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## February is Heart Month – What You Need to Know

Since 1964, the United States has recognized American Heart Month in February as a time to bring awareness to heart disease. According to the American Heart Association, heart disease is the leading cause of death for both men and women in the U.S. Many people are either unaware they have suffered a heart attack or just ignore the signs as they're experiencing one. So how do you know if what you're experiencing is a heart attack and when should you reach out for help?

Some heart attacks are sudden and intense. But most start slowly, with mild pain or discomfort. Pay attention to your body and call 911 if you experience any of the following warning signs:

- **Chest discomfort.** One of the most obvious symptoms is discomfort in the center of the chest that lasts a few minutes – or goes away and returns. It's usually described as uncomfortable pressure, squeezing, fullness or pain.
- **Discomfort in other areas of the upper body.** In addition to your chest, discomfort in other areas of the upper body including one or both arms, the back, neck, jaw or stomach are common.
- **Shortness of breath.** This can happen with or without chest pain.
- **Other signs.** Other possible signs include lightheadedness, nausea, or breaking out in a cold sweat for no apparent reason.



The American Red Cross and the American Heart Association (AHA) offer CPR and first aid classes. These classes teach people how to recognize and respond to life-threatening emergencies.

### American Red Cross

- Offers CPR classes for individuals, organizations, and healthcare professionals
- Classes are available online, in person, or as a combination of both
- Topics include recognizing emergencies, performing CPR, and using an AED
- Classes can meet OSHA requirements, and the education needs of healthcare professionals

### American Heart Association

- Offers CPR and first aid classes, including Basic Life Support (BLS), Advanced Cardiovascular Life Support (ACLS), and Pediatric Advanced Life Support (PALS)
- Classes are designed for people with little or no medical training
- Classes can help people prepare for emergencies or meet job or regulatory requirements
- The AHA also offers virtual training options

During the month of February Units are encouraged to contact their local Red Cross chapter to organize a community event offering CPR, First Aid, and/or AED classes at their home post. Unit members can also access online classes that are offered through the Red Cross.

## Infusion for the American Heart Association

Legion funding pumps life into research organization during infancy.

May 29, 1946



Dr. Leonard Rowntree, chairman of The American Legion's Medical Advisory Committee presented a check for \$50,000 to a little known and financially struggling non-profit organization called the American Heart Association. The Legion National Rehab Committee had been authorized to spend \$25,000 to help the AHA, and the American Legion Auxiliary raises \$25,000 to match it. At the time, as heart disease is accounting for one in four U.S. deaths. The AL and the ALA seize the opportunity to take a national leadership role to "inaugurate a nationwide program in the study, prevention and treatment of rheumatic heart disease." The funding leads to American Legion-sponsored heart research and provides the AHA a springboard to life-saving work that continues today.

## AMERICAN LEGION FAMILY DAY

The National Executive Committee passed [Resolution No. 7, American Legion Family Day](#) at its Fall Meeting in October 2022. The resolution established an American Legion Family Day to be observed annually on the last Saturday of April.

This year for Legion Family Day on April 26, posts are encouraged to open their doors to members of their community for the day to recognize and celebrate the accomplishments of Legionnaires, Sons of The American Legion members, Legion Riders and American Legion Auxiliary, and to bring awareness to the organization's "[Be the One](#)" initiative to reduce the rate of veteran suicide. Now is the time to start planning this community outreach. Suggestions: Invite civic leaders, all members, have activities for children, give awards to outstanding Legion Family members. Let the community know what we are about.



American Legion Family Day is a great day to gather as a Legion Family and share our mission with your community. Legion Family members are encouraged to host events at their post homes. The activities you choose are up to you! Examples of past events include blood drives, dinners, and cook-outs. Use this day as an opportunity to open the doors to spread the news about who we are, what we do, and why we matter. Make sure to have membership applications available.

## [ALA Community Service Facebook Page](#)

### About this group

A place to share service activities and events, ask questions, obtain information, and network for those interested in the American Legion Auxiliary Community Service program. Any views expressed in this group are those of the person expressing them, not necessarily those of the American Legion Auxiliary.

If you haven't already joined – TODAY is a GREAT DAY to join.

