

# MAFES Dawg Tracks

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MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY™  
MS AGRICULTURAL AND  
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*Safety Tips:*  
**Heart Attack Protection**

Coronary heart disease is the #1 killer in the USA. This subject is not about farm safety directly, but it will deal with a problem that can affect anyone at any time. If it should happen, (God forbid that it doesn't happen to any of our "Bulldog" family) we need to know in advance what we can do to help prevent it and what causes them. Our working environment exposes us to some symptoms that might not necessarily happen in a different industry and conditions.

## WHAT IS A HEART ATTACK?

Explaining a heart attack in medical language will take up more space that we have so we will summarize what one is:

**A heart attack is an emergency that requires immediate medical attention.** The heart is a muscle. Blood carries vital oxygen and nutrients to the heart muscle, and without blood, the heart muscle begins to die. This is why every second counts when it comes to heart attack treatment. An extensive blockage, especially in a major blood vessel, such as the left anterior descending artery, can cause a large heart attack. Large heart attacks that aren't treated early and aggressively can lead to heart failure. The risk of death within 5 years of being diagnosed with certain types of heart failure can be 50% or more, worse than many forms of cancer.

## SYMPTOMS OF HEART ATTACK-

Many heart attacks involve discomfort in the center of the chest that lasts longer than a few minutes or that goes away and comes back. It can feel like:

- ✓ Uncomfortable pressure
- ✓ Squeezing
- ✓ Fullness or stabbing pain

However, **NOT ALL HEART ATTACKS ARE PRECEDED BY CHEST PAIN!**

**Heart Attack symptoms include:**

- Chest discomfort
- Discomfort in other areas of the body: One or both arms, the back, neck, jaw or stomach
- Shortness of breath with or without chest discomfort
- Pounding heart or changes in heart rhythm
- Heartburn, nausea, vomiting, abdominal pain
- Breaking out in a cold sweat
- Dizziness or lightheadedness

**Heart Attack symptoms may be different in women:**

**These heart attack symptoms are more common in women.**

**They may occur without chest pain.**

- Sudden onset of weakness
- Shortness of breath
- Nausea, vomiting, indigestion
- Body aches
- Overall feeling of illness
- Sleep disturbance
- Sweating
- Fatigue

- Unusual feeling or mild discomfort in the back, chest, arm, neck or jaw. (Remember this may occur without chest pain and still be a heart attack).
- People who have diabetes or are elderly may also experience atypical heart attack symptoms.
- If you or someone you are with experiences any of the symptoms above get them help immediately. **Dial 911** to get to the hospital as soon as possible.
- If you can, **chew an uncoated aspirin tablet.** This can help slow blood clot formation while you wait for emergency medical technicians (EMTs) to arrive in an ambulance.

## TIPS TO AID IN HEART ATTACK PREVENTION-

- ❖ Maintain a healthy diet
- ❖ Program for regular exercise
- ❖ No Smoking
- ❖ Weight Control

**These 4 items apply to women as well, but the American Heart Association (AHA) also adds:**

- High Cholesterol
- High Blood Pressure

**All of these Tips will aid in the reduction of heart attacks.**

## COUGH/CPR-

**The American Heart Association doesn't endorse the following procedure, but there are documented cases where this has aided in saving a life when used:**

- During a sudden arrhythmia (abnormal heartbeat too) - it may be possible for a conscious, responsive person to cough forcefully and maintain enough blood flow to the brain to remain conscious for a few seconds until the arrhythmia disappears or is treated.
- Blood flow is maintained by increased pressure in the chest that occurs during the forceful coughs. This has been labeled as **Cough/CPR, although it is not a form of traditional resuscitation.**
- The association further states that this method should not be taught in lay-rescuer classes. It only complicates the real method of CPR. In virtually all lay-rescuer CPR classes, the finding trait that signals an emergency is unresponsiveness. This signals the rescuer to start the A-B-C's of CPR. An unresponsive victim won't be able to perform CPR. This technique has been effective in hospital settings during cardiac catheterization.
- In these cases, the ECG is monitored in the presence of a doctor. If arrhythmia is detected, a nurse will ask the patient to cough vigorously, and within the first 10-15 seconds, before the patient loses consciousness. The chance of arrhythmia leaving or the victim getting treated is much better.