



Safety Matters

Environmental Health & Safety

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Automatic External Defibrillators (AED's)



Statistics show that more than 200,000 Americans die of sudden cardiac arrest every year. Up to 50,000 of these deaths could have been prevented if someone had initiated the Cardiac Chain of Survival, and if an automated external defibrillator (AED) had been available for immediate use at the time of the emergency.

The Cardiac Chain of Survival is a series of four critical steps. All four steps of the chain must be present to help ensure survival. The steps are:

1. Early access to care (call 911)
2. Early CPR
3. Early defibrillation
4. Early advanced cardiac life support, as needed

The third step, delivering an electrical shock to the heart, is recognized as the most critical step in restoring cardiac rhythm.

Once the AED machine is turned on, its voice prompts will instruct the rescuer to apply its two electrodes to the victim's chest. Then the AED monitors the victim's heart rhythm. If a "shockable" rhythm is detected, the machine will charge itself and instruct the rescuer to stand clear of the victim and to press the shock button.

Training in use of the AED is necessary in order to understand the role of defibrillation in the broader context of the cardiac chain of survival. In most cases, EMTs and first responders are required to know how to use an AED as part of their job responsibilities.

Several AEDs are now available on campus. They are located in the Colvin Center, the Seretean Wellness Center, and are part of Environmental Health & Safety's response equipment. All EHS responders as well as selected staff of the Colvin Center and Wellness Center are trained in the use of AEDs. EHS has successfully used the AED during public events.

Any OSU department that wants to purchase an AED must first contact EHS to ensure requirements are met.

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