

## **Script – Broadcast – Sudden cardiac arrest and women**

### **Intro**

Every year, about 350,000 people suffer sudden cardiac arrest (SCA) outside of a hospital setting with almost 90% of all cases being fatal.

While there is an underlying belief that heart problems such as SCA tend to be more of a concern for men, that's not the case. In fact, women make up almost 40% of SCA episodes. Just as women may experience different symptoms of heart disease than men, their risk of SCA is somewhat different too.

According to Nancy Dagefoerde, an advanced practice nurse with OSF HealthCare Cardiovascular Institute, SCA can happen to any adult 30 and older, depending on risk factors, family history and other issues such as a heart birth defect.

**((SOT))**

**Nancy Dagefoerde, (DAG-UH-FERD), advanced practice nurse, OSF HealthCare Cardiovascular Institute**

"Sudden cardiac arrest occurs when there's an irregular heartbeat. We call it an arrhythmia that causes the heart not to beat or have electrical activity anymore. So, in general, there'll be no breathing and no pulse when you come upon a person that's having a sudden cardiac arrest." (:19)

"The thing that may be different with women is oftentimes their symptoms are portrayed differently and they often can get missed. A woman may come to an emergency room or a health care provider and say, 'I'm more tired' or 'I'm short of breath.' It's not the typical elephant on my chest type of chest pain that a man may have. And so, working them up for their symptoms, although they're vaguer, is important to be preventive to catch these things early before there's damage." (:27)

### **VO**

Dagefoerde says SCA is different than a heart attack, which occurs when there is a blockage in a coronary artery on the outside of the heart. Many times, a heart attack is the cause of sudden cardiac arrest. Symptoms of SCA include fainting, dizziness, racing or irregular heartbeat, chest pain and shortness of breath

### **TAG**

Risk factors for SCA include a previous heart attack, coronary artery disease, a prior episode of SCA, family history and personal or family history of abnormal heart rhythms, among others.

Dagefoerde has a simple message for anyone who is experiencing any potential cardiac symptoms. See your physician on a regular basis, know your family history, and don't ignore any symptoms that you are experiencing.

And if you see someone drop to the ground and think it could be SCA, call 911 immediately. The faster CPR is started, and defibrillation is administered, the better the chances of survival.