



Maine HeartSafe Communities

What is HeartSafe Communities?

The Maine Cardiovascular Health Council and the Maine Emergency Medical Services (EMS) office are partnering to bring *HeartSafe Communities* to Maine. It is a recognition program based on the “chain of survival” and is now being implemented in several states and countries.

The purpose of *HeartSafe* is to recognize the excellent work being done by EMS services throughout Maine and to provide opportunities to enhance partnerships, resources, and services to improve cardiovascular health and decrease deaths and disability due to sudden cardiac arrest, heart attack, and stroke.

Being HeartSafe is a Team Effort:

Early recognition of the signs and symptoms associated with sudden cardiac arrest, heart attack and stroke, immediate access to emergency services, and prompt medical treatment are all crucial to prevent future cardiovascular events, save lives and reduce medical costs and disability. *Maine HeartSafe Communities* designation promotes enhancements to each of these important links and recognizes a community’s dedication to improving its “chain of survival” through partnerships with the local Emergency Medical Services program.



For more information:

Contact the Maine Cardiovascular Health Council
HeartSafe Communities Program
207-622-7566, x226
tlove@mcdph.org

What it takes to be HeartSafe:

HeartSafe applicants must work with their community partners to meet the following criteria.

Basic Recognition Criteria:

- Community CPR training sessions (number required based on population)
- Cardiovascular related education and awareness activities
- EMS first response designated vehicles equipped with Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs)
- Public AED placement and training
- Advanced Life Support dispatched as primary or backup responders to all priority medical emergencies
- Ongoing evaluation of community “chain of survival”

Important Facts:

- Each year in Maine, one out of four (26%) people die from heart disease or stroke.
- In 2009, heart disease and stroke combined accounted for more than 3,000 Maine deaths.
- In the U.S. about 335,000 people a year die of coronary heart disease (CHD) without being hospitalized or admitted to an emergency room. Most of these are sudden deaths caused by cardiac arrest.
- It's estimated that more than 95 percent of cardiac arrest victims die before reaching the hospital. In places where defibrillation is provided within 5 to 7 minutes, the survival rate from sudden cardiac arrest is as high as 49 percent.