



Cardiac Arrest at Public Places in India: Need for Change in the Way India Handles Medical Emergency

Sneha Chakraverty*

Assistant professor, School of Physiotherapy and Rehabilitation Sciences,
KR Mangalam University, Gurugram, Haryana, India

***Corresponding Author:** Sneha Chakraverty, Assistant professor, School of Physiotherapy and Rehabilitation Sciences, KR Mangalam University, Gurugram, Haryana, India.

Received: July 26, 2023

Published: August 01, 2023

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Cardiac arrest is one of the most common causes of sudden death in India. Prehospital delay and lack of knowledge about pre-cardiac symptoms remain the main cause of sudden death due to cardiac arrest in India. The symptoms of cardiac arrest include sudden collapse and loss of consciousness, no breathing or gasping for air, and no pulse. The common public who doesn't have any idea of its symptoms usually panic during these situations which leads to delay in hospitalization. According to Accidental Death and Suicides Report 2021 in India, the number of people who died due to sudden cardiac arrest in 2021 is 28413. Most cardiac arrests happen outside the hospital like in homes or public places. And, if proper action is not taken death is supposed to happen within one hour of cardiac arrest. One of the immediate actions to be taken during cardiac arrest is calling the ambulance and performing cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) followed by defibrillation by Automated External Defibrillator (AED) machine. Delay in taking all these responses leads to a delay in hospitalization which causes death. Public places like airports, shopping malls, and railway stations are supposed to have AED installed to handle these kinds of medical emergencies. According to a study, the annual mortality rate due to Sudden Cardiac Death (SCD) is close to 7 lakhs in India. Sudden cardiac death is a global burden and the countries that have successfully managed to decline the statistics of SCD are supposed to have prescribed defibrillators in their community. The number of sudden cardiac death has increased in the last few years in India.

The first hour after cardiac arrest is crucial for saving life, and if it happens in general public places most people take a lot of time to

react. Every minute is crucial for saving life during cardiac arrest. And it's time to rethink the way we respond to medical emergencies. So, what can be done? From the government's point of view, CPR should be mandatory training for everyone from schools, colleges, and offices. AED should be installed in every public place. From the technology point of view, with the help of artificial intelligence some smart bands should be made that can predict cardiac arrest warning signs and alert the person wearing it. Transport remains a major problem in case of cardiac arrest and most people do not remember the emergency ambulance number during these cases. In that case, again technology can play a role by sending alerts to the patient and its' contacts and automatically alerting the nearby ambulance.

Due to the unpredictability of cardiac arrest, it is important to help people in public places for immediate transport. Technology in healthcare can do wonders to handle emergencies like cardiac arrest. But until and unless we use technology in the right way and we are not willing to help people around us, nothing can be done to save lives in case of medical emergencies.