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there may be groups in whom rescue breathing is desirable—drowning victims being one obvious example—and other patients in whom breathing could actually be detrimental.

"That's one possibility suggested by the studies we've just read today," Sayre points out. "Both of them show a trend toward improved outcome in the compression-only group. I haven't done the math to see whether, if you lump them together, that trend reaches statistical significance, but it's an interesting idea."

Keep in mind, he adds, that these are untrained laypeople. The difference between compression only and standard CPR may have been greater if trained professionals had been performing the two forms of CPR. At present, however, there are no good ways for a layperson to determine in the field, and particularly "over the telephone," whether any given patient might benefit from breathing or be harmed by it.

## **Missed opportunities**

As an aside, Sayre stressed that he thinks physicians have not really heard the message about compression-only CPR or realized that this simpler technique means family members might be more likely to save the life of a loved one with known heart disease.

"I'm not sure we really do a good job of recommending that our patients or families get trained, even with our own families," Sayre told **heartwire**. "I made sure my parents learned, but I suspect many physicians may not do that."

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## Sources

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## **Related links**

- CPR response consistently low in some areas [Arrhythmia/EP > Arrhythmia/EP; Jun 08, 2010]
- Rescue breathing improves CPR outcomes in kids [Arrhythmia/EP > Arrhythmia/EP; Mar 02, 2010]
- ARREST finds link between chest compressions and VF recurrence during CPR [*Arrhythmia/EP > Arrhythmia/EP*; Jan 05, 2010]
- Benefits of dispatcher-assisted CPR outweigh the risks [Acute Coronary Syndromes > Acute coronary syndromes; Dec 21, 2009]
- Upping duration of CPR compressions improves survival [Arrhythmia/EP > Arrhythmia/EP; Sep 21, 2009]
- Protocol stressing uninterrupted compressions can improve survival after out-of-hospital cardiacarrest
- [Acute Coronary Syndromes > Acute coronary syndromes; May 04, 2009]
- AHA promotes chest-compression-only bystander-initiated CPR
  [Acute Coronary Syndromes > Acute coronary syndromes; Mar 31, 2008]
- Streamlined "CPR" by EMS can improve survival in out-of-hospital cardiac arrest [Acute Coronary Syndromes > Acute coronary syndromes; Mar 12, 2008]
- AHA calls for "creative" strategies to encourage bystander-initiated CPR [*Prevention > Prevention*; Jan 18, 2008]
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