



FAQ

Frequently asked questions when using an Automatic External Defibrillator (AED).

In accordance to the [ANZCOR Guideline 7](#), New Zealand Resuscitation Council – Automated External Defibrillation in Basic Life Support

What is an Automatic External Defibrillator (AED)?

An Automatic External Defibrillator is a life-saving device used to treat Sudden Cardiac Arrest.

When do I use an AED?

Must only be used on a person who is unresponsive and not breathing normally. The Rescuer commences CPR until an AED is applied, so that a shock can be delivered if necessary. Using an AED can increase the survival rate of Cardiac Arrest.

What happens if I follow this process, apply the pads to a patient and the patient doesn't need to be shocked?

AEDs can accurately identify the cardiac rhythm as “shockable” or “unshockable”.

How do I use an AED?

Turn the machine on and follow the verbal prompts as communicated from the AED in use.

Do I need to be formally trained to use an AED?

No. In accordance to the resuscitation guidelines, “using the AED should not be restricted to trained personnel”.

When using an AED am I at risk of shocking myself?

Rescuers should be careful not to touch the patient during shock delivery.

Can I use an AED on a pregnant woman who is unresponsive and not breathing normally?

Yes. An AED can and should be used on a pregnant woman who is in cardiac arrest.

Can you use an AED if someone has a pacemaker?

Yes. Ensure you place the pads off to the side of the pacemaker, ensuring that the heart remains in between the pads.

Do I need to remove all jewellery / metal from the patient when using an AED?

No, just make sure that there is no jewellery / metal connecting between the pads.

Can I use an AED on someone who is wet?

Yes, however, you need to remove the patient from the water and towel off the patient to ensure the pads will stick.

Can I use an AED on a child / baby?

Yes, some AEDs have paediatric pads which are smaller and can be placed as per instructions. If there are no paediatric pads available you can use the adult pads on larger children. For smaller children and babies you can place these pads front and back, keeping the heart in a direct line between the pads.

Do I have to shave a hairy chest to effectively use a AED?

If the patient is very hairy, you should quickly cut the hair with scissors or a razor on the area where the pads need to be applied.



Link to the New Zealand Resuscitation Council Defibrillation Guidelines

<https://www.nzrc.org.nz/assets/Guidelines/BLS/ANZCOR-Guideline-7-AED-Jan16.pdf>

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