



Resuscitation Council UK Statement on COVID-19

PLEASE FORWARD THIS STATEMENT TO ANYONE WHO MIGHT ATTEND TO A PATIENT WITH A DEFIBRILLATOR

Resuscitation Council UK Statement on COVID-19 in relation to CPR and resuscitation in first aid and community settings

This statement is for anyone who is performing CPR/defibrillation in an out-of-hospital setting.

Whenever CPR is carried out, particularly on an unknown victim, there is some risk of cross infection, associated particularly with giving rescue breaths. Normally, this risk is very small and is set against the inevitability that a person in cardiac arrest will die if no assistance is given. The first things to do are shout for help and dial 999.

Because of the heightened awareness of the possibility that the victim may have COVID-19, Resuscitation Council UK offers this advice:

- Recognise cardiac arrest by looking for the absence of signs of life and the absence of normal breathing. Do not listen or feel for breathing by placing your ear and cheek close to the patient's mouth. If you are in any doubt about confirming cardiac arrest, the default position is to start chest compressions until help arrives.
- Make sure an ambulance is on its way. If COVID 19 is suspected, tell them when you call 999.
- If there is a perceived risk of infection, rescuers should attempt compression only CPR and early defibrillation until the ambulance (or advanced care team) arrives. Put hands together in the middle of the chest and push hard and fast.
- Early use of a defibrillator significantly increases the person's chances of survival and does not increase risk of infection.
- If the rescuer has access to personal protective equipment (PPE) (e.g. FFP3 face mask, disposable gloves, eye protection), these should be worn.
- After performing compression-only CPR, all rescuers should wash their hands thoroughly with soap and water; alcohol-based hand gel is a convenient alternative. They should also seek advice from the NHS 111 coronavirus advice service or medical adviser.

Further information, including an instructional video, can be found at <https://www.resus.org.uk/media/statements/resuscitation-council-uk-statements-on-covid-19-coronavirus-cpr-and-resuscitation/covid-community/>

If you have a specific questions in relation to CPR/defibrillation then please email defib@londonambulance.nhs.uk