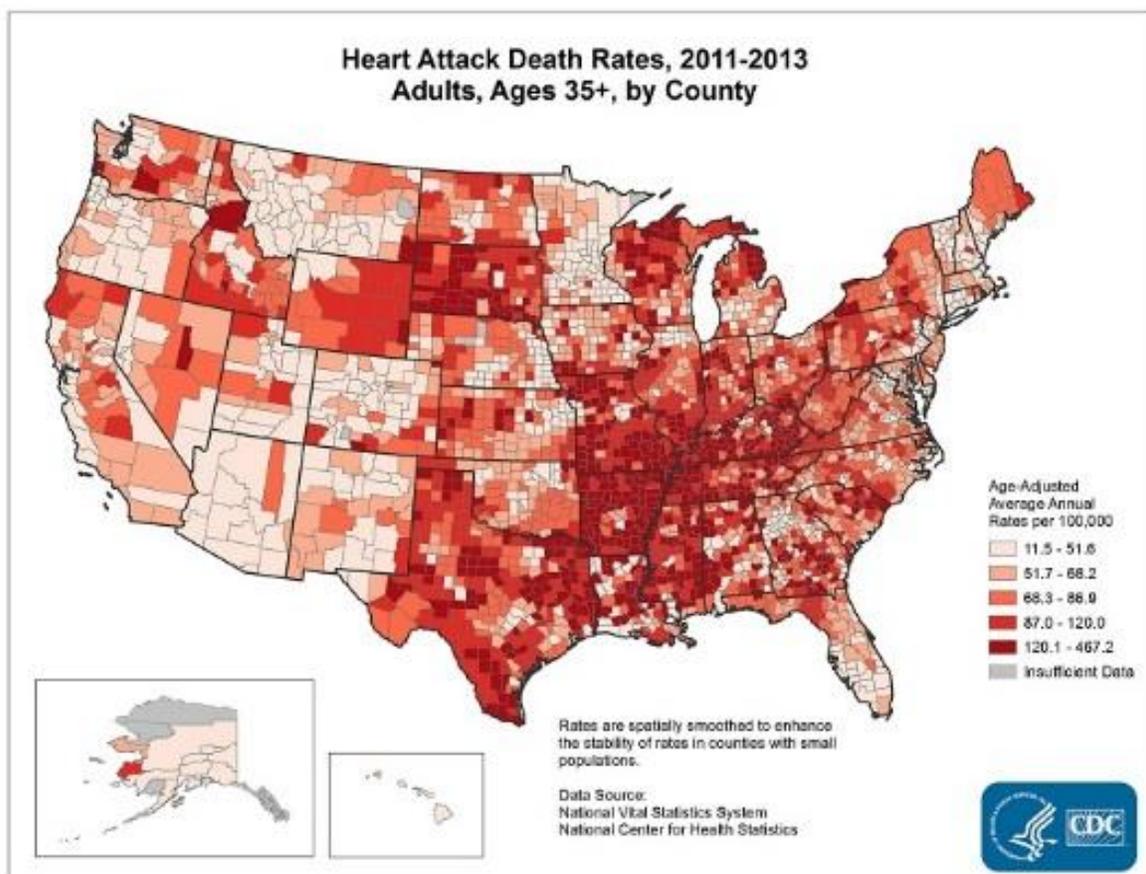


Know the Signs and Symptoms of a Heart Attack

About Heart Attack

- A heart attack happens when the **blood supply** to the heart is **cut off**. Cells in the heart muscle that do not receive enough oxygen-carrying blood begin to die. The more time that passes without treatment to restore blood flow, the greater the damage to the heart.
- Every year about **750,000 Americans** have a heart attack. Of these, **550,000** are a first heart attack and **200,000** happen in people who have already had a heart attack.¹
- About **15%** of people who have a heart attack will die from it.¹
- **Almost half** of sudden cardiac deaths happen outside a hospital.²
- Having high blood pressure or high blood cholesterol, smoking, having had a previous heart attack or stroke, or having diabetes can increase your chance of developing heart disease and having a heart attack.
- It is important to recognize the signs of a heart attack and to **act immediately** by **calling 911**. A person's chance of surviving a heart attack increases if emergency treatment is administered as soon as possible.



Source: [Interactive Atlas of Heart Disease and Stroke](#)

Symptoms of a Heart Attack

The **National Heart Attack Alert Program** notes these major signs of a heart attack:

Chest pain or discomfort. Most heart attacks involve discomfort in the center or left side of the chest that lasts for more than a few minutes, or that goes away and comes back. The discomfort can feel like uncomfortable pressure, squeezing, fullness, or pain.

Discomfort in other areas of the upper body. Can include pain or discomfort in one or both arms, the back, neck, jaw, or stomach.

Shortness of breath. Often comes along with chest discomfort. But it also can occur before chest discomfort.

Other symptoms. May include breaking out in a cold sweat, nausea, or light-headedness.

If you think that you or someone you know is having a heart attack, you should **call 911 immediately**.

CDC's Public Health Efforts

- [State Public Health Actions to Prevent and Control Chronic Diseases](#)
- [Million Hearts®](#)

For More Information

For more information on heart disease, visit our Web site at www.cdc.gov/heartdisease/ and the Web sites of the following CDC partners:

- [American Heart Association](#)
- [National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute](#)
- [National Heart Attack Alert Program](#)

References

1. Mozzafarian D, Benjamin EJ, Go AS, et al. on behalf of the American Heart Association Statistics Committee and Stroke Statistics Subcommittee. Heart disease and stroke statistics—2016 update: a report from the American Heart Association. *Circulation*. 2016;133:e38-e360.
2. Zheng ZJ, Croft JB, Giles WH, Ayala CI, Greenlund KJ, Keenan NL, Neff L, Wattigney WA, Mensah GA. [State Specific Mortality from Sudden Cardiac Death: United States, 1999](http://wwwdev.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm5106a3.htm)(<http://wwwdev.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm5106a3.htm>). *MMWR* 2002;51(6):123–126.