




## Teaching Clients How to Use the ED Appropriately

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# Agenda



We will discuss the CHW's role  
as health educator

When to go to the ED vs. when  
to go to the HCH

Benefits of going to the HCH  
as opposed to using the ED

+ Resource



Information based on PowerPoint and Hand-out developed by  
Daily Planet, Richmond, VA



# CHWs as Health Educators



Community Health Workers (CHWs) are **frontline public health workers** who are trusted members of and/or have an unusually close understanding of the community they serve. This trusting relationship enables CHWs to serve as a liaison/link/intermediary between health/social services and the community to facilitate access to services and improve the quality and cultural competence of service delivery. CHWs also build individual and community capacity by **increasing health knowledge** and self-sufficiency through a range of activities such as outreach, **community education**, informal counseling, social support and advocacy.

American Public Health Association, 2008



# CHWs as Health Educators

## What is your role?

- Learn signs and symptoms of serious illness
- Educate clients on the signs and symptoms of serious illness
- Discuss using good judgment and critical thinking
- Make yourself available



+ I started having/feeling....

What should I do?



# + Sore throat and fever

- Most likely due to:
  - Viral infection, such as the flu
  - Bacterial infection, such as strep throat
- These symptoms can be managed at your HCH
- Prevention:
  - Flu Shot
  - Wash your hands



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# I suddenly started having chest pain and can't really breathe

- Could be due to:
  - Strained muscles, trauma
  - Asthma or COPD
  - Pneumonia
  - Angina
  - Heart attack



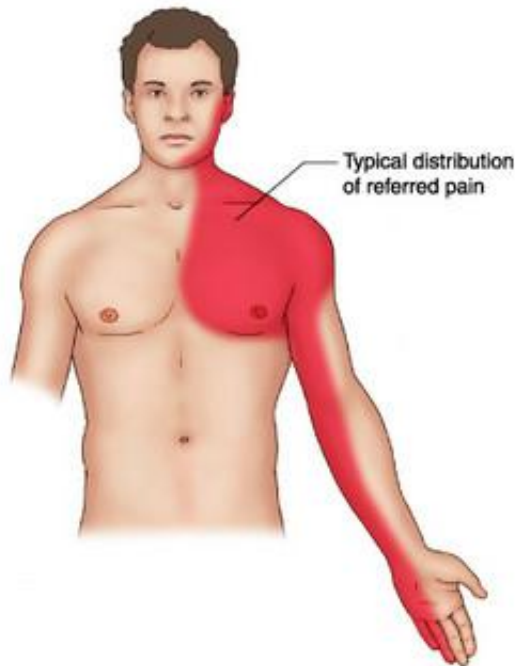
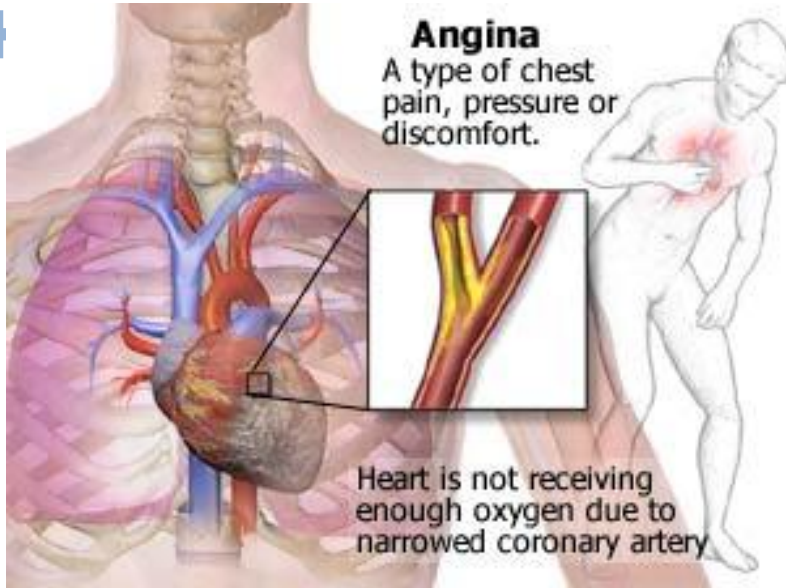





# Heart Attack

- Occurs when an artery, which supplies oxygen, to your heart becomes blocked
- You may feel
  - Pressure or squeezing pain
  - Pain spreading to your shoulder and arm
  - Lightheaded, nauseous, short of breath
- You can take aspirin (reduces clotting) or take nitroglycerin, if prescribed







**IF THERE IS CHEST PAIN ACT FAST!**



Chest pain may seem like pressure, or heaviness in the chest.



Chest pain may feel like an extra pair of hands squeezing the chest.



**ASK PATIENT TO DESCRIBE CHARACTER AND DURATION OF CHEST PAIN**

Chest pain may be severe and stabbing.

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# Chest Pain

Emergency Department





# I just ran out of my meds and need refills

- For many medications, it is important to never miss a dose, even for just a day
- Don't wait until you are completely out!
- Call the HCH
- OR make an appointment to see the pharmacist!





# My friend who also goes to the HCH just had a seizure

- Uncontrolled electrical activity in the brain
- Emergency if:
  - Seizure does not stop in a few minutes
  - Prolonged confusion after seizure (more than 15 min)
  - Not responsive after
  - Trouble breathing
  - First time seizure
- Some Causes
  - Infection
  - Fever
  - Trauma/Injury
  - Drugs/Alcohol
  - Low Blood Sugar

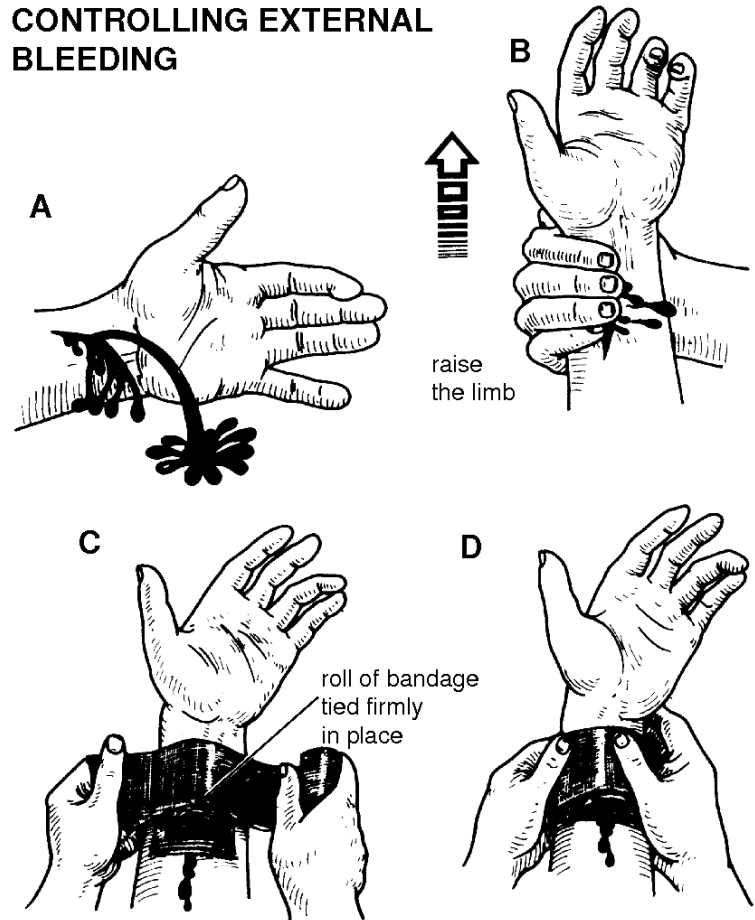




# I started bleeding and I can't get the bleeding to stop

- Prolonged bleeding may lead to:
  - Dizziness
  - Fainting
  - Rapid pulse
  - Pale skin
- It is important to control blood loss immediately to prevent these symptoms!

## CONTROLLING EXTERNAL BLEEDING







# I have sudden weakness on one side of my body

- Sudden weakness or numbness of the face, arm or leg on one side of the body
- Sudden loss or change in vision
- Trouble speaking
- Sudden severe headache with no cause
- Dizziness or sudden falls

**F**ace  
Does the face look uneven?  
Ask them to smile.

**A**rm  
Does one arm drift down?  
Ask them to raise both arms.

**S**peech  
Bef fri flew.  
Does their speech sound strange?  
Ask them to repeat a phrase.

**T**ime  
Every second brain cells die. Call 9-1-1 at any sign of stroke!

**FAST**  
Face  
Arm  
Speech  
Time

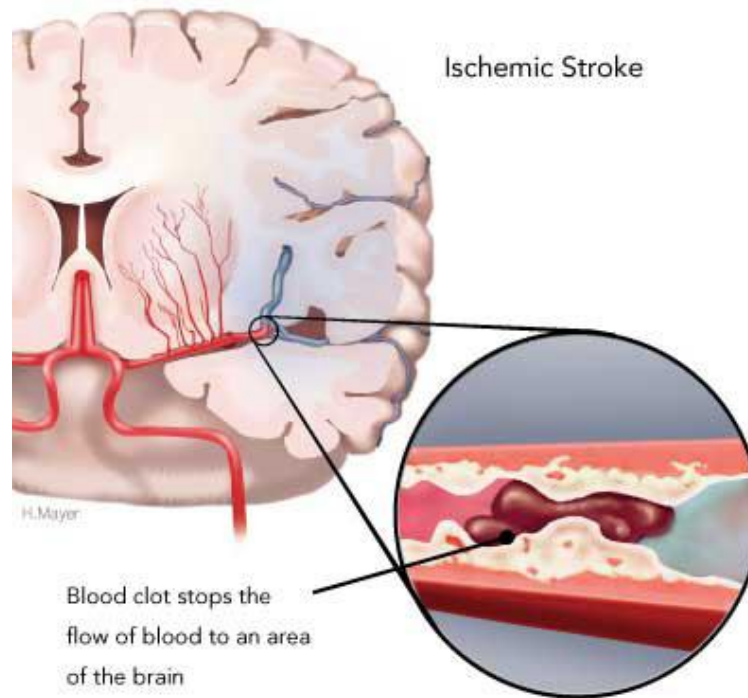
**Is it a stroke?  
Check these signs  
FAST!**

**Call 9-1-1 at any sign of stroke.**

The poster features illustrations of a man with a face droop, a woman with a drifting arm, and a woman with slurred speech. It also includes a hand holding a mobile phone and an ambulance.

# + Stroke

- When blood flow to part of the brain stops
- Without blood, the brain doesn't have oxygen, which can cause brain cells to die
- Risk factors
  - Diabetes
  - Family history
  - High cholesterol
  - Atrial fibrillation
  - Smoking



© Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada



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# Stroke

Emergency Department





# I have a new rash on my arm that is really itchy

- Cause is commonly:
  - Infectious
    - Bacterial
    - Fungal
  - Allergic
  - Insect bite or sting
  - Irritation
- If the rash becomes worse and **breathing difficult**, then it may be appropriate to go to the ER





# I started coughing and vomiting up blood this morning

- Bronchitis is the most common cause. Others include:
  - Lung cancer
  - Pneumonia
  - Tuberculosis
  - Pulmonary embolism
  - Trauma
- Causes of vomiting blood
  - Peptic ulcer
  - Damage to liver
  - Defects or changes to blood vessels in esophagus or stomach
  - Prolonged vomiting
- It is important to find the cause of the bleeding, so further bleeding can be prevented





# Other Scenarios?

# + HCH

vs.

- Allergies
- Cold or flu symptoms
- Cough or bronchitis
- Earache
- Minor burns or bruises
- Rash
- Fevers
- Minor cuts
- Sore throat
- Sprain
- Foreign object in eye or nose
- Medicine refills

# Emergency

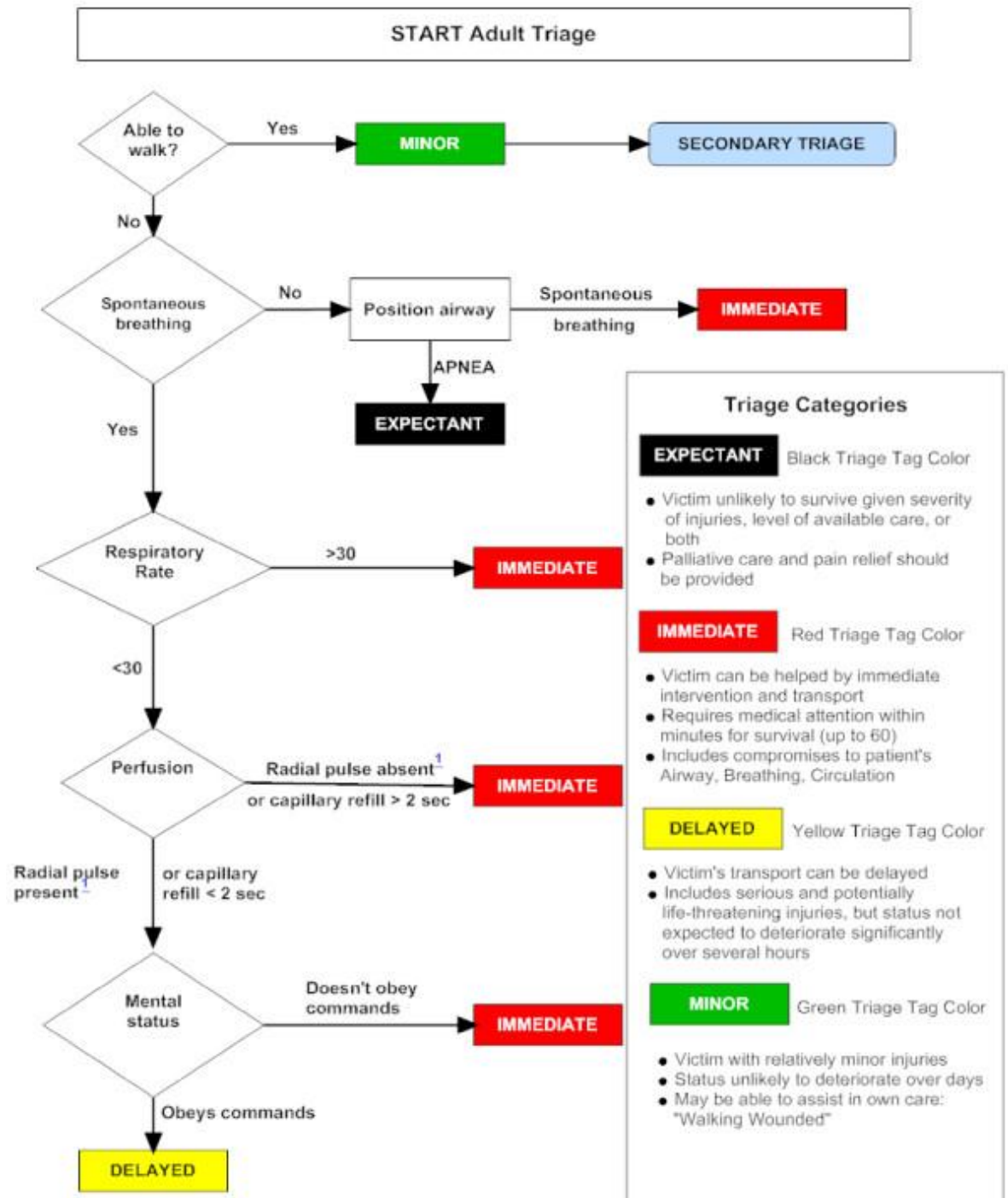
- Severe bleeding
- Chest pain or pressure
- Coughing or vomiting blood
- Difficulty breathing
- Major burns
- Poisoning
- Sudden dizziness or fainting
- Sudden confusion or difficulty speaking
- Sudden weakness or numbness
- Seizure
- Diarrhea or vomiting that won't stop
- Drug overdose

# + Downsides to the ED

- The wait, crowded
- Doctors and nurses may not know your medical history
- They only focus on the problem you are complaining of
- Medication you receive is temporary
- They see patients based on the severity of their condition, not in order of arrival

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# Triage



Acharya RP, Gastmans C, Denier Y. Emergency department triage: an ethical analysis. BMC Emerg Med. 2011 Oct 7:11:16



# Benefits of HCH

- Clients can always call the HCH or call the CHW
  - Make sure you provide an after hours number to your clients
- Continuous care from the same people
- Health education
- Decreases hospitalization
- Fewer number of tests requested







# Prior to Client's doctor appt



- Before your visit
  - Write down questions and worries
  
- On the day of your visit
  - Bring all medicines with you
  - Bring list of questions
  
- At doctor's office
  - Ask questions and tell doctor when you don't understand
  - Ask about your blood pressure, weight, and most recent lab values
  - Ask when you should schedule your next visit

# + What is the Client's job?

- Learn as much as you can about how to care for your illness
- Think about what lifestyle changes you are willing to make in your life to better your health
- Understand your medications and how to take them
- If you **do** need to go to the ER, bring a **visit summary** to your next HCH appointment

+ Questions?





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