

Fox19 - Why fewer heart attacks are being reported during the pandemic.

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<https://www.fox19.com/2020/04/13/why-fewer-heart-attacks-are-being-reported-during-pandemic/>

By Chris Riva | April 13, 2020 at 8:08 PM EDT - Updated April 13 at 8:08 PM

CINCINNATI (FOX19) - Doctors at Christ Hospital in Cincinnati are studying why fewer heart attacks are being reported during the COVID-19 pandemic.

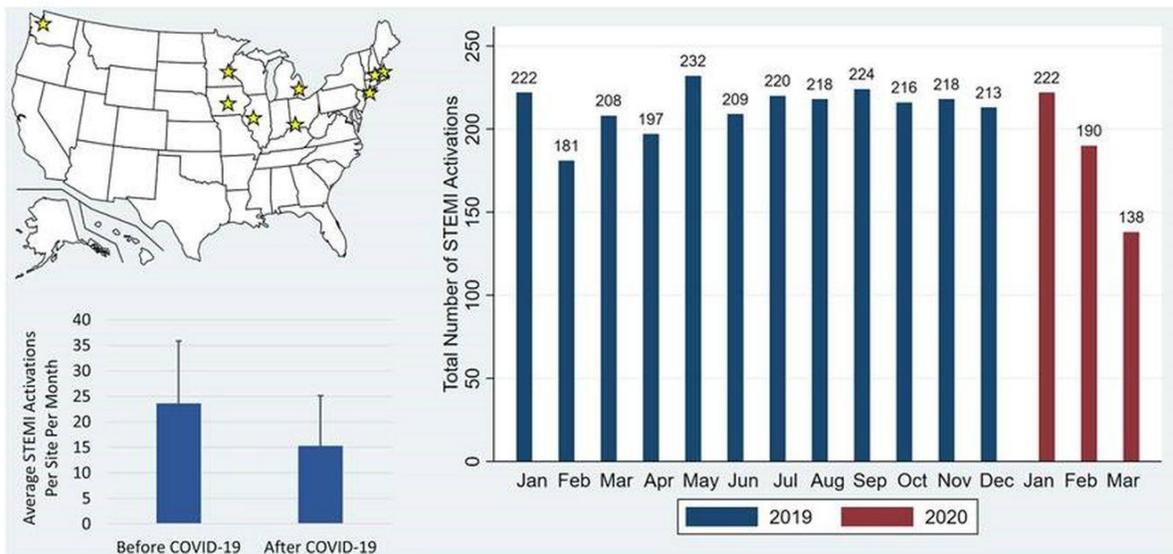
According to Timothy Henry, MD, cardiovascular interventionist at The Christ Hospital, doctors are seeing a 40-percent reduction in heart attacks countrywide since the pandemic started.

A study published Friday in the Journal of American Cardiology backs that up. The study's preliminary analysis shows a 38-percent reduction in the emergency procedures for heart attacks during the last week of March.

The issue surprised doctors like Henry, because traditionally during stressful events they see an uptick in heart attacks — sometimes as large as 20 percent.

The Christ Hospital is one of nine hospitals in the nation tracking and providing real time data on the issue.

"Where have all of the heart attacks gone? They have not gone away," Henry told FOX19 NOW, "but it appears people are afraid to come to the hospital because of the COVID crisis."



Hospitals say it is important for heart patients to know they will not be treated alongside COVID-19 patients.

"We have a special area of the hospital for those patients," Henry explained. "We have a separate space for patients that are COVID negative. You can be treated very safely."

Additionally, doctors believe there are two other reasons for the decrease in heart attack patients.

The first is misdiagnosis because of the focus on COVID-19. The second is medications are being used to address cardiac events in place of in-patient hospital visits.

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Christ Hospital is one of 9 hospitals nationally studying the decrease in emergency procedures due to heart attacks. (Source: WXIX)