Dear Alice,

I want to get trained in CPR and first aid... where is the closest place I can do so?

Answer

Dear Reader,

Kudos to you for pursuing this type of training! In an emergency, having someone around who can assess the situation, call for help, and perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and first aid when needed is crucial, as it can save lives. Many people worry that they might not know how to handle a situation in which someone is injured or goes into sudden cardiac arrest. With CPR and first aid training, you’ll be all the more prepared if such a crisis were to occur. And luckily, many organizations throughout the United States host regular trainings, so you might have options of locations to choose from that are close to you!

To find a nearby CPR or first aid class, consider calling your local hospital, or checking out the American Red Cross and the American Heart Association (AHA) websites for information on what’s available in your area. Additionally, if you’re affiliated with a university, your university may offer CPR and first aid classes as well. If you aren’t looking to be certified and are looking purely for education, there are many online courses that are offered. Some organizations, such as the American Red Cross, offer blended options that allow people to do the training independently and then show their skills to a certified instructor in order to acquire the certification.

Once you complete a training under the AHA or American Red Cross, your CPR and first aid credentials will last for two years. In order to maintain your certification after two years, you may be required to participate in additional trainings. For example, the American Red Cross offers certification renewal classes to folks whose credentials are nearing their expiration date, up to 30 days before their certification cycle is due to end. These sessions are often shorter in length than the original trainings and may be a worthwhile opportunity to brush up on skills and learn about any advancements that have been made since your last training.

In the event that you can’t get to a CPR class right away, you may want to also consider another effective option for helping someone who suddenly goes into cardiac arrest. The AHA has
recently developed a simplified version of CPR, called Hands-Only CPR. This version removes the mouth-to-mouth portion of the activity and instead focuses on chest compressions. Check out the Hands-Only method [5] from the AHA for more information, including a step-by-step demo. Further, in the case of any medical emergencies, calling the local emergency number and putting someone in the recovery position on their side can be ways that you can support someone, even if you haven't had any training yet.

Best of luck in your training endeavors!

Alice!
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Links
[3] https://www.redcross.org/take-a-class