

The impact of bystander cardiopulmonary resuscitation on patients with out-of-hospital cardiac arrests

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Abstract: Out-of-hospital cardiac arrest (OHCA) is one of the leading causes of death around the world. Bystander cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) is an independent factor to improve OHCA survival. However, the prevalence of bystander CPR remains low worldwide. Community interventions such as mandatory school CPR training or targeting CPR training to family members of high-risk cardiac patients are possible strategies to improve bystander CPR rate. Real-time feedback, hands-on practice with a manikin, and metronome assistance may increase the quality of CPR. Dispatcher-assistance and compression-only CPR for untrained bystanders have shown to increase bystander CPR rate and increase survival to hospital discharge. After return of spontaneous circulation, targeted temperature management should be performed to improve neurological function. This review focuses on the impact of bystander CPR on clinical outcomes and strategies to optimize the prevalence and quality of bystander CPR.

Keywords: Bystander cardiopulmonary resuscitation rate; Cardiopulmonary resuscitation; Hospital discharge; Out-of-hospital cardiac arrest

1. INTRODUCTION

Out-of-hospital cardiac arrest (OHCA) is a major public health problem, with a global incidence of approximately 55 per 100 000 person-years.¹ In Taiwan, the OHCA incidence rate ranged from 16.4 to 28.2 per 100 000 persons annually.² Despite recent improvement in medical technology, the survival to discharge rate of OHCA patients seldom exceeds 10%.^{1,3,4} Bystander cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) is known as a critical link in the chain of survival.⁵ This review focuses on the impact of bystander CPR on clinical outcomes and strategies to optimize the prevalence and quality of bystander CPR.

2. BYSTANDER CPR AND SURVIVAL

The association between bystander CPR and the survival of OHCA has been investigated in numerous studies.⁶⁻⁸ According to a meta-analysis of 16 cohort studies, bystander CPR was associated with approximately 2-fold chance of survival of

OHCA compared to no bystander CPR (odds ratio, 1.95; 95% CI, 1.66-2.30).⁷ Factors modifying the effect of bystander CPR on survival was investigated by Holmberg et al.⁹ A more marked effect of bystander CPR was found in the following conditions: short interval between collapse and CPR, CPR performed by a nonlayperson, a long delay before ambulance arrived, elderly OHCA victims, and outdoor OHCA.⁹ In addition to survival improvement, bystander CPR significantly lowered the 1-year risk of brain damage according to a nationwide data from Denmark (hazard ratio, 0.62; 95% CI, 0.47-0.82).¹⁰

3. EPIDEMIOLOGY OF BYSTANDER CPR

Bystander CPR rate remained low despite being known as a critical link in the chain of survival for OHCA patients. According to a meta-analysis involving 142 740 patients, 53% of events were witnessed by a bystander, but only 32% received bystander CPR.⁸ The Pan Asian Resuscitation Outcomes Study (PAROS) showed that bystander CPR rates in Japan, Taiwan, Singapore were 40.2%, 31.4%, and 24.3%, respectively.⁴ In a study including 20 520 cardiac arrests in North American, only 31.4% patients received bystander CPR.¹¹

A prospective, observational study revealed that CPR performance was higher in the following situation: witnessed arrest, bystander with more than a high-school education, CPR-trained bystander, and arrest occurred in a public location.¹² Furthermore, several epidemiological studies concluded that bystander CPR rates of OHCA were lower from low-income neighborhood.¹³⁻¹⁶

Effects of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic on bystander CPR rates varied between different countries. Three studies from Europe countries showed statistically significant

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decline in bystander CPR rates during COVID-19 pandemic.¹⁷⁻¹⁹ In contrast, two studies from North America found that the percentage of bystander CPR were similar between COVID-19 and non-COVID-19 period.^{20,21}

4. OBSTACLES TO BYSTANDER CPR

Common reasons for people not doing bystander CPR includes: panic or lack of confidence, CPR skill deficits, worry about being sued, inability to recognize cardiac arrest, and fear of disease transmission via mouth-to-mouth ventilation.^{12,22-24} Bystanders may fear to cause harm, especially if the victim is not in cardiac arrest. American Heart Association (AHA) 2020 Guidelines for CPR encouraged early initiation of CPR because the benefit outweighs any potential risk.^{25,26} Legal concerns also stop bystanders from doing CPR. However, the risk of facing litigation are higher in nonintervention compared to providing CPR.²⁷ Mouth-to-mouth ventilation is another reason that dissuades people from performing CPR. Locke et al²⁸ reported that people significantly decreased their willingness to perform CPR if mouth-to-mouth ventilation was required. The discussion of compression-only CPR vs standard CPR is presented later in this article.

5. TRAINING LAYPEOPLE IN BASIC LIFE SUPPORT

In response to low bystander CPR rate, extensive studies regarding encouraging bystander CPR have been conducted. According to a study from South Korea, participants' willingness to perform CPR significantly increased after basic life support (BLS) training.²⁹ A study from Australia showed regions with low bystander CPR rates were associated with lower rates of CPR training.³⁰ Therefore, BLS training can be a powerful way to promote the provision of CPR.

School students are one of the targets of CPR training. World Health Organization has advocated schools to execute CPR training programs.³¹ Recently, Taiwan, Canada, many American states, and some European countries have approved mandatory CPR training at school.³²⁻³⁵ In 2005, Denmark government launched a national campaign, requiring mandatory BLS training at elementary schools and for acquiring a driving license, which resulted in a 2-fold increase in bystander CPR rate.³⁶

Another group of bystander CPR training target is family members of high-risk cardiac patients. Up to the present, there is no sufficient evidence showing survival benefits in training family members. However, studies have revealed improvement in CPR skills, an increase willingness to perform CPR, and a reduction in stress after family members received CPR training.³⁷⁻⁴¹

6. INTERVENTIONS TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF CPR

The effect of different interventions on CPR have been analyzed in various studies listed in Table 1. Real-time feedback was proved to improve CPR quality.^{42,43} Hands-on practice with a manikin was associated with more adequate compression depth.⁴⁴ Using dominant hand against chest wall resulted in similar CPR quality in comparison with using nondominant hand.⁴⁵ Playing metronome sounds to the rescuer was shown to enhance a more accurate chest compression rate but does not improve the overall CPR quality.^{46,47}

Video-based and smartphone application-based learning are considered substitute methods for classroom-based learning in rural communities. There was heterogeneity of results in different studies comparing instructor-guided to video-guided training. Some studies demonstrated statistically significant better

CPR performance in instructor-guided training^{40,48} while others found no significant between-group differences.⁴⁹⁻⁵¹ In a randomized noninferiority trial, virtual reality training smartphone application, compared with face-to-face training, had comparable chest compression rate but inferior compression depth.⁵²

7. CHEST COMPRESSION-ONLY CPR VS STANDARD CHEST COMPRESSION CPR

The effect of continuous chest compression CPR (CCC-CPR) vs standard chest compression CPR (STD-CPR) have been widely studied. STD-CPR provides chest compressions and rescue breaths in a 30:2 ratio. However, interrupted rescue breaths such as mouth-to-mouth ventilation has several potential disadvantages: dissuading bystander from performing CPR, hyperventilation of the victim, and sacrifice of the precious time to perform chest compression.^{28,53,54}

A meta-analysis of three randomized controlled trials⁵⁵⁻⁵⁷ showed that bystander CCC-CPR was associated with increased survival to hospital discharge compared to bystander STD-CPR (14.1% vs 11.6%; 95% CI, 1.01-1.46).⁵⁸ Current CPR guidelines from AHA and European Resuscitation Council encouraged compression-only CPR for untrained bystander.^{5,25} Nevertheless, both chest compressions and rescue breathing are recommended in cases of children and asphyxia arrests (eg, drowning, drug overdose).^{5,25}

8. DISPATCHER-ASSISTED CPR

Dispatcher-assisted CPR (DA-CPR) refers to the system in which dispatchers provide "just-in-time" CPR instructions to emergency callers over the telephone. This action aims to achieve early bystander CPR before emergency medical services arrival and ultimately improve survival. However, dispatchers may be unable to recognize cardiac arrest by several atypical presentations of cardiac arrests (ie, agonal gasps or seizure-like activity).^{59,60} AHA suggested that instructions of prearrival CPR should be provided to the caller if the patient is unresponsive and not breathing or not breathing normally.⁶¹

Numerous studies have proved that DA-CPR significantly increased the prevalence of bystander CPR in the community.⁶²⁻⁶⁸ The impact of DA-CPR on clinical outcomes was also widely studied. The result from a meta-analysis conveyed that DA-CPR, compared with no bystander CPR, was associated with increased survival to hospital discharge, survival with favorable neurologic outcome, and return of spontaneous circulation (ROSC).⁶⁹ However, there are conflicting results in terms of DA-CPR vs bystander CPR without dispatcher assistance.⁶⁹

The efficacy of dispatcher assistance in improving CPR quality was investigated by a randomized controlled trial.⁷⁰ In comparison with CPR without dispatcher assistance, DA-CPR was associated with more accurate compression rate, while the results of CPR compression depth, complete release of pressure between compressions, and hand location were similar between two groups.⁷⁰

9. POST-RESUSCITATION CARE

Adequate post-resuscitation care plays a crucial role in improving survival and prognosis after cardiac arrest. The quality of life of OHCA survivors is highly associated with their neurological outcomes.⁷¹ Targeted temperature management (TTM) has shown to be associated with decreasing mortality and improving neurological function according to several randomized controlled trials.^{72,73} AHA guideline recommended maintaining a constant temperature between 32°C and 36°C for at

Table 1**Main studies of the effect of interventions in CPR training**

Author (y), nation	Study design	Study populations	Study design	Main outcomes
Baldi et al ⁴² (2017), Italy	Randomized controlled trial	Laypersons over 18 y old with no previous training in CPR	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Group A: simple BLS/AED course without any feedback (n = 150) Group B: BLS/AED course with 1 min of training with real-time visual feedback manikin (n = 150) Group C: BLS/AED course with 10 min of training with real-time visual feedback manikin (n = 150) 	Group A vs Group B vs Group C: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Compressions with correct depth (%): 66.6 vs 77.8 vs 75.7 ($p = 0.012$) Compressions with a complete chest recoil (%): 71.7 vs 86.6 vs 88.8 ($p < 0.001$) Compressions with the correct hand position (%): 93.2 vs 98.2 vs 99.3 ($p < 0.001$) Compression rate (per minute): 119 vs 117 vs 118 ($p = 0.592$)
Buléon et al ⁴³ (2013), France	Randomized crossover study	Students (University of Caen Basse Normandie France) who had never had basic life support formation before enrolment family members of patients with high-risk cardiac condition	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Group A: feedback information provided by the CPRmeter device (n = 154) Group B: CPRmeter device with the screen masked by an opaque adhesive (n = 154) 	Group A vs Group B: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Efficient CC rate (%): 71 vs 26 ($p < 0.0001$) Adequate depth rate (%): 85 vs 43 ($p < 0.0001$) Adequate CC rate (%): 81 % vs 56% ($p < 0.0001$) Adequate CC recoil/release (%): 100 vs 99 (p: NS)
Blewer et al ⁴⁴ (2016), United States	Prospective, cluster randomized trial		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Group A: video along with an inflatable manikin (n = 285) Group B: video-only training without a manikin (n = 237) 	Group A vs Group B: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Mean CC rate (per minute): 89.3 vs 87.7. Mean difference (95% CI), -1.6 (-5.2 to 2.1) Mean CC depth (mm): 45.8 vs 40.2. Mean difference (95% CI), -5.6 (-7.6 to -3.7)
Nikandish et al ⁴⁵ (2008), Iran	Randomized crossover study.	First year public health students (Fasa University of Medical Sciences)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Group A: subject's dominant hand was in contact with the sternum (n = 59) Group B: subject's nondominant hand was in contact with the sternum (n = 59) 	Group A vs Group B: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Total number of correct chest compressions (mean \pm SD): 183 \pm 152 vs 152 \pm 135 ($p = 0.09$) Total number of ECC with inadequate depth (mean \pm SD): 197 \pm 174 vs 196 \pm 173 ($p = 0.1$)
Park et al ⁴⁶ (2013), Korea	Randomized controlled trial	Adult (age >18) laypersons who had no BLS training within the preceding 5 y	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Group A: metronome sounds (110 ticks/min) were played to the rescuer through the speaker during the COCPR (n = 33) Group B: verbal encouragement was given repeatedly during the COCPR (n = 34) 	Group A vs Group B: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Compression rate (per minute): 111.9 vs 96.7 ($p = 0.018$) Accurate chest compression rate (%): 97.0 vs 14.7 ($p < 0.0001$) Mean compression depth (mm): 45.9 vs 46.8 ($p = 0.692$) Shallow compressions (%): 69.2 vs 15.7 ($p = 0.035$)
Scott et al ⁴⁷ (2018), United States	Prospective, randomized, controlled study	Laypersons aged 14 y and older	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Group A: instructions for performing compression-only CPR with the use of the metronome tool, which included the EMD counting aloud for each compression at a repeating cadence of "one, two, three, four" and instructing the caller to follow along Group B: exactly the same scripted instructions for compressions, eliminating only the "count out loud" instruction and the use of the tool itself 	Group A vs Group B: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Target compression rate (%): 45.9 vs 22.2 Median compression rate (per minute): 100 vs 89 ($p = 0.013$) Median compression depth (mm): 81 vs 61 (p: NS)

AED = automated external defibrillator; BLS = basic life support; CC = chest compression; COCPR = compression-only cardiopulmonary resuscitation; CPR = cardiopulmonary resuscitation; ECC = external chest compressions; EMD = emergency medical dispatcher; NS = nonsignificant.

least 24 hours for comatose patients with ROSC after OHCA.⁷⁴ Zhang et al⁷⁵ investigated the patients treated with TTM after cardiac arrest, finding that favorable neurological outcome was associated with significantly higher odds of bystander CPR (odds ratio, 1.44; 95% CI, 1.14-1.82). For patients with ST-elevation myocardial infarction or high suspicion of acute myocardial infarction, early coronary angiography and percutaneous coronary intervention were recommended in AHA guideline.⁷⁴

In conclusion, bystander CPR is an independent factor to improve OHCA survival. However, the prevalence of bystander CPR remains low worldwide. Community interventions such as mandatory school CPR training or targeting CPR training to family members of high-risk cardiac patients are possible strategies to improve bystander CPR rate. Real-time feedback, hands-on practice with a manikin, and metronome assistance may increase the quality of CPR. Dispatcher-assistance and compression-only CPR for untrained bystanders have shown to increase bystander CPR rate and increase survival to hospital discharge. After ROSC, TTM could improve neurological function.

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