

## Wilderness First Aid

The Wilderness Medical Society states that whenever you are more than an hour away from definitive medical care, you are in a wilderness medicine situation. Ordinary first aid courses assume EMS is accessible within 15 to 20 minutes. Leaders who take Scouts on activities where definitive medical care can be more than an hour away should have someone trained in wilderness first aid (WFA). The Boy Scouts of America are strongly promoting WFA training for leaders. The National Council BSA has developed a “Wilderness First Aid Curriculum and Doctrine Guidelines” for a 16-hour WFA course. Although the Boy Scouts are not a certifying agency in WFA, they are working with the major agencies (including ARC, ASHI, ECSI, and NASAR) to ensure WFA courses are readily available to Scouts and Scouters. (Note: We can certify in all levels of ASHI, ECSI, and NASAR wilderness first aid and emergency care.)

We are offering a two-day 16 hour *Wilderness First Aid* course. This course meets the New York State first aid requirements for trip leaders at children’s camps. It also meets all BSA (including the High Adventure Bases) WFA requirements for trip leaders. The minimum age is 14, which follows the BSA guidelines.

This is an intensive 16-hour course for those who are involved in serious wilderness activities. This course is the choice of many wilderness trip leaders and guides.

This will be an intensive course covering wilderness topics in detail with lots of outdoor skills practice, realistic hands-on scenarios, role-playing, and case studies. Patient assessment, environmental issues (heat and cold), and how the body reacts to the environment, accidents, illness, and stress will be emphasized. Emphasis will be placed on prevention and decision-making, not memorizing lists. The course will be very interactive with participants working in groups of three. Depending on the background of the class, some topics can be covered at the *wilderness first responder* level. We teach the course for our audience—the Adirondack type trek leader. Since this is an intensive hands-on participation course, we keep the maximum class size to nine.

We also offer a one-day **Wilderness First Aid and Emergency Care Outdoor Workshop** for those who have completed a WFA course. We will cover advanced topics mostly at the wilderness first responder (WFR) level. It will also include difficult patient assessment drills with trained victims plus an extensive group rescue of a realistic major trauma patient staged back in the woods with complete moulage and acting. We highly recommend this for those who have completed a WFA course.

Adequate first aid training in Scouting is stated in the following from the *Guide to Safe Scouting*.

*“Depending on the event or activity planned, it may be required that at least two adults or youth (though three or more is preferable) in each touring group should have a current training in WFA and CPR, know how and when to put this knowledge to use, and thoroughly understand the limitations of their knowledge. Further information and advancement in first aid may include wilderness first responder (WFR) and wilderness emergency medical technician (WEMT)”.*