

# DEFIBRILLATOR FAQ

The FAQs below are kindly provided to the club by London Hearts, a leading UK defibrillator charity.

Also known as an AED – Automatic External Defibrillator – these wonderful potentially life-saving machines are appearing all around the UK, in many cases thanks to the hard work of charities like London Hearts, from where the club purchased the defibrillator box now installed at Monikie Country Park rangers' HQ, only around 100 yards from our Bailiff's hut.

There is a wealth of information provided in these FAQs. They should be viewed in conjunction with the London Hearts training video.

View the video at <https://vimeo.com/557677120/e7524918c5>

Further info about London Hearts – <https://londonhearts.org/about>

## *WHAT IS AN AED DEFIBRILLATOR?*

A defibrillator is a device that gives a high energy electric shock to the heart through the chest wall to someone who is in Cardiac Arrest in an attempt to restart the heart in a regular rhythm.

Rapid defibrillation is the only proven way to treat sudden Cardiac Arrest and it can mean the difference between life and death.

## *WHO CAN USE AN AED? DO YOU HAVE TO BE TRAINED?*

You do not need to be trained to use an AED – anyone can use it.

AED training is an awareness and confidence building session.

## *HOW DO I KNOW I NEED TO USE AN AED ON SOMEONE?*

If someone is unresponsive and not breathing it is vital you call 999 and immediately start CPR compressions.

Send someone to get a defibrillator and use as soon as possible.

## *CAN I DO ANY HARM USING AN AED?*

No. The AED analyses the casualty's heart rhythm and only delivers a shock if it is needed.

## *CAN I GET A SHOCK FROM AN AED?*

Yes, if you were touching a casualty when the shock was delivered.

It is important nobody touches the patient when the AED is analysing the heart rhythm or delivering a shock.

## *DO THE PADS HAVE TO BE STUCK TO THE BARE SKIN?*

Yes. Remove ALL clothing from the casualty's chest and make sure the pads stick firmly to the bare skin.

It may be necessary to dry the casualty's chest or to shave it to ensure the pads stick properly.

#### *WHAT IF I STICK THE PADS THE WRONG WAY ROUND?*

If you inadvertently get the pads the wrong way, leave them where they are. If you change their position they may not stick properly again.

The AED will still work.

#### *CAN I USE AN AED IN THE RAIN?*

Yes, but keep the casualty as dry as possible and dry their chest to enable the pads to stick properly.

Do not kneel in a puddle of water.

#### *CAN I USE AN AED ON A CHILD?*

Yes, you can use an AED on anyone aged one year and above.

For children aged 1 to 7 years set the AED to Paediatric Mode and stick one pad to the centre of the chest and the other pad to the centre of the back.

For children aged 8 and above use the AED in Adult Mode with the pads in the normal adult positions.

If there are no paediatric options you can use an adult AED on a child.

Any AED is better than none.

#### *CAN I USE AN AED ON A PREGNANT CASUALTY?*

Yes. You can use an AED on a pregnant casualty in cardiac arrest.

#### *CAN I USE AN AED ON SOMEONE WITH A PACEMAKER?*

Yes, but make sure the pads are not stuck over the site of the pacemaker.

#### *WHAT IF THE CASUALTY STARTS BREATHING AGAIN AFTER I'VE USED THE AED?*

If you are SURE the casualty is breathing NORMALLY leave them on their back with the pads attached and the AED switched on and continue to monitor them.

If you are in any doubt about their breathing continue CPR and follow the prompts from the AED.

#### *COULD I BE SUED IF I USE AN AED AND GIVE CPR TO SOMEONE?*

To date there have been no known judgements against anyone who has used an AED to save someone's life.

"Good Samaritan" laws protect users who attempt to save a person from death and in this respect you cannot be sued for first aid.

In addition to this there is also the SARA (Social Action, Heroism and Responsibility Act) Act 2015.

This provides an additional safety net to protect people from being sued for first aid.

*IS A CARDIAC ARREST THE SAME AS A HEART ATTACK?*

No, they are not the same.

Sudden cardiac arrest is much worse than a heart attack.

It is a condition in which the victim's heartbeat stops abruptly and unexpectedly due to an abnormal heart rate or arrhythmia.

A sudden cardiac arrest victim will have little or no fore-warning, will lose consciousness and collapse.

A heart attack is when the blood flow to the heart is blocked.