

Element 4 of a PAD Program

Using and Maintaining an AED

Using an AED

AEDs appropriate for lay rescuers to use are simple. They all use these universal steps:

1. POWER ON the AED first.
2. ATTACH the AED to the victim's bare chest (AED, cables, pads).
3. ANALYZE rhythm.
4. SHOCK (if shock indicated).

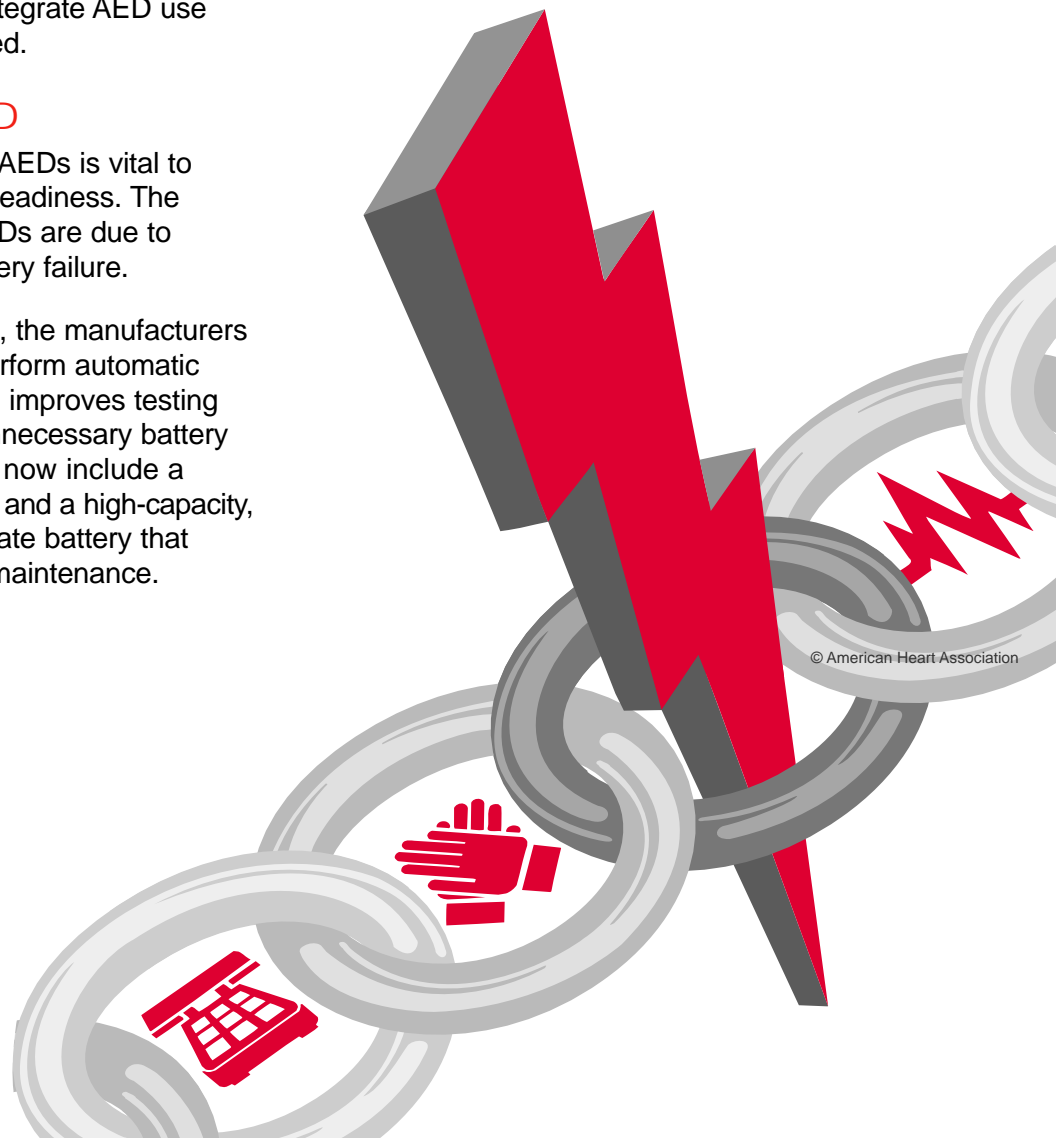
Although these steps are followed with all AEDs, there are variations in models that change how the steps are carried out. Because of this, it's important for lay responders to train on the specific model they'll be using in the PAD program. In addition, training is required to make sure that responders are prepared to make contact with the emergency system and integrate AED use with performing CPR, if needed.

Maintaining an AED

Appropriately maintaining AEDs is vital to ensure a continuous state of readiness. The majority of malfunctions in AEDs are due to improper maintenance or battery failure.

To limit potential problems, the manufacturers have developed AEDs that perform automatic self-testing, which saves time, improves testing consistency and minimizes unnecessary battery expenditure. Battery options now include a rechargeable lead acid battery and a high-capacity, extended-shelf-life lithium sulfate battery that needs no recharging and no maintenance.

Maintenance checklists provide for a standardized inspection and should be used to ensure that the AEDs are kept in a state of readiness. Inspections and checklists help identify and prevent deficiencies not just by providing a uniform way to inspect devices, but also by increasing the user's familiarity with the equipment. Regular use of a defibrillator checklist is a critical part of an AED program. AED operators should refer to the AED manufacturers for guidance about maintaining their specific AED. Recommendations may vary, depending on the device. A sample maintenance checklist is included in the right pocket of this folder.



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