

# Cardiac death patients often show symptoms

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A University of Berlin study has said patients who succumb to sudden cardiac death often show symptoms of cardiac arrest two hours before dying.

The study of 406 cases of cardiac arrest at a mobile intensive care unit in Berlin also found that up to two-thirds of the patients had a history of heart disease, WebMD reported Monday.

"Our study suggests that shifting the focus to educating high-risk patients and families may lead to earlier recognition, a quicker call to the emergency medical system, a higher percentage of bystander CPR (cardio pulmonary resuscitation), and thus to a higher probability of survival in patients with sudden cardiac death," said researcher Dirk Muller of the University of Berlin.

The study said 72 percent of the cardiac arrests occurred in the victims' homes, and 67 percent were witnessed by a bystander. Symptom data, which was available for 323 of the 406 cases, showed that 25 percent of the victims experienced chest pains lasting from 20 minutes to 10 hours and 30 minutes before the cardiac arrest.

"Training and prevention efforts should be focused on how to recognize the emergency, CPR training and automated external defibrillator use," Muller said.

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