

SHOCKINGLY SIMPLE

— ECG — RESTART A HEART — ECG —



COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: What is the Shockingly Simple campaign?

A: Sponsored by the Emergency Medical Services Division of Public Health – Seattle & King County, the Shockingly Simple campaign is aimed at increasing placement and registration of Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) by businesses and organizations in King County. Today, less than 1,000 businesses and organizations have registered an AED. By purchasing and registering an AED, businesses easily provide a greater chance of survival for sudden cardiac arrest victims.

Q: What is the benefit of registering an AED?

A: AEDs don't work if you can't find them. Registering an AED with the Emergency Medical Services Division of Public Health – Seattle & King County allows 911 dispatchers to view most registered AEDs in King County. This way, when a person calls 911, the dispatcher can tell them exactly where the nearest AED is located. This allows AED owners to not only help their own team, but also benefit the broader community.

Q: What is sudden cardiac arrest?

A: Sudden cardiac arrest (SCA) describes a condition in which the heart unexpectedly stops beating, halting blood flow to the brain and other organs. This can happen anytime, anywhere, to anyone and will result in death if not treated within minutes. In fact, every year, more than 300,000 adult Americans die from sudden cardiac arrest. It's important to note that an SCA is different than a heart attack, which is related to a blockage in an artery leading to the heart. Many people refer to an SCA as an “electrical” problem with the heart, and refer to a heart attack as a “plumbing” problem.

Q: Why are AEDs Important?

A: If used within minutes of an SCA, an AED can be lifesaving. Studies have shown a 70-80% chance of survival if defibrillation can be performed immediately on an SCA victim. In many cases, AED use is the victim's only chance of survival.

Q: How do AEDs work?

A: Using AEDs is simple. AEDs, regardless of manufacturer, are designed to diagnose a life-threatening abnormal heart rhythm. If an abnormal heart rhythm is found, the AED will determine the need for a shock to restore the heart's normal rhythm before EMS arrives.

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Q: Who can use an AED?

A: Anyone can use an AED in the event of a sudden cardiac arrest. AEDs are designed to be used by the public and do not require a medical background. Each AED provides step-by-step audio instruction to walk you through the process.

Q: What are the risks associated with AEDs?

A: AEDs are designed to administer a shock to SCA victims if an abnormal heart rhythm is detected. If an abnormal heart rhythm is not found, the AED will not administer a shock. A 1998 Washington State AED law grants immunity from civil liability for a person or entity that acquires and uses a defibrillator. (Source: RCW 70:54:310). In other words, there is virtually no risk of liability associated with using an AED in an emergency.

Q: Should my organization consider purchasing an AED?

A: If you can answer "yes" to one or more of the questions below, an on-site AED program should be strongly considered:

- Is it unlikely that EMTs/Paramedics can respond to the side of the patient in four minutes or less at this site?
- Has a cardiac arrest incident occurred at this site in the past five years and have the demographics of the population served by this site remained constant?
- Do 10,000 or more persons regularly gather at this location?
- Does this site have a large concentration of persons over 50 years old?

Q: How do I purchase an AED?

A: For private citizens and for-profit entities, AEDs can be purchased directly through AED manufacturers or through several online websites. For state and local agencies, non-profit organizations and colleges, Washington State has negotiated a reduced AED pricing. The full contract and information on how to use this state contract may be found at <http://www.ga.wa.gov/index.html>.