

What Is: External Defibrillator?

An external defibrillator can help reduce the risk for sudden cardiac death for people who aren't ready for, or can't receive, an implantable defibrillator.

The parts of the external defibrillator include the vest, which is worn directly on your skin and contains the belt of sensors and therapy pads; and the battery and monitor, worn around the waist or over the shoulder.

You will have two batteries and switch between them each day, use one while the other charges to make sure it will work properly if needed.

The external defibrillator works by continuously monitoring the heart for an abnormal heart rhythm or arrhythmia. If it senses an arrhythmia it delivers a shock to get the heart beating in a healthy rhythm again.

Using an external defibrillator is a temporary treatment. You may be instructed to wear it for 40 to 90 days while you are at a greater risk for dangerous rhythms, or until you are eligible for an Implantable Cardioverter Defibrillator (ICD).

While you are prescribed the external defibrillator, follow all instructions to wear it properly and stay heart safe!