

BLOOD PRESSURE EDUCATION TOOLKIT
MODULE 1
CASE STUDY #3

Mrs. Smith has been a resident at Phillips Manor Long Term Care Home for about four months. She is 5 feet tall and weighs 150 pounds. She has arthritis in both knees and walks with a walker. Lately she has seemed to be a bit more tired than usual and the PSWs often find her napping in the middle of the day. Mrs. Smith denies any other complaints and feels that her fatigue is due to her “getting on in years”. She has just celebrated her 91st birthday.

The doctor saw her today after a blood pressure reading of 172/92. She has always had mild hypertension but these latest numbers are quite a bit higher than usual. The doctor advised her that he was going to adjust her antihypertensive medications and ordered blood work. Although she was concerned with what the doctor told her she was sure that by taking it slower, relaxing more and skipping some outings, like her monthly shopping trip, that everything would be back to normal.

Later that evening, when she was preparing for bed, Mrs. Smith suddenly developed burning pain in her chest. She decided to lie down and rest until the pain went away. When the PSW came in about 30 minutes later she noticed that Mrs. Smith was sweaty and seemed to have some trouble breathing. Mrs. Smith admitted to some burning in her chest but insisted it was just heartburn and asked for an antacid.

QUESTIONS

1. What abnormal symptoms does Mrs. Smith have?

- a) *Burning chest pain not going away with rest*
- b) *Sweaty*
- c) *Shortness of breath*
- d) *Denial*

2. Upon noticing these symptoms what actions would you take?

Get help IMMEDIATELY

3. What are the symptoms of a heart attack?

- a) *Pain: sudden discomfort or pain that does not go away with rest*
- b) *Pain: burning, squeezing, heaviness, tightness, or pressure in the chest, neck, jaw, shoulder, arms or back*
- c) *Shortness of Breath – difficulty breathing*
- d) *Nausea – indigestion, vomiting*
- e) *Sweating – cool, clammy skin*
- f) *Fear – anxiety, denial*

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4. What do you report to the registered staff?

You report the abnormal symptoms you see or were told directly by Mrs. Bell including burning chest pain not going away with rest, sweating, shortness of breath and denial.

5. Should you do anything more?

Yes, you should continue to note any changes in Mrs. Bell's condition and support her until the registered staff take over her care.