



**BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA**  
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**First Class Requirement 7c1**  
**"Tell the five most common signals of a heart attack."**  
Scout Handbook index: First Aid | Heart Attacks

\_\_\_\_\_ Name

**Background 1:** A victim suffering from a heart attack will show outward symptoms. If you spot any two, don't take a chance. Call 9-1-1 immediately!

**Background 2:** Call 9-1-1 immediately! The longer the victim has to wait for the EMS techs to provide treatment and transport, the more damage is being done to their heart.

**Background 3:** Call 9-1-1 immediately! It's a standing joke among EMS techs that the 6th symptom of a heart attack is denial -- especially by men. "It's nothing. I'm fine." "It's just a temporary pain that will go away." "The pain is just a pulled muscle." "I'm completely fit -- it can't be a heart attack." Don't pay attention. If you suspect a heart attack, ignore the victim's denials and call 9-1-1. You can say, "Let's just play it safe."

**Background 4:** Women get heart attacks too. Women suffering heart attacks used to be rare, but now it's much more common. The best guess is that more women are now overweight and that more women are suffering from diabetes. Another possibility is that more women are taking on the high-stress corporate jobs that only men used to do.

**Background 5:** This requirement is, "Tell the five most common signals of a heart attack." The problem is that a woman's symptoms can differ from a man's. You'll have to learn both sets of five in order to pass this requirement.

1. For First Class, why do you have to know specifically about heart attacks? (*Hint: make sure your answer contains the words, "leading cause".*)

Because: \_\_\_\_\_

2. For both men and women, what are the five most common signs of a heart attack?

**P** = \_\_\_\_\_

**N** = \_\_\_\_\_

**S** = \_\_\_\_\_

**S** = \_\_\_\_\_

**W** = \_\_\_\_\_

3. For both men and women, what kind of pain does a heart attack victim normally experience (choose 1)?

Uncomfortable pressure, squeezing, fullness, pain in the center of the chest

Sharp stabbing twinges of pain

4. For both men and women, what kind of pain does a person experience when they have indigestion or heartburn (choose 1)?

Uncomfortable pressure, squeezing, fullness, pain in the center of the chest

Sharp stabbing twinges of pain

5. For men: Check off the places where a male heart attack victim might experience pain:

Behind the breastbone

Shoulders

Arms

Neck

Back

Abdominal

Upper body

Back teeth

6. For women: Check off the places where a female heart attack victim might experience pain:

Behind the breastbone

Shoulders

Arms

Neck

Back

Abdominal

Upper body

Back teeth

7. The best first aid for a heart attack is (choose any 3):  
 Call 9-1-1  
 Call 9-1-1  
 Call 9-1-1
8. While waiting for the ambulance, is it OK to do CPR (choose 1)?  
 Always do CPR if you know how  
 Only do CPR if the victim isn't breathing or you can't find a pulse
9. There are things you can do to keep your own heart healthy. Choose the correct one from each of these pairs:
- The heart is a muscle and benefits from being exercised  
 The heart muscle will eventually wear out, so treat it gently and give it as much rest as possible
- Eating good foods will ensure that your arteries don't get clogged up  
 Food goes into the stomach not into the arteries -- food has nothing to do with heart attacks
- Smoking causes arteries to constrict, thus making it easier for them to get clogged up  
 Smoke goes into the lungs not into the arteries -- smoking has nothing to do with heart attacks
10. Repeat: what are the five most common signs of a heart attack?
1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

11. Read the "First Aid Merit Badge Supplement" below. Look specifically at numbers 5 and 6. Why is moving around or taking stimulants bad? (*Hint: make sure your answer contains the words, "extra stress".*)

Because: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## First Aid Merit Badge Supplement

**In addition to calling 9-1-1, here are some additional actions you can take**

1. Place the victim in a partly reclining or sitting position.
2. Do not wait to see if the pain goes away. Call for help immediately.
3. Loosen tight clothing at the neck, chest, and waist.
4. Keep the person calm and comfortable, warm but not hot.
5. Do not allow the victim to move around.
6. Do not give stimulants.
7. If the victim is not breathing, give rescue breathing.
8. If the person suddenly collapses and loses consciousness, try to awaken him. If the person cannot be awakened, and if there is no breathing or pulse in the neck, begin CPR.

**More information about women experiencing different symptoms:** This information is not in the current edition of the Boy Scout Handbook, but it's good to know anyway.

1. In the "pain" category for women, add "lower left side of the jaw."
2. In the "pain" category, women can experience pain in both arms, while men are typically just the left arm.
3. In the "pain" category, women can experience pain that starts in the chest and then spreads to the lower and upper back.

4. In the "weakness" category, women can feel suddenly and unusually worn out after a typical workout routine. That can go along with a heavy feeling in the chest.
5. In the "weakness" category, women can feel extreme fatigue from a simple task, such as walking to the bathroom.
6. In the "nausea" category, it seems to be worse with a woman experiencing a heart attack. Vomiting is more common than with men.
7. In the "shortness of breath" category, women can notice that breathing is harder when lying down, but gets better when sitting up.