What is an AED?
The automated external defibrillator (AED) is a computerized medical device. An AED can check a person’s heart rhythm. It can recognize a rhythm that requires a shock, and it can advise the rescuer or first responder when a shock is needed. The AED uses voice prompts, lights and text messages to tell the rescuer the steps to take.

AEDs are very accurate and easy to use. With only a few hours of training, anyone can learn to operate an AED safely. There are many different brands of AEDs, but the same basic steps apply to all of them. The National Cheer Safety Foundation does not recommend a specific model.

Why do we need an AED?
That national average for Emergency Medical Service response is between 10 - 12 minutes. Without early defibrillation, only five out of one hundred Sudden Cardiac Arrest victims survive. Brain damage can start to occur at 4 - 6 minutes after the heart stops pumping blood.

Can anyone buy an AED?
The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) may require the purchaser to present a physician’s prescription. The FDA sets manufacturing and sales guidelines for AEDs.

Who can an AED be used on?
AEDs can be used on ages nine and up, while pediatric attenuated pads are recommended on ages one through eight.
What is my local protocol or requirements for AED training and use?

In many cases, a simple course including CPR and AED training is all that is required. For example, the American Heart Association offers the Heartsaver™ AED course, which can be completed in less than four hours. Training requirements vary from state to state. Contact us at 1-800-596-7860 for more information on your state's unique training requirements.

What liability do we incur by deploying AEDs in our facilities--or by not having AEDs on-site?

The laws surrounding AED usage vary from state to state. All states in the U.S. but one have passed Good Samaritan laws with language about AEDs. Additionally, the Cardiac Arrest Survival Act, which was passed by Congress and signed by President Clinton in 2000, provides AED users and acquires with protection from liability. This and similar legislation underway is helping to make AEDs the standard of care for Sudden Cardiac Arrest, and as such, organizations are increasingly at greater liability for failing to have these life-saving devices on-site. In fact, the father of a 14 year old student athlete in Olmsted Falls, Ohio is suing the school district for $2.5 million, claiming that school officials did not make provisions for notification of emergency personnel from the outdoor track where his daughter went into Sudden Cardiac Arrest and for failing to have defibrillators on school grounds. Read more about this from the National Center for Early Defibrillation.

Steps to Purchase an AED for your sports program:

- Get a prescription from a physician
- Notify local EMS to register the type and location of the AED(s)
- Train all users in CPR and AED operation
- Physician oversight to ensure maintenance and proper use