



LIFESAVING SOCIETY

The Lifeguarding Experts

STATEMENT REGARDING 2010 CPR & ECC GUIDELINES

On October 18, 2010, the International Liaison Committee on Resuscitation in collaboration with the American Heart Association released changes to the Guidelines for CPR and Emergency Cardiovascular Care.

Media reports have focused mainly on the recommendation that an untrained, unwilling or unsure bystander who witnesses an adult suddenly collapsing out of hospital should perform chest compressions only without giving mouth-to-mouth ventilations. This is based on the principle that compression-only CPR has some outcome data that shows slight improvement in outcomes to traditional CPR, and is better than no CPR at all.

However, compression-only CPR is not recommended in many situations including drowning. Drowning is a leading cause of accidental death worldwide. While compression-only CPR may be effective in cases of sudden heart attack, cardiac arrest during drowning is due, in large part, to lack of oxygen. The body is thus starved of oxygen and needs urgent replenishment in addition to circulation of blood that is provided by chest compressions.

Similarly, compression-only CPR is inappropriate in cases of cardiac arrest in children, when failure of breathing is the usual underlying cause.

The changes in the 2010 Basic Life Support Guidelines are focused on simplifying education and enhancing successful outcomes. They include emphasis on high quality CPR meaning rescuers should push hard and push fast; allow full chest recoil; minimize interruptions in compressions, and; defibrillate promptly when appropriate.

There are other changes that will affect lifesavers and lifeguards and the instructors who teach and evaluate them.

The transition to new protocols

The Lifesaving Society will announce its plan for an orderly transition to the updated CPR guidelines early in 2011.

In the meantime, Lifesaving Society instructors, examiners, and lifeguards should not change their teaching, evaluation, or performance of resuscitation skills until the Society officially announces changes to its programs and literature. Instructors and examiners should continue to follow Lifesaving Society Award Guides for the performance requirements for Lifesaving Society certifications.

Under no circumstances should candidates for Lifesaving Society awards taught under the current standards be expected to perform the newly released protocols. The Society will advise when any changes are to be introduced.

October 19, 2010