

Dispatch: Just Chest Compress

By ACSH Staff — July 30, 2010

Cardiopulmonary resuscitation performed with only chest compressions is just as effective — or perhaps moreso — as CPR that includes mouth-to-mouth breathing, [according to two studies in the *New England Journal of Medicine*](#) [1]. One study looked at 1,900-plus people in the Seattle and London areas, while the other focused on 1,200 similar cases in Sweden.

The study found when emergency operators instructed bystanders to perform CPR without rescue breathing the patient had a slightly higher survival rate compared to when those instructions included mouth-to-mouth resuscitation. Either way about 90 percent of patients died or suffered brain damage — but the findings could still encourage more people to perform CPR, since many people find mouth-to-mouth breathing unsanitary.

"If you witness a cardiac arrest all you have to do is apply chest pressure 100 times a minute firmly — not too firmly, because you don't want to break any ribs — but you don't have to administer mouth-to-mouth breathing," ACSH's Dr. Gilbert Ross says.

"I wonder whether this is a kiss of death for the old way of doing CPR," says ACSH's Jeff Stier.

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[1] http://www.redorbit.com/news/health/1898031/mouthtomouth_resuscitation_unnecessary_studies_claim/