the people around you. Notice

the subtle but abnormal signs. Have the presence of mind to stop the activity and ask the person how they feel; it's common for them to dismiss it as no big deal, so err on the side of caution.

- If one of your friends loses consciousness and has to be taken to the ER, know how to contact their family to let them know what happened.

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A friend invited me to [Blade Show](#) (the largest knife show in the world), so I went with him last weekend. With other 1,000 vendors, it was overwhelming. There were no metal detectors at the entrance or anyone frisking for weapons. My son asked me if there had ever been a mass shooting at such an event. “I don't know about a shooting, but I'm pretty sure there has never been a *mass* shooting,” I replied. “Oh yeah, because any shooter would quickly be killed.” I was surrounded by about 100,000 knives and at least hundreds of concealed guns (Georgia recently became a constitutional carry state), and yet I felt very safe, no one was attacked or injured, and everyone was very polite, even though I never saw a cop. How weird is that?



This is my EDC knife (a Benchmade Griptilian), but not my photo.

When I walked into the conference hall, I said, “Ah, I'm with my people!” It was fascinating to see people from all walks of life: lots of great beards, plenty of strong-looking dudes, plenty of people who were heart attack candidates, some tattoos, lots of tactical backpacks with morale patches, the guy in overalls and a cowboy hat with a toy poodle, the guy with the shirt that said, “introvert, but willing to discuss knives.” Hundreds of entrepreneurial craftsmen had traveled from all over the U.S. to display and sell their wares; many of them had found quite a niche.

I didn't buy anything (I'm set on knives), but picked up catalogs from Spyderco, Tops and

Esse. If you've never been to such an event, you should check one out sometime. It's interesting to be around people who are passionate about something that's rather obscure and yet ancient, and to be reassured that the world hasn't (yet) completely gone to Hell.



My morale patch (Blackbeard's flag).

What You Should Be Doing Now

Recommended documentaries: [Steve Jobs: The Man in the Machine](#) and [Missing 411: The Hunted](#) on Amazon Prime Video.

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I would love to hear from you! I thrive on feedback from readers. If you have any comments, suggestions, insight/wisdom, or you'd like to share a link to a great article, please [email me](#).

Generally, I don't have time to answer questions about your specific situation, but if you have a general question that I think other readers also have, [let me know](#) and I will provide an answer in a future issue.

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Before starting a new diet or exercise regimen, you should consult with a doctor, nutritionist, dietician, or personal trainer.

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