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Stayin' Alive kept Florida heart attack victim alive

June 4, 5:26 PM · 1 comment

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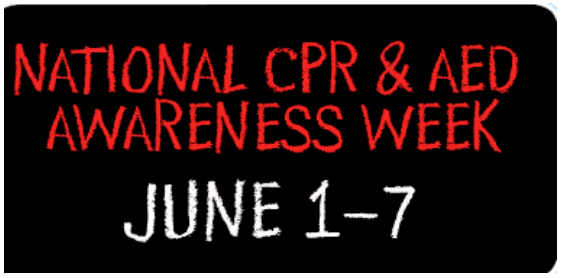

A Delray Beach man who experienced cardiac arrest while jogging recently had his life saved by the Bee Gee's song Stayin' Alive. Tom Maimone, an experienced jogger who'd been given a clean bill of health by his doctor, suffered a heart attack during a 10 mile run and collapsed in the street.

Luckily. Tom Elowson was driving by and stopped to perform CPR. Elowson recalled hearing that the latest CPR technique could be done to the 1970's disco hit. He was able to maintain the proper rhythm until EMTs arrived to take over. At the hospital, it was learned that Maimone had a previously undetected significant occlusion of one of his coronary arteries.

Elowson was quite correct about his recollection. In 2006, Dr. Alson S. Inaba a pediatric emergency physician at Kapiolani Medical Center for Women and Children in Honolulu, published an article in a journal of the American Heart Association in which he identified a way to keep perfect time while doing CPR on a victim of cardiac arrest.

As it turns out, the Bee Gees' classic Stayin' Alive has a beat that's almost exactly 100 beats per minute - the same rate the American Heart Association now recommends for chest compressions during CPR.

The University of Illinois medical school studied the effect the song had on keeping time during CPR. Five weeks after practicing CPR with the song playing on an iPod, doctors at the medical school were able to hum along without the music and keep time just a little bit faster than 100 per minute, which is perfectly fine when we're talking about chest compressions.

Stayin' alive,
Stayin' alive,
Ha...ah...ah...ah
(this part is exactly 100 beats per minute)
Stayin' a-li-ive

This tip helps rescuers like Elowson keep the proper rate while doing CPR. Going too slow doesn't

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generate enough blood flow, and going too fast doesn't allow the heart to fill properly between compressions. Humming along with the Bee Gees is one way to stay on track.

For those less optimistic folks, Queen's classic, Another One Bites the Dust, also has the proper beat.

For more information: Listen to the last segment on a RadioLab podcast out of New York

American Heart Association

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Deborah Shlian is an Examiner from Miami. You can see Deborah's articles on Deborah's Home Page.

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Comments

P. Foster, RN says:

Thank you so much for reporting this article correctly and giving credit where credit is due. I work with Dr. Inaba in Honolulu and he is a wonderful man and mentor to many. He has saved many lives not just in the ER but apparently by sharing his thoughts on the need for an easy to remember song that helps others to save lives too! Thank you and keep sharing the education that saves lives... Stayin Alive!
Tom and Tom congratulations to both of you... "Rescuer" and now "survivor"... Good Job!

June 11, 10:16 PM

Name:

P. Foster, RN

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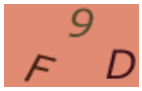

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