

CPR on a Baby 4 Weeks or Older

What is it?

A lifesaving technique that's useful in many emergencies, such as a heart attack or near drowning, in which someone's breathing or heartbeat has stopped. The American Heart Association recommends starting CPR with hard and fast chest compressions. This hands-only CPR recommendation applies to both untrained bystanders and first responders.

Plan of Action:

Cardiac arrest in babies is usually due to a lack of oxygen, such as from choking. If you know that the baby has an airway blockage, perform first aid for choking. If you don't know why the baby isn't breathing, perform CPR.

First, evaluate the situation. Touch the baby and watch for a response, such as movement. Don't shake the baby.

If there's no response, call 911 or your local emergency number, then immediately start CPR.

Follow the compressions, airway and breathing (C-A-B) procedure (below) for a baby under age 1 (except newborns, which include babies up to 4 weeks old):

If you saw the baby collapse, get the AED, if one is available, before beginning CPR. If another person is available, have that person call for help immediately and get the AED while you stay with the baby and perform CPR.

Compressions: Restore blood flow

1. Place the baby on his or her back on a firm, flat surface, such as a table or floor.
2. Imagine a horizontal line drawn between the baby's nipples. Place two fingers of one hand just below this line, in the center of the chest.
3. Gently compress the chest about 1.5 inches (about 4 centimeters).
4. Count aloud as you push in a fairly rapid rhythm. You should push at a rate of 100 to 120 compressions a minute, just as you would when giving an adult CPR.

Airway: Open the airway

After 30 compressions, gently tip the head back by lifting the chin with one hand and pushing down on the forehead with the other hand.

Breathing: Breathe for the baby

1. Cover the baby's mouth and nose with your mouth.
2. Prepare to give two rescue breaths. Use the strength of your cheeks to deliver gentle puffs of air (instead of deep breaths from your lungs) to slowly breathe into the baby's mouth one time, taking one second for the breath. Watch to see if the baby's chest rises. If it does, give a second rescue breath. If the chest does not rise, repeat the head-tilt, chin-lift maneuver and then give the second breath.
3. If the baby's chest still doesn't rise, continue chest compressions.
4. Give two breaths after every 30 chest compressions. If two people are performing CPR, give one to two breaths after every 15 chest compressions.
5. Continue CPR until you see signs of life or until medical personnel arrive.

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