

Automated External Defibrillator for Infants and Children Younger Than 8 Years of Age

Rescuers may use an AED when attempting to resuscitate infants and children younger than 8 years of age. This Part will help you understand how to use an AED for victims in this age range.

Learning Objectives

In this Part, you will learn

- The importance of using an AED as early as possible for infants and children younger than 8 years of age
- How to use an AED for infants and children younger than 8 years of age

Know Your AED

Although all AEDs operate in basically the same way, AED equipment varies according to model and manufacturer. You should be familiar with the AED used in your setting.

See Operating an AED: Universal Steps in Part 4.

Pediatric-Capable AEDs for Reduced Shock Doses

Most AED models are designed for both pediatric and adult resuscitation attempts. These AEDs deliver a reduced shock dose when pediatric pads are used.

One common way to reduce a shock dose is by attaching a pediatric dose attenuator to the AED (Figure 32). An attenuator reduces the shock dose by about two thirds. Typically, an attenuator delivers the reduced shock via child pads. A pediatric dose attenuator frequently comes preconnected to the pediatric pads.

Figure 32. A pediatric dose attenuator reduces the shock dose an AED delivers. This attenuator uses child pads.

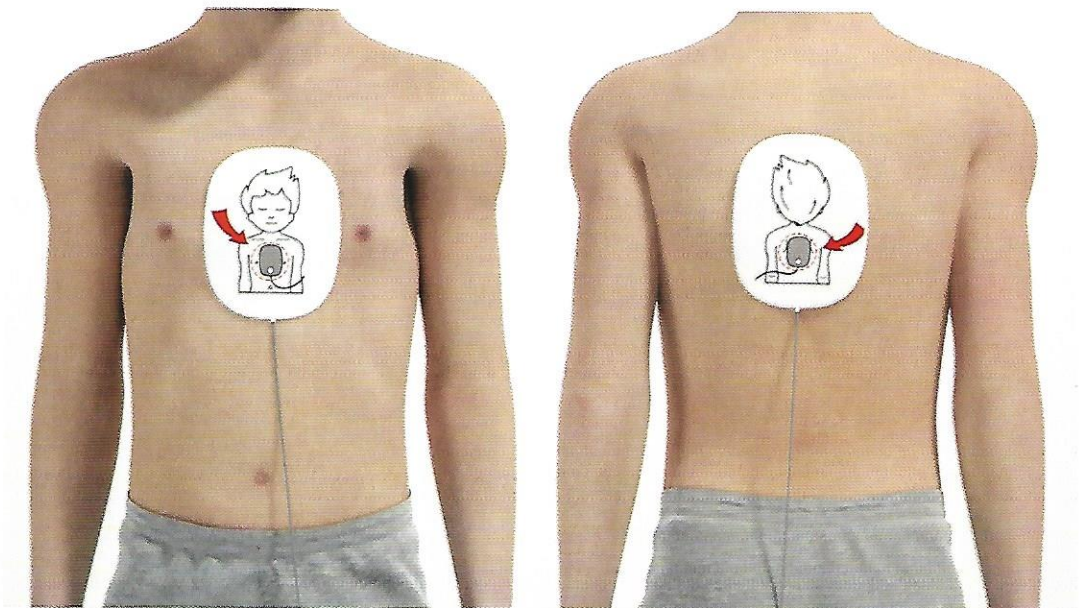


Choosing and Placing the AED Pads

Use child pads, if available, for infants and for children younger than 8 years of age. If child pads are not available, use adult pads. Make sure the pads do not touch each other or overlap. Adult pads deliver a higher shock dose, but a higher shock dose is better than no shock.

For pad placement, follow the AED manufacturer's instructions and the illustrations on the AED pads. Some AEDs require placing child pads in a front and back (anteroposterior [AP]) position (Figure 33), while others require right-left (anterolateral) placement. For infants, AP pad placement is common. See Critical Concepts: AED Pad Placement Options in Part 4.

Figure 33. AP AED pad placement on a child victim.



AED Use for Victims 8 Years of Age and Older

- Use the AED as soon as it is available.
- Use adult pads (Figure 34). **Do not use child pads**—they will likely give a shock dose that is too low.
- Place the pads as illustrated on the pads.
- Place the pads directly on the skin. Do not allow the pads to touch or overlap, and do not place on or over clothing.

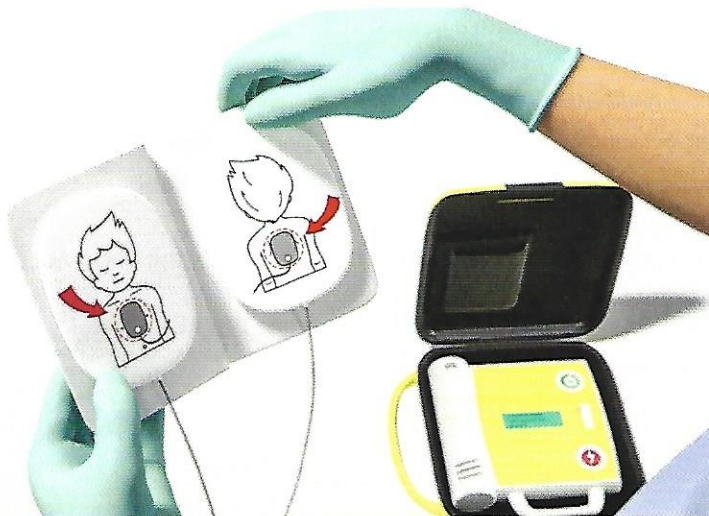
AED Use for Victims Younger Than 8 Years of Age

- Use the AED as soon as it is available.
- Use child pads (Figure 35) if available. If you do not have child pads, you may use adult pads. Place the pads so that they do not touch each other.
- If the AED has a key or switch that will deliver a child shock dose, turn the key or switch.
- Place the pads as illustrated on the pads.
- Place the pads directly on the skin, and do not place on or over clothing.

Figure 34. Adult AED pads.



Figure 35. Child AED pads.



AED Use for Infants

For infants, a manual defibrillator is preferred to an AED. A manual defibrillator has more capabilities than an AED and can provide the lower energy doses that infants often need. This course does not cover how to use a manual defibrillator, a skill that requires advanced training.

- When a manual defibrillator is not available, an AED equipped with a pediatric dose attenuator is the preferred alternative.
- If neither is available, you may use an AED without a pediatric dose attenuator.



Critical Concepts:
Using Adult Pads or Adult Shock Dose Is Better Than No Defibrillation for an Infant or Child

AED Pads

If you are using an AED for an infant or for a child younger than 8 years of age and the AED does not have child pads, you may use adult pads. To ensure that the adult pads do not touch each other or overlap, you may need to place them anterior and posterior.

Shock Dose

If the AED you are using cannot deliver a pediatric dose, use the adult dose.

Review Questions

1. What should you do when using an AED on an infant or a child younger than 8 years of age?
 - a. Never use adult AED pads.
 - b. Use adult AED pads.
 - c. Use adult AED pads if the AED does not have child pads.
 - d. Use adult AED pads, but cut them in half.
2. If a manual defibrillator is not available for an infant victim, which action should you take?
 - a. Perform high-quality CPR.
 - b. Use an AED equipped with a pediatric dose attenuator.
 - c. Cut the adult pad to fit the infant.
 - d. Wait for advanced care to arrive.
3. What is important to remember about AED pad placement on infants?
 - a. Ensure that pads overlap each other in very small infants.
 - b. Place 1 adult pad on the chest.
 - c. You may need to place 1 pad on the chest and 1 on the back, according to the diagrams on the pads.
 - d. If child AED pads are not available, do not use the AED.

See Answers to Review Questions in the Appendix.