

Doctors: Defibrillators needed at resorts

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As more people hit the ski slopes defibrillators should be at ski resorts for cardiac emergencies, doctors said in the British Medical Journal.

The doctors based their article on personal experience. Sarah Davies, a British physician, and other doctors and nurses from different countries helped a man who collapsed on the slopes.

All knew the European Resuscitation Council guidelines and knew what they were expected to do but they couldn't find a defibrillator in the first aid room. After eight minutes an emergency helicopter arrived with a defibrillator and the patient was taken to a hospital.

She said the experience showed how important internationally recognized resuscitation guidelines and access to a defibrillator can be. Research has also shown that personnel such as ski patrol employees can be trained to use portable automated external defibrillators.

"We therefore support the suggestion that AEDs should be placed in public areas and that non-medical personnel should be trained to operate them," the doctors said.

Skiing can trigger cardiac problems in people with a history of heart problems, high blood pressure or not used to strenuous exercise, she said.

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