



Michigan District

Region D "The Great Lakes Region"

"Friends for Fun, Safety and Knowledge"



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Our Mission:

**To Save Lives
Through Quality,
World Class Education**

Our Motto:

"Safety Is For Life"

RIDER ED DIRECT

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A Monthly Communication to Michigan's Chapter Educators
From your GWRRA Michigan District Rider Ed Team
Volume 4 Number 1

To: All **Chapter Educators**, and **Chapter Directors** *without* an Educator

This is intended to *support* your Rider Education efforts. If you need a topic idea for your required "Gimme 5" talk at your Gathering or for your chapter newsletter article this month, feel free to use this material in part or in whole. It is **not** mandatory that you use this either for your talk or in your newsletter. If you choose to use it, feel free to change it to suit your audience. If you use this as your article *without change*, however, please credit the MI District Rider Ed Team. *Thanks!*

Rather than talk about a motorcycle topic this month, I wanted to talk about the signs to look for in case someone you know suffers a heart attack or stroke.

(Possible "Gimme 5" for Chapter Educators for January, 2010)

MONTHLY TOPIC: Medical Reminder: Signs for Heart/Brain Attacks

Most of us in Michigan have put away our motorcycles for the long, cold winter. A few of us have some bike maintenance plans for the winter months, but the majority of us are looking at other things to occupy our time during the frustrating non-riding season.

There are a lot of physical demands placed on our bodies by the cold weather, including the obvious things like shoveling snow. It seems like we hear a lot about increased occurrence of heart attacks and strokes (brain attacks) during the winter. An important key to successful recovery from these attacks is rapid advanced medical attention. And key to getting rapid medical attention is for YOU to RECOGNIZE the symptoms quickly.

Learn the signs, but remember this: Even if you're not sure it's a heart attack or stroke, have it checked out (tell a doctor about your symptoms). Minutes matter! Fast action can save lives — maybe your own. Don't wait more than five minutes to call 9-1-1 or your emergency response number.

Calling 9-1-1 is almost always the fastest way to get lifesaving treatment. Emergency medical services (EMS) staff can begin treatment when they arrive — up to an hour sooner than if someone gets to the hospital by car. EMS staff are also trained to revive someone whose heart has stopped. Patients with chest pain who arrive by ambulance usually receive faster treatment at the hospital, too. It is best to call EMS for rapid

transport to the emergency room.

Follow the Boy Scout motto: **Be Prepared!** The American Heart Association advises these steps:

- Keep a list of emergency medical service numbers next to the telephone and in your pocket, wallet or purse.
- Find out which area hospitals are primary Heart or Stroke centers that have 24-hour emergency care for the condition.
- Know (in advance) which hospital or medical facility is nearest your home or office.

The possible symptoms of a **HEART ATTACK**, according to American Heart Association, are:

- Chest discomfort (uncomfortable pressure, squeezing, fullness or pain) in the center of the chest that lasts more than a few minutes, or that goes away and comes back
- Pain or discomfort in other areas of the upper body (one or both arms, the back, neck, jaw or stomach)
- Shortness of breath with or without chest discomfort.
- Other signs may include breaking out in a cold sweat, nausea or lightheadedness

Symptoms of heart attack in women are often different than in men. According to the US Government information, women report the following symptoms:

Women's major symptoms prior to their heart attack included:

- Unusual fatigue - 70%
- Sleep disturbance - 48%
- Shortness of breath - 42%
- Indigestion - 39%
- Anxiety - 35%

Major symptoms of women during the heart attack include:

- Shortness of breath - 58%
- Weakness - 55%
- Unusual fatigue - 43%
- Cold sweat - 39%
- Dizziness - 39%

Women are also more likely to describe:

- Breathlessness and/or inability to catch your breath when waking up.
- Dizziness--unexplained lightheadedness, possible blackouts.
- Anxiety--unusual nervousness, feelings of impending doom.
- Edema--fluid retention and swelling usually of the ankles or lower legs.
- Fluttering--rapid heartbeats, palpitations.
- Feeling of heaviness, such as pressure-like chest pain between the breasts that may radiate to the left arm or shoulder.

The possible symptoms of a **STROKE**, according to the National Stroke Association, are:

- Sudden numbness or weakness of face, arm or leg -- especially on one side of the body
- Sudden confusion, trouble speaking or understanding
- Sudden trouble seeing in one or both eyes
- Sudden trouble walking, dizziness, loss of balance or coordination
- Sudden severe headache with no known cause

Women may report unique stroke symptoms:

- Sudden face and limb pain

- Sudden hiccups
- Sudden nausea
- Sudden general weakness
- Sudden chest pain
- Sudden shortness of breath
- Sudden palpitations

Please remember that not all the warning signs occur in every stroke. Don't ignore signs of stroke, even if they go away!

Check the time. When did the first warning sign or symptom start? You'll be asked this important question later.

If you have one or more stroke symptoms that last more than a few minutes, don't delay! If you're with someone who may be having stroke symptoms, expect the person to protest — denial is common. Don't take "no" for an answer. Insist on taking prompt action. Immediately call 9-1-1 or the emergency medical service (EMS) number so an ambulance (ideally with advanced life support) can quickly be sent!

The National Stroke Association advises us to use the following tool to help you recognize stroke symptoms and act F.A.S.T.:

ACT F.A.S.T.	
F ACE	ASK THE PERSON TO SMILE. DOES ONE SIDE OF THE FACE DROOP?
A ARMS	ASK THE PERSON TO RAISE BOTH ARMS. DOES ONE ARM DRIFT DOWNWARD?
S SPEECH	ASK THE PERSON TO REPEAT A SIMPLE SENTENCE. ARE THE WORDS SLURRED? CAN HE/SHE REPEAT THE SENTENCE CORRECTLY?
T IME	IF THE PERSON SHOWS ANY OF THESE SYMPTOMS, TIME IS IMPORTANT. CALL 911 OR GET TO THE HOSPITAL FAST. BRAIN CELLS ARE DYING.

We **MUST** treat stroke as an emergency. When a stroke -- or brain attack -- first hits, we must recognize the symptoms and immediately call 9-1-1. Every minute counts for stroke patients and acting F.A.S.T. can lead patients to the stroke treatments they desperately need. The most effective stroke treatments are only available if the stroke is recognized and diagnosed within the first three hours of the first symptoms. Actually, many Americans are not aware that stroke patients may not be eligible for stroke treatments if they arrive at the hospital after the three-hour window.

Planning Reminders:

1. Co-Rider, Team Riding, Road Captain, and other seminars are available for presentation at your chapter. Invite neighboring chapters and share the opportunity for fun and knowledge. The Seminar Request form is available here:

<http://www.gwrra-mi.org/RiderEdForms/REQUEST%20SEMINAR%20FORM.doc>

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2. This is a good time to set up your off-season First Aid / CPR / AED training. Beat the mid-winter rush. The request form is available here:
http://www.gwrra-mi.org/RiderEdForms/MFA_Request_Form.pdf

Thanks for all you do for Rider Education! And remember: **Safety Is For Life!**

Your comments about this communication and your questions about Rider Education can be directed to:

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