

American Heart Month: What is a Silent Heart Attack?

About 1 in 5 heart attacks happen without the person being aware of it

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VO/SOT SCRIPT

SUGGESTED TEASE	THE SPOTLIGHT IS ON HEART DISEASE PREVENTION DURING AMERICAN HEART MONTH. WHILE IT'S IMPORTANT TO KNOW THE SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF A HEART ATTACK.... DID YOU KNOW IT'S POSSIBLE TO HAVE ONE WITHOUT EVEN KNOWING? HOW COMMON SILENT HEART ATTACKS ARE, COMING UP.
ANCHOR LEAD	FEBRUARY IS AMERICAN HEART MONTH... AN OPPORTUNITY TO RAISE AWARENESS OF HEART DISEASE -- THE NUMBER ONE KILLER OF MEN AND WOMEN IN THE U-S. ACCORDING TO THE C-D-C, SOMEONE HAS A HEART ATTACK EVERY FORTY SECONDS. WITH COMMON SYMPTOMS LIKE CHEST TIGHTNESS, ARM PAIN, AND SHORTNESS OF BREATH, YOU MIGHT ASSUME IT WOULD BE OBVIOUS TO KNOW WHEN YOU'RE HAVING A HEART ATTACK. BUT ABOUT TWENTY PERCENT OF HEART ATTACKS GO UNNOTICED. IT'S CALLED A SILENT HEART ATTACK... WHICH IS WHEN SOMEONE MISTAKES THE SYMPTOMS OR HAS NONE AT ALL. DR. ANDREW FREEMAN, A CARDIOLOGIST AT NATIONAL JEWISH HEALTH, SAYS SILENT HEART ATTACKS CAN HAPPEN TO ANYONE... BUT ARE OFTEN LINKED TO ANOTHER MEDICAL CONDITION -- DIABETES. <i>"Diabetes in itself is a cardiovascular disease risk factor. And so we have to be very careful with our diabetic patients to make sure that we are periodically checking on their hearts to make sure these types of things don't happen. And in many cases, like I said, they don't lose</i>
(SOT :18) CG: Andrew M. Freeman, MD National Jewish Health	

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<p>ANCHOR TAG</p>	<p><i>any heart function, but they're obviously at risk for more events down the road."</i></p> <hr/> <p>SILENT HEART ATTACKS ARE DETECTED WHEN IMAGING TESTS - LIKE AN E-K-G - REVEAL HEART MUSCLE DAMAGE.</p> <p>RECENT STUDIES' HAVE SHOWN HAVING A SILENT HEART ATTACK INCREASES YOUR RISK OF EXPERIENCING ANOTHER HEART ATTACK OR EVEN SUDDEN CARDIAC DEATH.</p>

EXTRA BITES

<p>CG: Andrew M. Freeman, MD National Jewish Health</p>	<p>Dr. Freeman says people don't seek treatment because of atypical symptoms: <i>"There are people out there who don't manifest with a typical chest pain or shortness of breath or arm pain or passing out. They just never know things are happening to them, or they have what appears to be indigestion or belly ache, or even a chest ache. And it's transient. And they don't think much of it and never seek medical care."</i> :18</p> <p>Dr. Freeman says many people don't realize they've had a heart attack: <i>"We start doing some investigating. And it turns out, they had a heart attack, which is when part of the heart muscle dies. Now, many of these people don't have a significant reduction in their heart function, thankfully. But nonetheless, this is a trigger sometimes for us to look a little bit further."</i> :14</p> <p>Dr. Freeman says pay attention to symptoms that seem unusual: <i>"I always tell people to pay really good attention when they have things that seem out of the blue for them. Right. So if you're doing fine and you're going for a brisk walk and all of a sudden you get what appears to be indigestion You haven't eaten recently, should get that checked out."</i> :12</p> <p>Dr. Freeman says minor heart attacks can lead to future heart attacks: <i>"In many cases, like I said, they don't lose any heart function, but they're obviously at risk for more events down the road, and that's why it's important to know about this."</i> :07</p>
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CG: Andrew M. Freeman, MD
National Jewish Health

Dr. Freeman gives an example of a silent heart attack:
“One of the things that happened to me when I was training many years ago was somebody showed up with what appeared to be jaw pain and a toothache while they were exercising, didn’t think anything of it, and it turns out that was their angina, that was their chest pain except it occurred in their jaw.” :14

Dr. Freeman says it’s important to investigate unusual symptoms:
“People who have diabetes are the ones who are probably at the highest risk for a silent heart attack. And then there are people out there who ignore symptoms and we call it silent because they never came to medical attention, and I think it’s important for people to check out symptoms when they have them.” :14

References

¹Association of Silent Myocardial Infarction and Sudden Cardiac Death, **JAMA Cardiology, Volume 4, No. 8, August 2019**. Online:
<https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamacardiology/article-abstract/2737873>

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