

MEDIA ADVISORY

8 September 2009



Chances of “Staying Alive” after cardiac arrest set to improve as Singapore Heart Foundation offers CPR+AED certification at its Heart Wellness Centre

Unique facility and first-of-its-kind portable CPR kit aims to make Singapore “Heart Safe” by boosting numbers of CPR- and AED-trained people who can save lives

12 September 2009: The Singapore Heart Foundation (SHF) is launching its own certification programme to equip members of the public with two vital skill sets they need to save a life in cardiac emergencies, i.e. Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) and using Automated External Defibrillator (AED) machines. The certification programme utilises a unique and entirely mobile CPR 3A (Anyone, Anytime, Anywhere) Kit.

In Singapore, only 2.7% of people who suffer from sudden cardiac arrests in public areas survive.

“We hope to draw inspiration from cities with exceptional survival rates like Seattle in the United States and Gottenburg in Sweden where out-of-hospital sudden cardiac arrest survival rates are as high as 40%. We aim to increase the survival rates by providing greater accessibility to CPR+AED training and empowering more people to help save lives,” said A/Prof Terrance Chua, Chairman of SHF.

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Chances of staying alive... page 2

The training programme, called CPR+AED Certification @ SHF, will be offered at the SHF-Isetan Foundation Heart Wellness Centre in Bishan starting 12 September 2009 at a subsidised introductory rate of \$100. The training cost also includes the CPR 3A Kit that allows users and their family members to learn the core skills of CPR. The self-instructional kit is exclusive to the Singapore Heart Foundation. It comes with a DVD and a practice dummy that can be used to refresh CPR skills as often as needed to build confidence in performing quality CPR even after the 4-hour course. This kit, together with the programme, is the most affordable CPR+AED training package available in the market.

“The ‘Chain of Survival’ comprises four vital links that can save a life in cardiac emergencies: early access, early CPR, early defibrillation and early advance care. We hope that with an increased number of trained CPR+AED personnel, confidence in performing quality CPR through the frequent use of CPR 3A Kits and accessibility to AED machines, we would see a significant improvement in the out-of-hospital sudden cardiac arrest survival rate in Singapore.” said A/Prof Chua.

Apart from the CPR 3A Kit, SHF will also make use of new ways to seed the CPR concept in public consciousness. One such novelty is the use of the 1977 Bee Gees disco hit *Stayin’ Alive*. The song has been found to have 103 beats per minute—the best rhythm for performing CPR.

In fact, a small study by University of Illinois College of Medicine researchers in Peoria found that 10 doctors and five medical students who listened to the “Saturday Night Fever” tune while practicing CPR not only performed perfectly, they remembered the technique five weeks later.

“We thought that introducing this song in our programme would lead to better retention of CPR techniques among our trainees, and especially when they are in a situation that may cause them to panic under pressure.” said Mr Vernon Kang, CEO of SHF.

SHF believes that both the title of the song and its lyrics underline the importance of CPR in saving a life. Apart from CPR, SHF also promotes installation of AEDs in public places through its Heart Safe Singapore initiative, which aims to improve survival rates in sudden cardiac arrest.

“We hope to work closely with companies and office building managements alike to make Singapore as Heart Safe as possible,” Mr Kang said.

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For photo and video opportunities during a CPR-AED training session at 1:45pm to 2.30pm and interview with a Singapore Heart Foundation representative, please contact the following:

MEDIA CONTACTS

Melissa Thomas
Fleishman-Hillard
Tel: +65 6424 6379
Mobile: +65 9271 8494
Email: melissa.thomas@fleishman.com

Shefali Srinivas
Fleishman-Hillard
Tel: +65 6424 6386
Mobile: +65 9159 3111
Email: Shefali.srinivas@fleishman.com

About Singapore Heart Foundation

The Singapore Heart Foundation (SHF) is a non-profit charitable organisation at the forefront of the battle against heart disease in Singapore. Since its inception in 1970, the Foundation has grown into a well-established and reputable organisation with local and international links.

SHF fulfills its mission through educational programmes highlighting preventive measures against heart disease to the public. SHF supports community-based research aimed at gaining a better understanding of the landscape of heart disease in Singapore. SHF also focuses on rehabilitative and preventive care for recovering heart patients and at-risk individuals. In addition, SHF offers financial assistance to needy heart patients for emergency relief as well as for treatment.

For more information, please visit www.myheart.org.sg.

CPR+AED Certification @ SHF

FACT SHEET

HEART SAFE SINGAPORE

Heart Safe Singapore, launched by the Singapore Heart Foundation, endeavours to improve the overall out-of-hospital heart attack rates in Singapore by creating an environment for more effective use of CPR and AED in the community.

BACKGROUND

Sudden cardiac arrest (SCA) can strike anyone regardless of age, ethnicity or gender. Many victims of SCA appear seemingly healthy with little or no cardiovascular risk factors. In Singapore, the statistics are alarming: only 1 in 36 SCA casualties survive in an out-of-hospital environment. Meanwhile, cities such as Gothenburg (Sweden) and Seattle (USA) have recorded exceptional survival rates of more than 40%.

WHAT IS THE CHAIN OF SURVIVAL?

The Chain of Survival comprises four vital links that can save a life in cardiac emergencies: early recognition and access, early CPR, early defibrillation and advance cardiac life support. Our knowledge of cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and the use of Automated External Defibrillator (AED) is hence extremely important in reducing the number of sudden cardiac deaths. CPR and AED, if duly administered in the few critical minutes just after collapse, will skew the Chain of Survival equation towards higher chances of survival.

WHAT IS CPR?

CPR is an emergency procedure for restoring the breathing and heartbeat of an unconscious victim of heart attack, drowning, strangulation, suffocation, electrocution, drug over dose, carbon monoxide poisoning or accident. It is a combination of mouth-to-mouth breathing and chest compressions. The primary objective is to deliver continuous flow of oxygen to the lungs and brain. CPR essentially buys time for the victim until AED and emergency care arrive. Early CPR is the second critical link in the Chain of Survival.

WHAT IS AN AED?

An Automated External Defibrillator (AED) is a small portable electrical device that automatically analyses potentially life threatening cardiac rhythms in a patient and treats it by defibrillation, the application of an electrical shock, to allow the heart to re-establish normal rhythms. It is designed to be used primarily by first responders in cardiac emergencies who may not be fully trained in Advanced Cardiac Life Support (ACLS).

Early defibrillation, the third critical link in the Chain of Survival, can greatly improve survival rates for out-of-hospital cardiac arrests caused by irregular heart rhythms (ventricular fibrillation). Defibrillation works best in the first few minutes after the onset of cardiac arrest. If it is initiated too late, the heart may not respond to the electric therapy. For every minute of delay in giving CPR and defibrillation following collapse, the survival rate decreases by 7-10%.

ABOUT CPR+AED CERTIFICATION @ SHF

The CPR+AED Certification @ SHF will equip Singaporeans with the necessary life-saving skills to respond in cardiac emergencies. It provides participants with up-to-date knowledge and skills to perform CPR and use AED effectively and safely.

The 4-hour course features lectures and hands-on simulation that empowers the trainees to learn and role-play through interaction in a conducive, non-threatening environment. Participants will be coached and guided systematically in the medical protocol that includes determining unresponsiveness, activating emergency medical services as well as performing CPR and use AED on adult casualties.

The course objectives are:

- To understand the importance of the Chain of Survival
- To understand the rescuer's role and response to cardiac arrest victims
- To demonstrate knowledge and skills in CPR
- To demonstrate knowledge of using AED

Some First Aid with CPR courses require one full training day. This programme is only four hours long. Is the teaching of skills compromised?

The CPR+AED Certification @ SHF is in full compliance with the national standards. Singapore Heart Foundation is a recognised National Resuscitation Council accredited AED training centre.

What is the unique selling proposition of the CPR+AED Certification @ SHF?

The CPR+AED Certification @ SHF features the CPR 3A (Anyone, Anytime, Anywhere) Kit, a complete and self-instructional kit that allows participants to:

- Focus on practical skills with intensive hands-on training during and after the course
- Transfer their CPR know-how and skills to family members
- Build confidence in performing quality CPR as participants and their families are able to refresh their life-saving skills as often as desired

Who are the target participants?

- Schools
- Corporations
- Grassroots organisations

- Sports organisations
- Responsible members of the public
- Workplace safety and first aid teams
- Families of heart patients
- Families with elderly parents
- Families with members at risk of cardiovascular diseases

How do I receive a certificate?

Participants must attain a minimum of 80% for theory and achieve at least 90% competency for practical test before a CPR+AED Certificate is awarded. The Certification is issued by the Singapore Heart Foundation.

Is there an expiry date to the certification?

Yes, the certification is valid for 2 years from the date of training.

Are there any pre-requisites or requirements before I can sign up?

All are welcome to sign up. There are no special requirements to learn CPR+AED. Do note, however, that participants must be physically able to kneel on the floor for the hands-on simulation.

Do I need to do any readings before coming to the course?

The training manual will be mailed two weeks prior to the commencement of the course. Participants are strongly advised to read the material for maximum learning benefits.

When and where will the course be held?

Unless otherwise stated, trainings are held every second Saturday of the month, from 1.30pm to 5.30pm, at the SHF-Isetan Foundation Heart Wellness Centre, 9 Bishan Place #07-01, Junction 8 (Office Tower).

SHF reserves the right to change the venue and training schedule in the interest of availability, equipment needed and class size.

Is there a dress code?

Participants are requested to be suitably and comfortably dressed: T-shirt and pants/slacks with comfortable shoes.

How much is the course fee?

Companies, communities and the public can go through the course at a subsidised introductory rate* of S\$100 (excluding GST) per person**.

* Introductory rate is limited to the first 100 registered participants.

** Includes the CPR 3A (Anyone, Anytime, Anywhere) Kit valued at S\$60 and a step-by-step training manual.

How do I sign up?

Registration form is available at the SHF office and can also be downloaded from www.myheart.org.sg. Registration is confirmed only upon receipt of a complete registration form and payment.

How do I pay?

Cash or cheque payments (payable to SINGAPORE HEART FOUNDATION) must be made three weeks prior to the course date. Payments can be made in person or, in the case of cheque payments, mailed to:

Singapore Heart Foundation
CPR+AED Certification @ SHF
9 Bishan Place #07-01
Junction 8 (Office Tower)
Singapore 579837

For more information or to sign up for the CPR+AED Certification @ SHF, please email cpaed@heart.org.sg or call 6354 9370 / 9348.