

FAQ on AEDs for Schools - Featuring Powerheart AED -

Why do schools need AEDs?

Sudden cardiac arrest (SCA) — or massive heart attack — as it is sometimes known, which kills 450,000 people in the U.S. alone each year, can strike anyone: your students, staff, faculty or visitors. Even a seemingly healthy person can suffer cardiac arrest without warning. According to the American Heart Association (AHA), as many as 50% of SCA victims have no prior indication of heart disease — their first symptom is cardiac arrest.



The only definitive treatment for SCA is a defibrillation shock — an electrical pulse through the heart — which restores a normal heart rhythm. The chance of an SCA victim's survival decreases by 10 percent with every minute that passes, so in order to be effective, defibrillation treatment must be administered within the first few minutes of SCA.

In its publication, "Guidelines 2000 for CPR and Emergency Cardiac Care," the AHA recommends defibrillation within 3-5 minutes for emergency response outside the hospital. Recently published studies in the [New England Journal of Medicine](#) further support that recommendation, with results that show a 74 percent survival rate for victims defibrillated within three minutes.

Why 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. In fact, the national average response time is 10-12 minutes, so even the best EMS responders could have difficulty arriving in time. Besides traffic, consider the time needed to make it to a patient's side on a remote athletic field or in a crowded auditorium, for example. AEDs offer a practical way to save more lives because they are designed for use by nearly anyone. Widespread deployment of AEDs in educational and athletic facilities gives SCA victims the best chance of survival.

Who can help my organization implement an AED program?

There are several factors to consider when implementing an AED program, such as the selection of an AED, lay-rescuer training, physician oversight, determining optimal placement and developing ongoing quality assurance programs. AED Everywhere can assist your superintendent, principal, school board, athletic trainer or school nurse with all facets of a comprehensive AED program.

Are AEDs easy to use?

Extremely. Automated external defibrillators are designed for use by virtually anyone with minimal training. Cardiac Science's Powerheart® AED is the only AED with patented, one-button operation and pre-connected, self-testing, interchangeable electrodes, making Powerheart the easiest AED to use. In addition, the Powerheart is the only AED that can provide continuous monitoring capabilities during and after cardiac arrest, thereby protecting the victim against the reoccurrence of a life-threatening arrhythmia following resuscitation.

What additional training is required?

In many cases, a simple course including CPR and AED training is all that is required. For example, the American Heart Association offers the Heartsaver™ AED course, which can be completed in less than four hours. Training requirements vary, so contact AED Everywhere for more information on your state's unique requirements.

What liability do we incur by deploying AEDs in our facilities — or by not having AEDs on-site?

As a result of their easy-to-use design, Cardiac Science's AEDs reduce the risk of operator misuse. Consequently, if the Powerheart AED is used in accordance with the directions in the manual, proper training, usage protocols and medical direction, the risk of liability from using it is minimal. The laws surrounding AED usage vary from state to state. All states in the U.S. but one have passed Good Samaritan laws with language about AEDs. Additionally, the [Cardiac Arrest Survival Act](#), which was passed by Congress and signed by President Clinton in 2000, provides AED users and acquirers with protection from liability. This and similar legislation underway is helping to make AEDs the standard of care for SCA, and as such, organizations are increasingly at greater liability for **failing** to have these life-saving devices on-site. In fact, the father of a 14-year-old student athlete in Olmsted Falls, Ohio is suing the school district for \$2.5 million, claiming that school officials did not make provisions for notification of emergency personnel from the outdoor track where his daughter went into SCA and for failing to have defibrillators on school grounds. Read more about this from the [National Center for Early Defibrillation](#).

What is the cost to purchase and maintain an AED?

An AED from Cardiac Science costs about the same as a well-equipped laptop computer. With its seven year warranty and four year battery, the Powerheart AED offers a very low cost of ownership throughout the life of the AED. An AED Everywhere sales professional can provide more information about specific options and costs.

Where would we place our AEDs?

The Powerheart AED's convenient delivery systems allow for mobile and stationary placement throughout a facility to support the 3-5 minute response time recommended by the AHA. Some key areas to place AEDs in your facility would be:

- In student health areas or with the school nurse
- In cafeterias, auditoriums, and gymnasiums
- Near a fire extinguisher
- In a reception or common area
- With athletic trainers
- With a security officer

Wherever your AEDs are placed, they should be visible and easily accessible.

Making Schools Safe is an Educated Decision

Young people die from cardiac arrest on school and college campuses every year. In fact, according to the Mid America Heart Institute, 5,000-7,000 children and adolescents die from sudden cardiac arrest in the U.S. annually. Most of them could probably have been saved with prompt defibrillation. The sad reality is that anyone can be a victim — even young and seemingly healthy people. That's why Cardiac Science is making a concerted effort to work with local schools and national educational institutions to increase awareness and help campuses be prepared to respond immediately with AEDs.

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Bruce Hosta, the father of a young athlete who died two years ago, is suing the Olmsted Falls (Ohio) School District, the school board and a teacher for wrongful death, pain and suffering. Dara Hosta, then 14, had just won a race during gym class when she collapsed in cardiac arrest. The physical education teacher sent other students to get help, but it was too late. Dara died six days later on June 1, 2000. The \$2.5 million lawsuit filed May 24th claims that school officials did not make provisions for notification of emergency personnel from the outdoor track and did not have defibrillators on school grounds.

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"It's a great relief to the school board that we've successfully implemented an AED program in our district. Besides the liability issues, we all feel better knowing that we are prepared to deal with potentially devastating human tragedies on our campuses."

*Martin Handler
Superintendent of Schools
Sullivan County (NY) Board of Cooperative Educational Services*