

Treatment is just a heartbeat away

February 24 2011

(PhysOrg.com) -- Those who delay going to hospital or calling an ambulance when experiencing chest pain - acute coronary syndrome (ACS) - have a higher mortality and morbidity rate than those who don't.

A study released by Professor of Critical Care Nursing, Sharon McKinley at the University of Technology, Sydney has demonstrated that people are arriving at the [hospital](#) too late to receive maximum benefit from treatment.

Professor McKinley and her colleagues have highlighted the need for greater awareness and increased education on the benefits of early hospital treatment for ACS.

"ACS is where the heart muscles begin to die due to a lack of oxygen, the longer the heart is in this condition the more severe the effects. People who delay going to hospital or do not call an [ambulance](#) can have increased short term complications and a higher risk of heart attacks in the future." McKinley said.

"The study reinforces the need to address the problem of delays in deciding to seek treatment after the recognition of ACS symptoms," She said. "I encourage everyone to call an ambulance as those who do have a 30% shorter transportation time to hospital." Professor McKinley said.

Cardiologist Professor Gregory Nelson at Royal North Shore hospital said, "The results from Professor McKinley's study mimic our own experience in the management of patients with heart attack. Only 50%

of patients actually call an ambulance when experiencing ACS symptoms.”

"Every fifteen minute delay increases the patient's chance of dying by 1%. I suggest anyone who is experiencing symptoms of ACS should call 000 immediately as ambulance services are equipped to deal with a heart attack," Professor Nelson said.

Professor McKinley said, "Coronary artery disease continues to be a significant cause of death and disability in the developed world." In Australia there are approximately 130 heart attacks a day; half of those are fatal.

The study has been published online as an Early View article in Emergency Medicine Australasia and the Journal of Australasian College for Emergency Medicine.

More information: [onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10 ... 011.01385.x/abstract](http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/1111.01385.x/abstract)

Provided by University of Technology, Sydney

Citation: Treatment is just a heartbeat away (2011, February 24) retrieved 27 April 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2011-02-treatment-heartbeat.html>

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