

Using a Defibrillator

Body & health

What an AED does, and why anyone can use one.

Automated external defibrillators are designed for untrained bystanders.

1

Send someone for it

Continue CPR while it is fetched. Do not stop to go yourself if others are present.

2

Turn it on

It gives spoken instructions from that moment.

3

Attach the pads

Bare chest. The pads show where they go — upper right, lower left.

4

Stand clear while it analyses

It decides whether a shock is appropriate. You cannot override it.

5

Shock if told, then resume CPR

Immediately, without waiting to reassess.

SPECIAL CASES

Wet chest — dry it first

Excess hair — shave if a razor is included

Pacemaker — place pads clear of the lump

Patches — remove and wipe

Educational reference. An AED will not deliver a shock to someone who does not need one — using it cannot harm them.