



**St. John Ambulance Saint-Jean**

**SAVING LIVES SAUVER DES VIES**  
at work, home and play au travail, à la maison et dans les loisirs

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **St. John Ambulance encourages Canadians to learn the skills to save a life for CPR month**

**Ottawa, ON** – November 1, 2019 – To kick off the official start of CPR Month this November, St. John Ambulance is encouraging everyone across Canada to get CPR trained and familiarize themselves with the use of an Automated External Defibrillator (AED) to save a life.

A sudden cardiac arrest is a medical emergency that can happen to anyone, at any time, no matter a person's level of fitness or health. It occurs when heart function ceases abruptly, causing the heart to no longer be able to pump blood to the rest of the body. In the event of a sudden cardiac arrest, the only effective treatment is CPR paired with an electric shock from an AED, improving chance of survival by upwards of 75 per cent.

An AED is a portable, easy to use device that delivers a shock through the chest wall of a person whose heart has stopped beating effectively. As this shock is the only method of getting the heart to function normally again, the use of an AED is a vital step in saving the life of someone suffering a sudden cardiac arrest. According to the Sudden Cardiac Arrest Association, if defibrillated with an AED within the first minute of collapse, the chance of survival is nearly 90 per cent. Each minute more, the chance falls seven to 10 per cent.

"Over 35,000 Canadians die each year of sudden cardiac arrest," said Shawn McLaren, Chief of Learning for St. John Ambulance. "It's our mission to equip people with lifesaving skills in CPR and the equipment needed to reverse this trend. CPR training and AEDs save lives."

St. John Ambulance is the largest and oldest first aid and CPR training provider in Canada, teaching over 500,000 students lifesaving skills each year at locations throughout the country. The charity offers a variety of first aid courses that teach CPR, including the use of an AED.

"Getting trained is easy and inexpensive," said McLaren. "Whether you're a teenager or an adult, you can learn the skills to save a life."

Nearly 80 per cent of sudden cardiac arrests happen outside of a hospital setting, according to the Heart and Stroke Foundation. Quick bystander CPR is extremely important, noted McLaren. It can mean the difference between life or death for a friend, family member or a stranger.

St. John Ambulance is consistently campaigning to increase awareness about the importance of CPR and AEDs. Through November, St. John Ambulance will be offering special promotions across Canada on AEDs to equip people to save a life. Proceeds from each sale will help fund the charity's work to get more Canadians CPR trained, as well as provide support for its charitable services like administering first aid at community events or therapy dog visitations to the elderly, children or the sick. To sign up for CPR training or to learn more about AEDs, visit [www.sja.ca/cprmonth](http://www.sja.ca/cprmonth).



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**About St. John Ambulance Canada**

St. John Ambulance is a humanitarian organization and is the foundation of the Order of St. John. The charity has operated in Canada since 1883 with a mission to improve people's health, safety, and quality of life, training over 500,000 students in Canada each year in first aid and CPR. Its volunteers also provide hundreds of thousands of hours of community service across Canada. All proceeds from training and product sales fund St. John Ambulance's community services, in addition to generous support from donors. Learn more at [sja.ca](http://sja.ca).

**Please direct any questions to:**

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