



AED's in our Communities

Even under the best circumstances, EMS systems can experience delays when responding to a call. When that call is for a person suffering from cardiac arrest—every minute counts. That is why the American Heart Association encourages all business and facilities in the communities to have Automatic Electronic Defibrillators (AED's) available for lay rescuers to initiate defibrillation for the cardiac arrest patient.

From the time that a person collapses from cardiac arrest brain damage can start to occur in just 4-6 minutes. Death may be prevented if the sudden cardiac arrest victim receives immediate bystander cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and defibrillation within a few minutes after collapse. CPR consists of mouth to mouth rescue breathing and chest compressions. It can help keep blood flowing to the heart and brain until emergency help arrives. Defibrillation can stop the abnormal, erratic rhythm and allow the heart to resume its normal rhythm. An automated external defibrillator (AED) provides an electric shock, which is the only way to defibrillate.

If no bystander CPR is provided, a victim's chances of survival are reduced by 7 to 10 percent with every minute of delay until defibrillation. The cardiac arrest survival rate is only about 5 percent if a system for providing early defibrillation is not present in a community. In cities with "community AED programs," when bystanders provide immediate CPR and the first shock is delivered within 3 to 5 minutes, the reported survival rates from VF sudden cardiac arrest are as high as 48 to 74 percent.

Thousands of portable, computerized AED's are not used in police and emergency vehicles and many public buildings. Lay rescuers can be trained to use them. If survival rates from sudden cardiac arrest increased from 5 percent to 20 percent, about 40,000 more lives could be saved each year.

The above statistics and information are provided by the American Heart Association. For more information on obtaining AED's or for training in the use of AED's visit their website at www.americanheart.org.

Democratic

As you know, the Democratic National Convention is coming to Boston the week of July 26th—29th. Action Ambulance Service is working very closely with the State Police, Local Authorities and Traffic Planning Boards to help reduce the impact of the convention on our patients, facilities and communities.

Because of road closures, it may be necessary to re-route transportation to facilities that are not our patients first choice. We appreciate your understanding and cooperation during this time. Every effort will be made on our part to accommodate patient requests. As always, superior patient care and transportation is our goal and we will continue to serve our customers with that goal in mind.

The following website provides more information on traffic changes and restrictions:

http://www.boston04.com/about_boston/visitor_information.asp

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Home Delivery—Baby Boy!!

A baby boy in Wakefield decided his due date was here and he didn't want to wait for mom to get to the hospital. With the help of Action Ambulance paramedics, Wakefield Fire Dept. and dad, mom delivered the baby boy at approximately 00:53 on Friday, June 18th in the kitchen of their Wakefield home.

Wakefield 911 dispatchers received the call at approximately 00:35 on Friday morning that a woman was in labor and needed assistance. The fire department and Action Ambulance paramedics were dispatched to the home on Pearl St. On arrival they found mom to be in labor with contractions coming rapidly and the baby ready to make his appearance. Mom was helped to a comfortable position; paramedics examined her and

found the baby to be crowning. "It was all pretty exciting and things moved quickly once we got on scene," said Action Ambulance paramedic Paul Damacogno. The paramedics assisted mom in the delivery and then quickly assessed the baby, suctioning his mouth and nose and drying him off. Then with help from the paramedics, dad was able to cut the umbilical cord. "Mom did a great job staying calm and Dad was very helpful. It is such a wonderful feeling to be part of something amazing like this" said Action Ambulance paramedic Leslie Haidazuk. Once delivery was completed, mom and baby were transferred to the stretcher and transported to Melrose Wakefield Hospital where both were examined and found to be in great condi-

tion. The family was discharged from the hospital on Monday, June 21st and is now home.

This is the family's second child, they have a 3 1/2 year old son, who is excited about being a big brother. "We are extremely thankful to everyone for their help with our surprise delivery. Our baby boy is doing very well and we have a fun story to share now about his arrival." Commented the Wakefield family.

ECG Lead Wires Contribute to Infections

Recently, reusable ECG Leads have come under scrutiny as reservoirs for multidrug-resistant bacterial pathogens that may potentially play an important role in serious nosocomial infections in hospitalized patients.

In a study presented at the annual Inter-science Conference on Antimicrobial Agents and Chemotherapy, among the key

findings were: 77% of the ECG leads were contaminated with one or more antibiotic-resistant nosocomial pathogens. Overall, 67% of leads were contaminated with MRSA, 17% with vancomycin-resistant enterococci and 12% with gram-negative bacilli.

All ECG lead wires should be thoroughly cleaned after every use—

remember these wires are touching bare skin on our patients and often times are coated in sweat, vomit or other substances. Follow your facility's protocols for cleaning equipment and help to prevent the further transmission of these pathogens.

How To Enjoy the Sun—Safely

At last, summertime is here! Beach, barbecues, swimming and lounging outside—a time to take advantage of the nice weather and enjoy the sun. When taking off to enjoy the outdoors—remember sunscreen. In the United States alone, approximately 1 million new cases of skin cancer are diagnosed each year. It has been shown that a link exists between getting sunburn as a child and developing skin cancer later in life. Please follow these tips and keep yourself and family members safe -

Try to plan outdoor activities for early morning or late afternoon.

Keep out of the sun between 10am and 4pm.

Wear protective clothing when out in the sun—hats with a wide brim to protect neck, ears and face, sunglasses to protect eyes, etc.

Try to stay in the shade whenever possible to avoid direct exposure to the sun.

Use a sunscreen with and sun protection factor (SPF) of 30 or higher.

Apply sunscreen liberally to all exposed areas of skin. Apply at least 30 minutes before going outside and reapply regularly.

Remember that harmful UV rays travel through clouds so use protection even on overcast days.

Enjoy the summertime—the warm weather, sunshine, extra hours of daylight—but do it safely!



Heat Exhaustion vs. Heat Stroke

There are several heat related illnesses that range from mild to life threatening. Heat exhaustion and Heat Stroke are the two most commonly confused.

Heat exhaustion is usually brought on from over exertion in hot temperatures. Heat exhaustion is a temporary condition and is non-life threatening if treated. Signs of heat exhaustion are extreme perspiration, flushed skin color and normal or slightly elevated body temperature. Symptoms may include severe thirst, nausea, vomiting, dizziness, headache and fatigue. To treat this patient, immediately move them out of the heat to a cool location. Give the patient cool liquids such as water, sports drinks or juice. Remove any excess clothing and sponge with cool water. If condition does not improve within 30 minutes seek medical attention.

Heatstroke occurs when the body is unable to regulate it's temperature. The

body's temperature rises, the sweating mechanism fails and the body is unable to cool off. This can cause a core body temperature of 106 degrees or higher in just 10-15 minutes. If left untreated, heatstroke can be deadly. Signs of heatstroke are hot, dry skin, flushed appearance. Symptoms may include headache, rapid pulse, dizziness, nausea and confusion. It is important to remember that heatstroke can be a life threatening emergency and treatment needs to be sought immediately. To treat this patient, get them to a cool, shaded area. Begin cooling patient off by removing excess clothing, sponging patient with water, fanning patient with cool air and using ice packs to help reduce body temperature. Call for emergency medical help and get the patient to the hospital immediately.

Remember, when trying to distinguish between heat exhaustion and heat stroke:

Heat exhaustion pt.'s perspire heavily

Heat stroke pt.'s are hot and dry

Heat exhaustion pt.'s have normal core body temp.

Heat stroke pt.'s have extremely elevated core body temp.

In both situations, the patient must be moved to a cool location and the body must be cooled down. Heat stroke is a life threatening situation and needs to be treated immediately.

Safe Driving Tips for Traveling in Work Zones

Road construction is often the cause of delays, frustration and road rage. The NHTSA states that in 2002 1,181 people were killed in accidents occurring in work zones.

When traveling through areas under construction, it is important to use extra caution and be prepared to stop. Expect the unexpected and be alert to what is happening around you. Read all signs

and follow their instructions. Watch for detail officers and work crews. Don't speed and do not tailgate other vehicles. Avoid using cell phones, changing radio stations or other distractions. Keep a safe distance from traffic cones, safety barriers and construction equipment. If possible, plan ahead and avoid work zones. If you are unable to avoid work zones then try to plan ahead allowing extra time for

travel and be patient.

By following these guidelines and being a safe driver you could save a life—possibly your own.



Upcoming Community Events

7/29 CPR Recertification

1:00—3:00

Wilmington Health Care Center

8/21 Easter Seals Softball Game

3:00—5:00

Plains Park, Danvers

8/3 Ambulance Tours

1:30—4:30

Mulberry Daycare, Reading

8/24 Car Seat Safety Lecture

10:00—1:00

Wakefield Public Library

8/12 CPR Recertification

4:00—5:30

Northshore Health Care, Lynn

Starting this fall, Action Ambulance

will be offering monthly CPR recertification classes at our headquarters in Wilmington. These classes will be open to all members of our communities and the dates will be posted in our next newsletter as well as on our website www.actionambulance.com. If you have any questions regarding classes please contact Wayne Gilbert at 978 262 2615.

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Safety Day at Middlesex County Sheriff's Dept. Youth Camp

Action Ambulance Service was proud to be part of the free Youth Public Safety Academy held by the Middlesex County Sheriff's Department. The Youth Public Safety Academy is a weeklong program offered at no cost to residents of area communities. Transportation, lunch and all activities are provided by the Middlesex Sheriff's Office in conjunction with the local communities Police, Fire and Emergency Services personnel. The goal of the program is to teach 10, 11, and 12 year old children about public safety. To build up their confidence and team work and focus on the duties and responsibilities of law enforcement personnel in the hopes of establishing respect and trust between those children and professionals.

During each week, local police officers, firefighters and EMT/Paramedic's work with the cadets to show them the importance of public safety; how to act in the event of a fire or an emergency

situation; and the role they can play in making their homes, schools and communities safer. Action Ambulance Service provided an ALS Ambulance and two paramedics to the program. "This was a great opportunity for us to give back to the communities we serve and to interact with the children in the area. We strongly believe that education is a top priority and we fully support the programs that the Middlesex Sheriff's department offers." Stated Wayne Gilbert, Action Ambulance paramedic. The Action paramedics gave the cadets a first aid demonstration and lecture, gave tours of the ambulance to the cadets and allowed for hands on training/experiences with the equipment on the ambulance.

Activities each week include K-9 demonstrations, fire safety house demonstrations, fingerprinting program, police and fire department tours, and a teamwork, self-confidence course at the Billerica Boys and Girls club. Each week

ends with a graduation ceremony where cadets receive their diplomas from Sheriff DiPaola and local officials. For more information of the Middlesex Youth Public Safety Academy, please visit their website at <http://www.middlesexsheriff.org/index.html>