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## Evening workout proves to be a real lifesaver

**Posted 2 days ago**

Robynne MacDonald took a trip to the YMCA to work out Monday evening and saved a life.

The off-duty emergency room nurse was on the treadmill at about 5 p.m., intent on a cooking show when someone tapped her on the shoulder.

Turning around, she saw a middle-aged man lying on the floor. Her instincts immediately kicked in.

"I checked his pulse and started CPR while the YMCA staff got out the defibrillator," said MacDonald.

They shocked him once and she performed CPR for two minutes until paramedics and firefighters arrived.

"It all went by so fast," she said. "I just remember seeing his eyes open and seeing him breathe. I was so happy."

MacDonald had never before encountered an emergency while off duty. This is the third time a public access defibrillator (PAD) has been used successfully in the community and a first for the one at the YMCA. The PADs were first installed in 2005. Now there are 35 across the district.

"Not only did it save the individual, it saved a member of the community and helped a whole family," said Jean Guy Belzile, emergency medical services manager for the District of Nipissing.

MacDonald said the situation was much different than being in the emergency room.

"I was completely out of my environment because there were no doctors and so I was giving the directions," said MacDonald.

The quick response by the YMCA staff impressed MacDonald. When a PAD is installed, staff and volunteers are trained how and when to use it to effectively save lives.

MacDonald said she has encountered patients in the emergency room who had been treated with a PAD before arriving at hospital and was amazed to see them in such good condition.

"More establishments need to have this around," said MacDonald.

Each PAD in the district was purchased through local fundraising efforts and cost approximately \$2,000 plus training. The machine at the YMCA was purchased by the Kinsmen Club of North Bay.

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