

CAHE *Allied Health News in Review*

Mythbusters: Cough CPR?

Plain English Findings: For many years an email has been circulating which claims to provide people with a method of self-resuscitation during a heart attack. The following News in Review does not aim to provide medical advice. The aim of this report is to evaluate any research evidence which either supports or refutes the advice provided in this email.

Evidence Background

Article title: *How to survive a heart attack when alone*

Author: Not specified

Article availability: This article can be viewed by entering its title into any search engine. An example of a website which currently distributes this article is provided in the link below, where this article can be viewed.

<http://www.scribd.com/doc/94518/Attack-Heart-Attack-even-you-are-alone>

The article is circulating via email and in Microsoft PowerPoint format with text and graphics. It is 7 pages in length and a reference to a scientific article is typed at the base of the 6th page. This reference is stated as N° 240 of Journal of General Hospital Rochester. A thorough search of all available databases and a search for publications written by staff at the Rochester General Hospital failed to find this article. A spokesperson for Rochester General Hospital provided an online statement which denied any knowledge of this article. A link to this statement is provided below.

http://www.viahealth.org/body_rochester.cfm?id=329

The origin of evidence:

The result of a search of scientific evidence from all available sources is that the research cited by this article does not exist. The following headings are used for all CAHE *News in Review* reports to provide information about the research evidence which underpins news reports and other health related claims.

The objectives of research: Not applicable

The nature of evidence: Not applicable

Participants involved in the research: Not applicable

Interventions utilised: Not applicable

Outcome measures: Not applicable

Key findings: Not applicable

Recommendations made by the review article: Not applicable

Methodological considerations: Not applicable

Validity and reliability of the conclusions: Not applicable

Clinical implications:

Clinical guidelines published in 2007 by the Scottish Intercollegiate Guidelines Network (SIGN) titled 'Cardiac Arrhythmias in Coronary Heart Disease' only support traditional chest compressions from bystanders as a part of any attempt at resuscitation during a heart attack. No evidence or recommendations for the use of cough CPR are provided by these guidelines. A link to these guidelines is provided below.

<http://www.sign.ac.uk/guidelines/fulltext/94/index.html>

The American Heart Association has published an online statement where it states that it does not support the content of this article. It makes reference to its own 2005 Guidelines for Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation and Emergency Cardiovascular Care and notes that 'cough CPR' is not taught in any of the courses that it supports. A link to these guidelines is provided below.

<http://www.americanheart.org/presenter.jhtml?identifier=3035517>

In addition, the American Heart Association provides recommendations in response to the specific example of a heart attack used by the article. A summary of it's recommendations are as follows:

- 1) Be aware of the early signs of heart attack
- 2) Respond by calling for an ambulance or seek assistance to call an ambulance.

These recommendations by the American Heart Association can be viewed on the American Heart Association's website by following the link provided below.

<http://www.americanheart.org/presenter.jhtml?identifier=4535>

This *Allied Health News in Review* report demonstrates the importance of always seeking advice on medical and health related issues from qualified and registered medical or health professionals. The advice and decisions made by medical and health professionals should be based on both clinical experience and research evidence.

Reference:

American Heart Association 2005, 'American Heart Association Guidelines for Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation and Emergency Cardiovascular Care: part 4: adult basic life support', *Circulation*, vol. 112, no. 24, doi:10.1161/CIRCULATIONAHA.105.166553

Scottish Intercollegiate Guidelines Network 2007, 'Cardiac Arrhythmias in Coronary Heart Disease', viewed 27 March 2009, <www.sign.ac.uk>.

CAHE AHNIR Author: L. Perraton.

CONTACTS

www.unisa.edu.au/cahe

[karen.grimmer-somers](mailto:karen.grimmer-somers@unisa.edu.au)

@unisa.edu.au

Telephone (08) 8302 2769

Facsimile (08) 8302 2766

University of South Australia

GPO Box 2471

Adelaide SA 5001

Australia

CRICOS Provider Number

001218