



# Hands-Only CPR vs. Mouth-to-Mouth CPR



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## Hands-Only CPR vs. Mouth-to-Mouth CPR

Believe it or not, becoming a life-saver may be easier than you think. If you learn how to perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), you could prove to be the difference between life or death for a sudden cardiac arrest (SCA) victim.



SCA occurs when the heart suddenly stops beating, which causes blood to stop flowing to the brain and other critical organs throughout the body. It can happen to anyone, at any time, regardless of an individual's medical history. And if SCA is not treated within minutes, it may result in death.

To better understand why CPR is crucial to assist SCA victims, consider the following statistics from the American Heart Association (AHA):

- 88 percent of cardiac arrest incidents occur at home, which indicates an SCA victim is likely to be a loved one.
- 70 percent of Americans said they feel "helpless" to act in a cardiac emergency due to the fact that they do not know how to perform CPR or their CPR training has significantly lapsed.
- Effective bystander CPR that is administered immediately after an individual suffers SCA can double or triple the victim's chances of survival.
- Only 32 percent of SCA victims receive assistance from a bystander.
- Less than 8 percent of victims who suffer SCA outside a hospital survive.

You don't need comprehensive training to learn CPR. In fact, two types of CPR are available that are simple to learn and empower individuals to provide life-saving support in emergencies: hands-only and mouth-to-mouth CPR.

## What Is Hands-Only CPR?

The AHA recommends hands-only CPR for use on teens or adults whom you see suddenly collapse. If a teen or adult collapses, this person likely was breathing normally before the incident happened, and there may already be sufficient oxygen in the victim's blood for the



first few minutes after cardiac arrest. Thus, after a teen or adult suffers SCA, this person will be able to maintain enough oxygen to the vital organs as long as someone administers high-quality chest compressions with limited interruption to pump blood to the heart and brain.

Hands-only CPR is an easy-to-remember and effective option for people who have been trained in CPR before but may not remember the steps of conventional CPR, according to the AHA. In fact, a recent AHA study indicated Americans who had not been trained in CPR within the past five years said they would be more likely to perform hands-only CPR than conventional CPR on a teen or adult who collapses suddenly.

Perhaps most important, hands-only CPR involves two steps:

1. **Call 911 or send someone to call 911 for you.** If you see someone suffer SCA, pick up the phone and dial 911 immediately, or have someone call 911 for you. Provide the 911 operator with information about your location and any other pertinent details about the situation. Try to stay calm, cool

and collected, and remember, the time you take to respond to a 911 operator's queries *will not* delay the arrival of medical personnel.

- 2. Administer chest compressions.** Push hard and fast in the center of an SCA victim's chest at a rate of 100 to 120 beats per minute. The AHA notes administering hands-only CPR to the beat of the popular disco song "Stayin' Alive" may dramatically improve an SCA victim's chances of survival. Also, keep in mind that administering chest compressions is hard work, and the more tired you become, the less effective your compressions will be. If someone else knows how to perform hands-only CPR, you can take turns administering chest compressions. The AHA points out switching rescuers about every 2 minutes or sooner as needed is ideal. Or, if you are alone, do your best to continue to administer chest compressions.



The use of chest compressions has been shown to aid SCA victims, and numerous individuals are embracing the opportunity to learn hands-only CPR.

Recently, the AHA has established hands-only CPR training kiosks in several airports around the country that allow individuals to learn life-saving skills while they wait for their flights to depart. The training kiosks feature a touch screen with a video tutorial that explains how to administer hands-only CPR, a brief practice session and a 30-second CPR test. Going forward, the kiosks could help many travelers learn how to perform hands-only CPR and lead to improved survival rates among SCA victims.

## What Is Mouth-to-Mouth CPR?

Mouth-to-mouth CPR uses the same compressions discussed above in hands-only CPR and adds in mouth-to-mouth breaths, and its steps include:

1. **Call 911 or send someone to call 911 for you.**
2. **Administer 30 chest compressions.** Push hard and fast in the center of an SCA victim's chest at a rate of 100 to 120 beats per minute for 30 compressions.
3. **Give 2 breaths.** After 30 compressions, give the SCA victim 2 breaths by pinching the victim's nostrils closed using your thumb and index finger. Next, place your mouth over the victim's mouth and maintain a tight seal; you may also use a mouthpiece if one is available. Administer 2 quick breaths and watch for the victim's chest to rise.
4. **Repeat 30 chest compressions and 2 breaths.** Continue to give 30 chest compressions and 2 breaths until help arrives.



Mouth-to-mouth CPR requires additional effort in comparison to its hands-only counterpart. Barrier devices such as pocket masks or key chain masks can provide protection against bodily fluids that may be encountered while giving breaths.

The AHA recommends CPR with a combination of compressions and breaths for:

- Infants up to the age of 1
- Children up to puberty
- Any individual who is found to be unresponsive and not breathing normally
- Victims of drowning, drug overdose, collapse as a result of breathing problems or extended cardiac arrest

Furthermore, the AHA notes there are many medical emergencies that can cause a person to become unresponsive and stop breathing normally. In these situations, CPR that includes mouth-to-mouth breathing may prove to be more beneficial than hands-only CPR alone.

Of course, if you encounter an SCA victim, call 911 and begin performing CPR immediately. Once advanced medical services arrive, they will be able to take over the care of the SCA victim.

The AHA also points out any attempt to provide CPR to a person who suffers cardiac arrest is better than no attempt to provide help. If the person is not breathing, performing chest compressions to ensure the blood is flowing through the body is much more helpful than doing nothing.

## What Are the Benefits of Hands-Only and Mouth-to-Mouth CPR?



Hands-only and mouth-to-mouth CPR are valuable, and the benefits of both types of CPR extend beyond SCA victims.

The AHA offers an [informative, engaging video](#) to explain how to perform hands-only CPR, and CPR training programs are available to teach individuals

how to administer mouth-to-mouth CPR, hands-only CPR and other life-saving techniques.

CPR training courses include skills practice to teach individuals how to perform chest compressions. They are instructor-led and usually can be completed in only a few hours.

If an individual understands how to perform hands-only and/or mouth-to-mouth CPR, he or she may be able to encourage others to learn how to perform CPR. This may drive a revolution, one that leads many individuals to become CPR-certified so they can make a difference in their respective communities.

## How Can You Learn to Perform Hands-Only and Mouth-to-Mouth CPR?



A CPR training program will explain the ins and outs of both types of CPR and ensure you'll gain the skills and confidence needed to administer CPR in a critical situation.

There are many reasons to enroll in a CPR training program, including:

1. **You can learn all about CPR.** A CPR training program offers comprehensive insights into hands-only and mouth-to-mouth CPR, the use of automated external defibrillators (AEDs), how to support conscious and unconscious choking victims and more.
2. **You can maintain a valid CPR certification.** Many jobs require CPR certification, for example, teachers, corporate managers, security guards, etc. With a CPR training program, many schools and businesses can be ready for any emergency.

3. **You don't need prior CPR training to enroll in a CPR training program.** CPR training programs are offered around the country, ensuring students – regardless of age or experience – can find out how to perform hands-only and mouth-to-mouth CPR.
4. **You won't have to break your budget to enroll in a CPR training program.** CPR training programs often serve as cost-effective options for parents, teachers, medical professionals and others.
5. **You can participate in hands-on and classroom lessons.** A typical CPR training program will feature both hands-on and classroom lessons that allow students to receive relevant CPR insights and practice hands-only and mouth-to-mouth CPR.
6. **You can enroll in a class that fits your schedule.** Because many CPR training programs are available, you should have no trouble finding a CPR class that matches your schedule.
7. **You can learn from CPR experts.** Some CPR training program feature instructors who work as emergency medical technicians (EMTs), nurses and other healthcare and medical personnel so you can learn from instructors that have done it in real life.
8. **You can receive answers to your CPR questions.** A CPR training program ensures you can get answers to your CPR concerns and queries right away.
9. **You can gain real world insights.** As you develop your CPR skill set, you'll be able to gain expert CPR insights so you can complete hands-only and/or mouth-to-mouth CPR properly in an emergency.
10. **You can find out how to save a life.** With hands-on and mouth-to-mouth CPR training, you may be able to save an SCA victim's life.

Learning hands-only and mouth-to-mouth CPR might appear tough at times, but a CPR training program will deliver the confidence, skills and know-how that you need to administer life-saving support.

## Which Is Better: Hands-Only or Mouth-to-Mouth CPR?

Ultimately, hands-only and mouth-to-mouth CPR empower anyone to become a life-saver in a life-threatening situation and the provider can choose which one they feel the most comfortable with. Ultimately, any CPR is better than no CPR. The AHA points out CPR is a skill that can be improved with practice and recommends individuals take a CPR course to practice and learn CPR skills, including giving chest compressions and breaths. It also notes those who learn CPR are more confident about their skills than those who have not been trained. Plus, the AHA states a CPR training program that lasts even a few minutes provides skills training and practice that can help an individual prepare to perform chest compressions.

## Learn How to Perform Hands-Only and Mouth-to-Mouth CPR Today

There are many opportunities to learn how to perform hands-only and mouth-to-mouth CPR. With hands-only and mouth-to-mouth CPR training, you may be able to help a family member, friend, colleague or neighbor survive an SCA emergency. You also can set the tone for your community, encouraging others to become CPR-certified to reduce the loss of life in SCA emergencies.



To learn more about how you can become CPR-certified in Southern California, please contact SureFire CPR at **(888) 277-3143**.