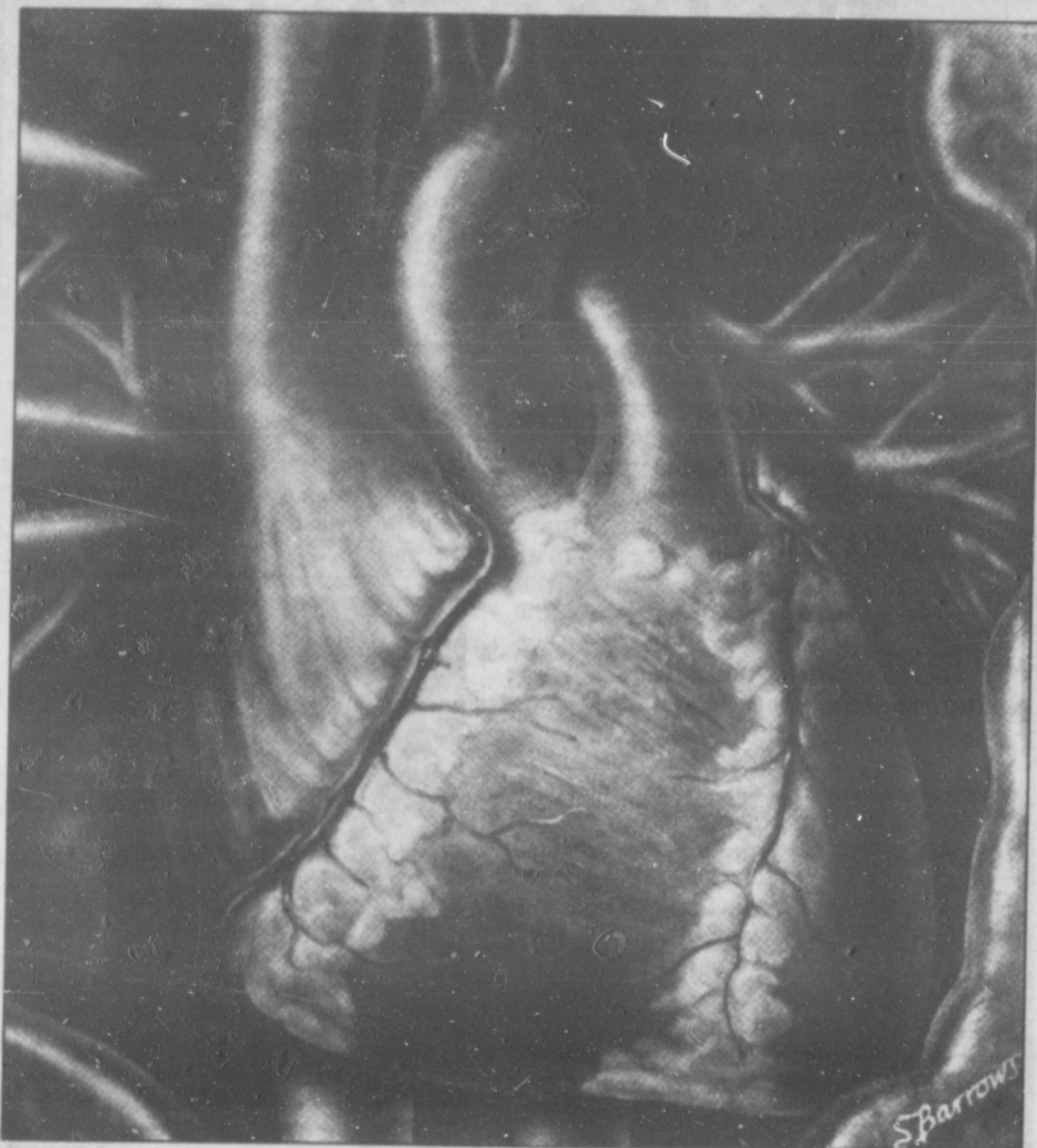




The right decision

By Andy Kuipers

Before Jay opened the front door, he knew something was wrong. His dad's car was in the driveway, and that was strange at this time of day. As he dropped his books on the dining room table, he noticed his dad sitting in the living room.

"Dad, what are you doing home?" Jay sauntered into the room, then stopped to take a closer look at his father. There was sweat on his forehead, and his face was very pale. "You don't look so good, Dad. Is something wrong?"

"Must be something I ate, Jay. Stomach's kind of upset." It was an effort for him to speak, and he sounded out of breath. "I'll just sit here a minute." He struggled to undo his tie. His hand moved down his chest.

"Dad, what's the matter? Is it your chest?" His father nodded and rubbed his chest. Jay could see the pain in his dad's face. Suddenly Jay realized the danger his father was facing. He had heard these same symptoms in his CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation) class. Jay made his decision. "Dad, I'm calling an ambulance. I think you're having a heart attack."

"No, Jay, don't be silly!" his father

protested. "It's just a little indigestion. Help me upstairs so I can lie down." He tried to get up, but Jay gently eased him back into his chair, loosened his tie and opened the top button of his shirt.

"You're staying right here until the ambulance comes." Jay reached for the phone. "Trust me, Dad, I know what I'm doing."

Jay did know what he was doing. He recognized the signs of a heart attack: chest pain, pale skin color, sweating, shortness of breath, weakness and nausea. He also knew that more than half of the approximately 650,000 yearly heart attack deaths occur during the first two hours of a heart attack.

Jay's dad needed to remain as quiet as possible and in a position that allowed him to breathe easily. During a heart attack, the heart is running short of needed oxygen. Any extra effort uses oxygen the heart needs.

Getting immediate medical attention for his father was critical. Jay didn't let his father stop him from doing what was best. It isn't unusual for a person having a heart attack to deny it. If you are in this situation, don't let anyone change your mind. Make the right decision. Call for help.

Save me! I'm your friend

Janet smiles and waves to you as she starts the final lap around the track. Suddenly she collapses. She's not breathing. It takes four to six minutes without oxygen for the brain to die. You must act now. Would you know what to do?

CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation) could save Janet's life. Broken down CPR stands for:

(C)ardio — heart
(P)ulmonary — lungs
(R)esuscitation — restoring life to someone apparently dead

To put it all together, CPR means restarting breathing and heartbeat.

The American Heart Association has divided CPR into three steps: A is for airway, all the passages leading to the lungs. When a person passes out, the tongue often falls to the back of the throat and blocks the airway. To reopen it, tilt the head back and move the jaw forward. This action lifts the tongue. Often this is enough to allow breathing to begin again.

If it does not begin again, you must proceed to step B — breathing. Mouth-to-mouth resuscitation is the most effective way of breathing for another person. You must blow into the person's mouth once every five seconds while pinching the nose closed.

Next, check to see if the person has a pulse. If not, use step C — circulation. To circulate blood after the heart stops, press on the lower third of the breastbone. You must continue

breathing, also. Give two breaths for every fifteen compressions of the breastbone.

These steps may keep a person alive until medical assistance arrives. If you

By Karen O'Leary, RN

know CPR, you may save a friend's life.

For information about CPR classes, contact your local chapter of the American Heart Association.

How to perform CPR

To open airway, tilt head back and move the jaw forward.



Blow into the person's mouth once every five seconds.



Press on the lower third of the breastbone. Give two breaths for every 15 compressions on the breastbone.

