

Why do I need to buy an AED?

We are talking about the nation's leading killer; killing more people than strokes, AIDS and breast cancer in the US annually. Each year, more than 350,000 Americans experience sudden cardiac arrest (SCA) outside of a hospital. SCA affects people of all ages and with many types of heart problems, but occurs most commonly in adults with coronary artery disease, and so it will only become more common as America ages.

On average in the U.S., just 6.4% of SCA victims survive. Cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and early defibrillation with an automated external defibrillator (AED) more than double a victim's chance of survival. In fact, early defibrillation with CPR is the only way to restore the SCA victim's heart rhythm to normal. For every minute that passes without CPR and defibrillation, the chances of survival decrease by 7–10%. However, there are not enough AEDs and persons trained in using AEDs and performing CPR to provide this life-saving treatment, resulting in lost opportunities to save more lives. Tragically, 64% of Americans have never even seen an AED. **AED PROGRAMS CAN IMPROVE SURVIVAL RATES.** Communities with comprehensive AED programs that include training of anticipated rescuers in both CPR and AED use have achieved survival rates of 65 percent or higher. Making AEDs more available to lay responders trained in their use saves more lives.

With an AED program in place, survival rates have reached 50-60% or EVEN MORE in some settings. A study evaluating the AED program at O'Hare International Airport showed a 55% survival rate for cardiac arrest victims in the terminal. In Vegas, survival rates in casinos are surpassing 70%. The University of Massachusetts in 2006 revealed a 75% SCA survival rate for their PAD program. It is well documented in the medical literature and elsewhere, that early defibrillation saves lives using AED technology.

Why do we need AEDs? Can't we just call 911?

There is a very good chance emergency medical services (EMS) cannot respond fast enough to save someone in cardiac arrest, particularly in congested urban areas, high-rise buildings, in remote rural areas, or large facilities. In fact, the national average response time is 8-10 minutes, so even the best EMS responders could have difficulty arriving before the vital first 6 minutes after the SCA event. Besides traffic, consider the time needed to make it through building security or in a crowded shopping mall with multiple escalators and all the way to a victim, for example.

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