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FIRSTAIDCANADA.com

AEDS FAQ

What is an AED?

Automated external defibrillators (AEDs) are small portable, electronic devices used to restart a heart that has stopped beating properly. AEDs can:

- analyze the person's heart rhythm
- determine whether a shock is needed
- use voice or screen prompts to guide the rescuer through the process

What is the Significance Between Cardiac Arrest and AEDs?

Cardiac arrest is when the heart suddenly stops beating properly. When this happens, the best treatment for the heart is to be shocked back into a normal beating rhythm. This procedure is called defibrillation.

According to the [Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada](#), as many as 35,000 Canadians experience a sudden cardiac arrest (SCA) each year. Early access to cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and defibrillation (1 to 3 minutes after cardiac arrest) is vital. These actions may increase the chance of survival by 75% or more.

What is the Difference Between Fully Automatic and Semi-Automatic?

Fully Automatic AED

- The AED will automatically shock the victim if a shock is required.
- Well-suited for users with limited training or high-stress situations.
- Less interaction is required.
- May be preferred in an environment where a broad range of users may be responding to emergencies.

Semi-Automatic AED

- A rescuer is required to press the shock button to shock the victim if a shock is required.
- More control and involvement in rescue.
- Allows users time to assess the patient and confirm shock is needed.
- Commonly used in settings with trained responders.

Which AED Should I Purchase?

There are many AEDs available for sale in Canada. While all AEDs analyze a heart rhythm and deliver an electrical shock to the heart, not all are identical. AEDs can:

- have semi-automatic (a shock button) or automatic features (deliver the shock without someone initiating it)
- provide 'coaching' to guide users on giving effective CPR breathing and compressions
- be sold with pads (electrodes) for use on children under 8 years old or under 25 kg

To determine which AED is right for you, please contact First Aid Canada and one of our representatives will assist you.

How Many AEDs Should I Purchase?

This is dependent on the size of your workplace. For example, due to the time sensitivity of cardiac arrest, we typically recommend that an AED is accessible in a location that ensures a response time that is less than 3 minutes.

How Often Do You Have to Replace Batteries?

2-5 years depending the AED make and model.

How Often Do You Have to Replace the Pads?

2-5 years depending the AED make and model.

What are the Maintenance Requirements for AEDs?

AEDs must be appropriately stored and maintained to make sure they are readily accessible and functional during an emergency. Employers and workers must follow the manufacturer's instructions for use, care, and maintenance checks.

Proper maintenance requires a combination of regular inspection and testing, which includes:

- Inspecting the AEDs working status and physical condition
- Checking the AED pads and accessories
- Checking that the batteries are charged
- Cleaning the AED

Review the manufacturer's manual for instructions on how often the battery needs to be replaced. Contact the manufacturer if the device warns you that servicing is needed or if there are any device defects or discrepancies in performance.

Most manufacturers provide a maintenance checklist and testing schedule. It is highly recommended to create a checklist and schedule if your AED manual does not have one. It is

also recommended to keep documented records of maintenance checks, repairs, or replacements.

What Should a Workplace Do if They Choose to Have AEDs Available at the Workplace?

If an employer voluntarily chooses to install AEDs, they would be required to operate, inspect, and maintain the device according to the manufacturer's instructions.

As part of their emergency preparedness and response plan, the employer should have a training program by an approved training agency to make sure that employees are trained in the proper use of the AED. If you have employees who are trained in first aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), they would be the most appropriate candidates for operating the AED.

In a situation where a person unexpectedly collapses, is unresponsive, and not breathing normally, it is likely that the person is experiencing cardiac arrest. In this case, you should:

1. Immediately call 911 or your local emergency services and ask a bystander to grab the nearest AED
2. Start performing CPR to keep the blood circulating
3. Use the AED as soon as it is available to restart the heart

Performing CPR is essential because it keeps the blood circulating to the vital organs but it does not restart the heart. Only the AED can restart the heart.

Can an AED Live Outside or Does it Need to be Stored Inside?

AEDs can be stored outside, however, due to the varying climate changes in Canada, having them stored in a protective, temperature controlled case/cabinet is essential to ensuring the shelf-life and effectiveness of the unit.

Sources:

<https://www.aedsuperstore.com/resources/faq/>

<https://www.heartandstroke.ca/how-you-can-help/learn-cpr/aeds>

<https://thedailyscan.providencehealthcare.org/2022/10/when-the-heart-suddenly-stops/>

https://www.ccohs.ca/oshanswers/hsprograms/firstaid_aed.html?=&wbdisable=true

<https://ohsinsider.com/aeds-in-the-workplace-know-the-laws-of-your-province/>

Have a question? Contact us at www.firstaidcanada.com or sales@firstaidcanada.com