

**Question: What is a AED?**

*Answer:* AED stands for Automatic External Defibrillator. An AED is used to administer an electric shock to a person who is having a cardiac arrest. AEDs are designed to allow non-medical personnel to save lives.

**Question: What does the American Heart Association and the Irish Heart foundation say about AEDs?**

*Answer:* The Irish Heart Foundation and the American Heart Association strongly supports having AEDs in public areas such as sports arenas, office complexes, schools, doctors' offices, shopping centres, golf courses, airports, and other public places. The AHA also advocates that all police and fire and rescue vehicles be equipped with an AED.

**Question: What does the Health & Safety Authority in Ireland say about AEDs?**

*Answer:* The HSA now include training in the use of a defibrillator as a requirement for Occupational First Aid.

**Question: How does an AED work?**

*Answer:* Two pads, connected to the AED, are placed on the patient's chest. A computer inside the AED analyzes the patient's heart rhythm and determines if a shock is required to save the victim. If a shock is required, the AED uses voice instructions to guide the user through saving the person's life.

**Question: Why do we need AEDs?**

*Answer:* AEDs save lives. When a person has a sudden cardiac arrest ("SCA"), their heart's regular rhythm becomes chaotic or arrhythmic. Every minute that the heart is not beating lowers the odds of survival by 7% to 10%. After 10 minutes without defibrillation very few people survive.

**Question: What is Sudden Cardiac Arrest (SCA)?**

*Answer:* Sudden cardiac arrest is when the heart's normal heart rhythm suddenly becomes chaotic. The heart can no longer pump the blood effectively and the victim collapses, stops breathing, becomes unresponsive, and has no detectable pulse. When used on a victim of SCA, the AED can be used to administer a life-saving electric shock that restores the heart's rhythm to normal.

**Question: Is SCA the same as a heart attack?**

*Answer:* No. Both the heart attack (myocardial infarction) and a sudden cardiac arrest have to do with the heart, but they are different problems. SCA is an electrical problem; a heart attack is a "plumbing" problem. Sometimes a heart attack, which may not be fatal in itself, can trigger a sudden cardiac arrest.

**Question: Who can have a SCA?**

*Answer:* Anyone, anytime. Children can have SCAs, teenagers can have SCAs, athletes can have SCAs, old people can have SCAs. Although the risk of SCA increases with age and in people with heart problems, a large percentage of the victims are people with no known risk factors.

**Question: What is the recommended treatment for SCA?**

*Answer:* Defibrillation is the only treatment proven to restore a normal heart rhythm.

**Question: How much time do I have to respond if someone has a sudden cardiac arrest?**

*Answer:* Only minutes. Defibrillate within 3 minutes and the chances of survival are 70%. After 10 minutes, the chances of survival are negligible.

**Question: I know CPR; wouldn't it help?**

*Answer:* CPR only buys a little more time - potentially giving the victim a small amount of extra time until a defibrillator arrives. But SCA ultimately requires a shock to restore a normal heart rhythm. As a result, most CPR training now also includes AED training.

**Question: Is an AED complicated to use?**

*Answer:* AEDs are very easy to use. An AED can be used by practically anyone who has been shown what to do. In fact, there are a number of cases where people with no training at all have saved lives.

**Question: Can a non-medical person make a mistake when using an AED?**

*Answer:* AEDs are safe to use by anyone who has been shown how to use them. The AED's voice guides the rescuer through the steps involved in saving someone; for example, "apply pads to patient's bare chest" (the pads themselves have pictures of where they should be placed) and "press red shock button." Furthermore, safeguards have been designed into the unit precisely so that non-medical responders can't use the AED to shock someone who doesn't need a shock.

**Question: Can the AED itself make a mistake?**

*Answer:* It is unlikely. Studies show that AEDs interpret the victim's heart rhythm more quickly and accurately than many trained emergency professionals. If the AED determines that no shock is needed, it will not allow a shock to be given.

**Question: What else do I need to do to keep my AED in working order?**

*Answer:* The pad package must be replaced every two years. Otherwise, the AED performs automatic self-checks every day to test its operational readiness. If anything is not fully functional, the unit will make a loud chirp and flash a red light warning the owner that servicing may be required.

**Question: What features should I look for in an AED?**

*Answer:* Look for 1) an AED that is easy for non-medical people to use, 2) an AED that is technically reliable, and 3) one that is reasonably priced.

**Question: How do I buy a defibrillator - AED?**

*Answer:* Contact Safety Ireland  
Callsave: 1850 555 999  
website: <http://www.defibtech.ie>  
email: [info@defibtech.ie](mailto:info@defibtech.ie)

## Defibrillators in Ireland

Defibrillators in Ireland are very popular, but there are several things you should consider before you purchase.

### Factors to consider are:-

- National Standard for Defibrillators in Ireland 2008
- Support available in Ireland.
- The cost of approved training or is it included.
- The cost of maintaining your defibrillator.

### NATIONAL STANDARD FOR DEFIBRILATOR IN IRELAND 2008

In Ireland we have a national standard for defibrillators, but not all models meet this standard. This standard includes ISO certification and attested quality management systems, shock/drop tolerance, long battery life for units, product liability insurance and many other items. If the company selling you a defibrillator doesn't have on their website or sales information details of the National Standard, chances are their unit doesn't meet this standard.

### SUPPORT AVAILABLE IN IRELAND

With the internet it may seem that support and services for your defibrillator are available here in Ireland. Many companies selling defibrillators only have a shop front on the internet, with no office you can visit and no units or accessories in Ireland. You need to see does the company have an office in Ireland and is it a virtual/serviced office or a real location. Also what stock do they hold?

### THE COST OF APPROVED TRAINING

Companies selling defibrillators should be approved by the Irish Heart Foundation to provide training, but not all are. Training should be provided free, under Irish Health & Safety law within the workplace you should not use equipment unless you have been trained to do so.

### THE COST OF MAINTAINING YOUR DEFIBRILATOR

The cost of training and the cost of defibrillation pads and batteries should be taken into account. Defibrillation pads have a self life of two/three years, after that time the gel on the pads begins to dry and the pads may not stick to the chest.

Defibrillation pads – you should check the cost of defibrillation pads and what expiry date is on the pads. Each defibrillator should have two sets of adult defibrillation pads.

Battery – you should check the cost of the defibrillation battery and what its standby life is once inserted into a defibrillator. Also check how many shocks the battery has, this will give you an idea of the battery power. Defibrillator batteries range from 2 years to 7 years.

Some units have an all in one system, that is the battery and pads are in a cartridge system. This means if you use the pads you must replace both the pads and battery.

**Defibtech, LLC** is a leading innovator in the field of **Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs)**. The Company designs and manufactures the award-winning, **FDA-approved, Lifeline™ and Reviver™** brands of defibrillators and related accessories. Defibtechs products are sold exclusively through a network of distribution partners in the United States and around the world. Defibtech, founded in 1999, is headquartered in Guilford, Connecticut, and manufactures all of its defibrillators in the USA in a **state-of-the-art ISO-13485:2003 certified** facilities.

**Safety Ireland** is the sole authorised distributor for Defibtech LLC products in Ireland. Only units sold by us are covered under warranty. We are also an approved training site for the Irish Heart Foundation. Safety Ireland with Defibtech have the highest level of support available in Ireland for defibrillators. With our main office just off the M50 in Terenure Dublin, and offices in Cork, Galway and Wexford we are able to provide the best support and service possible.

#### **Safety Ireland Accreditation:**

- Irish Heart Foundation - Approved Training Site.
- Further Education and Training Awards Council - FETAC - Quality Assured Registered Provider.
- Institution of Occupational Safety and Health - IOSH - Licensed Provider.
- Approved Assessment Centre Occupational First Aid Health & Safety Authority.

**Defibtech** is a registered Trade Mark in Ireland number 242083.

