

# Heart foundation launches CPR course

**Tan Dawn Wei**

Each year, several thousands in Singapore suffer from sudden cardiac arrest, which can be triggered by a heart attack.

Only one in 35, or 2.7 per cent, will survive if the attack did not occur in a hospital.

It is not a pretty number, considering cities like Seattle in the United States and Gothenburg in Sweden chalk up survival rates as high as 40 per cent.

That is why the Singapore Heart Foundation (SHF) wants Singaporeans to pick up skills in two life-saving areas: cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and the use of the automated external defibrillator machine.

The SHF has just launched its own certification programme and hopes to train as many people as possible in these areas.

Sudden cardiac arrest can strike anyone, and many victims appear healthy with little or no cardiovascular risk factors.

For every minute of delay in giving CPR and defibrillation after a person collapses from cardiac arrest, the survival rate decreases by 7 per cent to 10 per cent, said Dr Terrance Chua, chairman of the foundation.

"It is crucial that the public learns it instead of saying, 'I'm not a doctor or a nurse', because it could be your loved one you might have to save," said Dr Chua, also deputy medical director at the National Heart Centre.

He said Singapore should aspire to reach Seattle's and Gothenburg's numbers – many residents there are trained in CPR, and defibrillators are widely available in these two cities.

The foundation has also been promoting the installation of defibrillators in public places through its Heart Safe Singapore initiative.

These devices can now be found in malls like Ngee Ann City and Suntec City, and soon, Changi Airport's terminals.

The non-profit organisation's



ST PHOTO: CHEW SENG KIM  
Mr Michael Foo, manager of Heart Safe, demonstrates the use of the CPR kit that allows learners to practise the life-saving skill on their own.

new four-hour certification course is being offered at its headquarters in Junction 8 at a subsidised introductory rate of \$100.

It comes with a special mobile kit that allows learners to practise

CPR at home on a dummy. Those interested in buying the kit alone can also get it from SHF for \$60 each.

For more information, go to [www.myheart.org.sg](http://www.myheart.org.sg)

## Urgent need

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## Get trained

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DR TERRANCE CHUA, who is chairman of the Singapore Heart Foundation