

How to Use an AED

IMPORTANT:

Before delivering the shock, make sure no one is touching the victim. Following the shock, begin performing CPR immediately, starting with chest compressions, and monitor the victim until medical help arrives.

- 1 Place the victim flat on his or her back when it's safe to do so**, taking steps to avoid further injuries to the neck or spine.
- 2 Check for a pulse.** If you can't find a pulse, a second person should be sent to retrieve the AED while a primary bystander begins chest compressions. Once the AED has been retrieved, the victim should have their bare chest exposed quickly so that chest compressions aren't interrupted.
- 3 Locate the appropriate sticky patches** and attach them to the machine. While continuing chest compressions, The machine should have pictures of how to use an AED, which can be a helpful guide in an emergency situation.
- 4 Ensure the victim's chest is dry, and attach the patches.** The first patch will be located between the person's right pectoral muscle and their collar bone. The second will be applied below the left pectoral muscle near his or her left side.
- 5 Follow the machine's directions.** The machine should have a clearly identified button that will be pressed. The machine will analyze the person's heart rate and give a clear indication of whether an electric shock is needed to return the victim's heart to normal rhythm.

Where to Find an AED

Use This Rule: Prominent, Visible, Accessible

Look for AEDs near entrances, in lobbies, by elevators, or near staircases. They should be clearly marked and available for immediate use.

So, if you're wondering where to look, think: What's the most prominent, visible, and accessible place for an AED to be?



Follow These Steps

1 Call

When there's an emergency, first, call emergency medical services (EMS).

Did You Know? Many EMS services maintain maps of public access defibrillator (PAD) networks. Once the EMS operator knows your location, they can help point them to an AED nearby.

2 Look

If you're in a public place, like a gym, hotel, mall, or airport, look around for a green and white AED sign. You'll see a white heart split by a lightning bolt on a green background. They're found in cabinets that should be easily accessed and available 24 hours a day.

Did You Know? If an AED is beeping on its own without an emergency taking place, the battery may need to be changed, or the electrode pads may be expired.

3 Ask

If neither you nor EMS can locate the nearest AED, ask! In places like hotels or gyms, a concierge person or front desk worker can point you in the right direction. Asking for help is essential, as saving minutes can save a life.

4 Search

Searching "AED near me" can yield a map with AED locations if you're unable to find one yourself or by asking around.

Did You Know? There are websites and apps you can use outside of a simple Google search to find an AED near you. Apps like Pulse Point and sites like stayingalive.org maintain easy-to-use AED location databases.

AED FAQs

How do I use an AED?

All AEDs now come with an automated system that provides the user with voice instructions and visual prompts so that even someone who has never used one can properly operate an AED. To learn more about how to use an AED, read our article.

How many AEDs should be in a building?

It depends on the building's size and layout, as well as the number of people present at any given time.

What is the survival rate for sudden cardiac arrest?

Low, with less than 10% of individuals surviving without intervention. But with AEDs and CPR, that rate jumps up to 31.4%, when provided within 5 minutes. Act fast, and save a life!

How much do AEDs cost?

Depending on the make and model, AEDs can range in price from several hundred to over a thousand dollars.

Who can use an AED?

AEDs are intended for use by the general public. They are safe, accurate, and easy to use.