

Sudden Death: Bringing the Dead Back to Life

Sudden death is a cardiac term for when someone unexpectedly collapses and dies. Also called cardiac arrest, this lethal event occurs because the heart suddenly stops (having either no beat, or develops a totally ineffective beat – such as ventricular fibrillation). CPR is typically performed (to keep oxygen-containing blood flowing to the brain), and if one is available, a defibrillator shocks the victim in hopes of restoring the heartbeat. Yet despite the heroic successes often portrayed in TV and movies... the harsh reality is that 85 to 90% of these patients die, and severe brain damage develops in half of those who do survive.

The reason for this lack of success is that all treatment efforts (CPR, defibrillation) are aimed solely at returning the absent heartbeat. Yet this time-honored response is highly unsuccessful... because it does not address the heart defect that caused the sudden death. So even when a heartbeat is restored, the condition that caused the sudden death continues, leading to other issues that still result in the patient's early death. Despite this dire reality, medical science rigidly adheres to this ineffective method. But why stay so stubbornly attached to a method in which 85 to 90% of patients perish? Especially when there is a better way.

An alternate and effective three-step approach has been used experimentally and in patients. First, CPR specifically designed to provide sufficient blood pressure is employed to ensure blood nourishment to the brain. Second, body circulation is supported using a small portable heart-lung machine whose catheters easily access the groin arteries. Use of this support continues in the cardiologist's cath lab as they diagnose why the heart stopped. Third, the dead heart is then brought back to life by the delivery of blood containing the same added ingredients that successfully treated heart attack patients.

After achieving positive results experimentally, this new method was applied internationally to 34 sudden death patients. Unlike patients treated conventionally (where near 90% die and severe brain damage occurs in half of those few surviving), *80% of these patients survived* – and only one patient sustained brain injury.

A further dilemma with present methods is that 100% will die if CPR / defibrillation does not return an efficient heartbeat within 15 minutes. Yet these 34 patients underwent CPR for an average of 72 minutes (including one survivor for 150 minutes). So why was this new approach so much more successful? Because it also treated *the cause* behind the sudden death and not just the symptom (the heart stopping).

Summary of Chapter 11 from the book:

SOLVING THE MYSTERIES OF HEART DISEASE
Life-saving Answers Ignored by the Medical Establishment
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