Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is an AED?

An Automated External Defibrillator (AED) is a device used when someone is experiencing certain types of cardiac arrest.

2. What happens during cardiac arrest?

In cardiac arrest, or sudden cardiac death, the heart’s electrical activity is disorganized and there is no effective pumping of blood. An AED is capable of recognizing the heart's electrical activity, determining if an electric shock is required, and restoring normal heart rhythm.

3. Are AED’s safe?

AED devices are safe. They are programmed to deliver shocks only when the heart rhythm is not effective and the electric shock is definitely required. If the shock is needed, a voice prompt in the AED is activated, telling the rescuer to push a button to deliver the shock.

4. When should an AED unit be deployed?

The device is only applied when a person has collapsed in cardiac arrest, has no effective breathing or coughing, and no movement.

5. What if someone uses applies it on a victim by mistake?

An AED should not deliver an electric shock if applied by mistake to a person who has fainted or had a seizure.

6. Are AED’s covered under California Law?

California law allows the placement and use of AEDs in the home, work settings, and other public locations. While rules vary depending on use, state law mandates that units be thoroughly checked on a monthly basis. Orange County Emergency Medical Services should be also notified when an AED device is located in a private or public setting anywhere in the County of Orange.

7. Where can I go to obtain an AED unit for my facility?
Please contact the Environmental Health and Safety office at 949-824-6200, or at occhlth@uci.edu for further consultation.

8. Is there any special type of training for designated AED responders?

Yes, all responders must be current on CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation) and AED training within the last 2 years. Records and certificates of completion must be maintained and kept in the AED folder.

9. What is considered a complete and fully functioning AED unit?

A complete unit consists of:
1. Main AED unit either mounted to the wall or a detached unit.
2. Two pairs of unexpired defibrillaton pads
3. Full battery inside the unit with a spare full battery
4. Ancillary items (hand towels, scissors, razors, and pair of gloves)
The unit must pass the self test.