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press clip

Thanks from the heart

ALEX SAMPSON

GEELONG fitness trainer Liam Millard knows just how important defibrillators are.

Aged 18, he had a heart attack the day after a football match on the Gold Coast where he lived at the time.

If it wasn't for that fact an ambulance was on the road near his house he would have have died. But an ambulance crew used a

defibrillator on him within three minutes.

After being administered 30 shocks and spending four days in an induced coma, Liam spent five weeks in hospital.

Now 22, Mr Millard was told by doctors that he was very lucky the heart attack didn't happen on the field, as his club did not have a portable defibrillator.

"It was a defect I never knew about and it made me realise how these things can happen any time, even

if you're fit and healthy," he said. "It made me see just how important it is that as many places as possible have defibrillators.

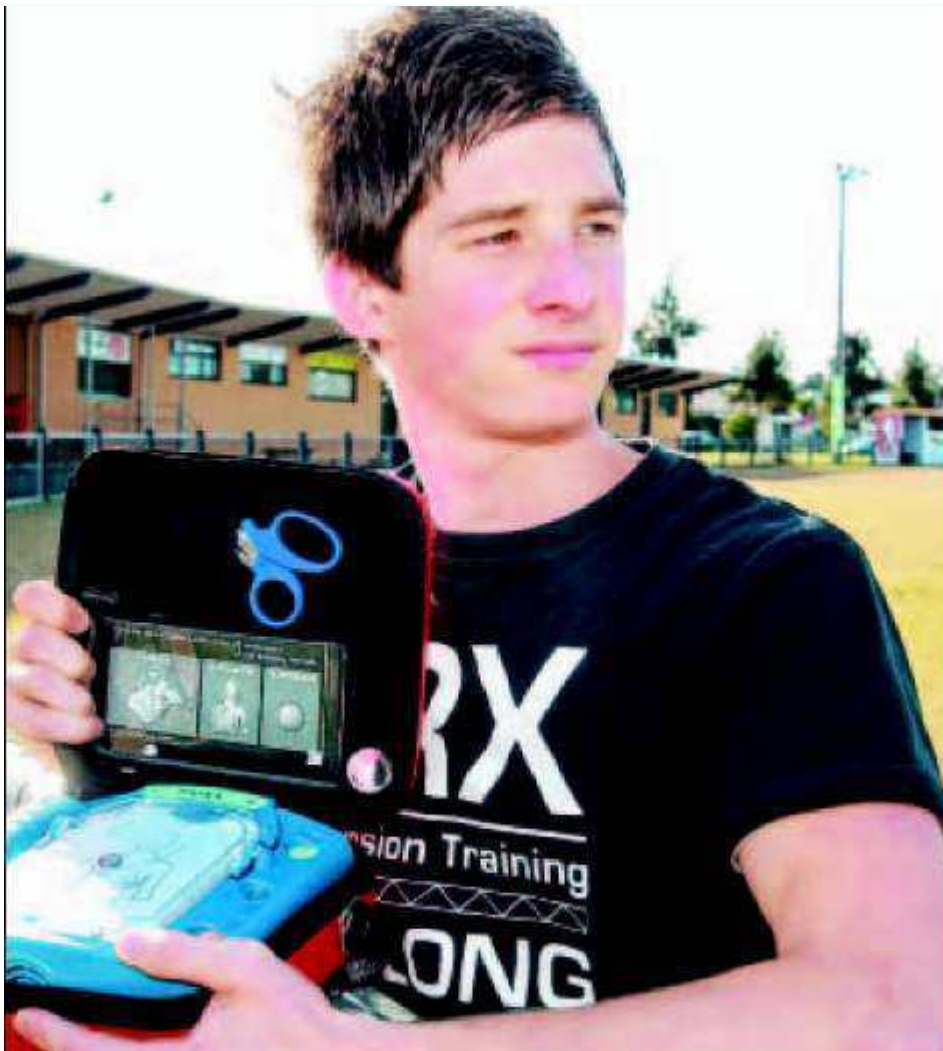
"I was always fit and healthy and I just want people to know that even young, fit people are not invincible. You should go in for regular check-ups and clearances.

"In Europe football clubs require medical clearances for all teenagers playing sport, so maybe in Australia we could implement it

for football and other contact sports. We also need to make sure every sporting club has a defibrillator, they really do save lives."

Mr Millard now has a implanted defibrillator that will restart his heart if it ever stops again.

He has pursued a career as a fitness trainer in Geelong but can no longer play football because of the stress on his heart.



Liam Millard had a cardiac arrest at a football match on the Gold Coast



press clip



St John Ambulance Australia volunteers Robyn Stone and Chris Murray are calling for defibrillators at every sporting club.

Photos: PETER RISTEVSKI