



Member Guest Blog: CPR – Dispelling the Fear

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You've seen it many times on television and in movies, glamorized by on-screen medical professionals during adrenaline-laced scenes depicting the life-or-death world of healthcare. It is the "knee-jerk" reaction to someone that has become unresponsive and has stopped breathing that miraculously restores life. But the truth is, CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation) is not movie magic created to elevate our on-screen rescuer to superhero status. It is very real and it really does save lives.

For nearly half a century, CPR has made its way into our homes via our television sets. It has "starred" in a multitude of medical dramas, both in television and on film, helping it become one of the most iconic lifesaving skills in the world. Arguably, this "stardom" may have lent itself to the notion, still believed by many today, that CPR is reserved for those with the skills and knowledge to care for the sick and injured. However, the very opposite is true.

Performing CPR does not require making complex decisions or having in-depth medical knowledge. It is easy to learn, remember and do. There are no prerequisites for getting certified and having a medical background is not required. Anyone has the capacity to learn CPR.

Participating in a CPR class is an uncomplicated, and often fun, experience. As the student, you engage in an instructor-led course supplemented with instructional videos and mannequin-centered hands-on practice. A half a century of techniques and guidelines are wrapped up into a few hours of classroom time designed to provide you with the skills necessary to successfully perform CPR. The course is often delivered in a familiar environment, where you are surrounded by people who are as eager as you are to learn such an invaluable skill.

The fear of having to perform CPR, or feeling unqualified to perform it, often discourages the idea of getting certified or often guides most back to the notion that it's a skill better left to the professionals. However, with 400,000 cardiac arrests happening outside the hospital each year, of which 88 percent occur in the home, the professionals aren't always there to help. The burden of acting quickly and selflessly during an emergency often falls onto the shoulders of the people experiencing it. The bystander is often left to rush to the aid of a loved one, friend or co-worker.

Although performing CPR in a real-world emergency doesn't always end in a movie-miracle climax, arming yourself with the knowledge and skill of CPR can ultimately make a difference in saving someone's life.

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