

First Aid

First Aid takes the most amount of time to practice, because the skills transfer to the other technical events (Pool Simulations and PAA).

1. Basic Patient Care

Take turns being victim, rescuer, and judge. Use a general marksheet and practice your basic patient care without missing any steps. Here are four basic patient types that you can start with. Repeat each patient until you don't miss any steps on the marksheet.

1. Unconscious Breathing
2. Unconscious Non-Breathing
3. Conscious Chest-Pain
4. Conscious Broken Leg

2. Speed Drill

Once you can treat basic patients without skipping any steps, see how fast you can do it. For example, you should be able to treat an unconscious breathing patient in under two minutes.

3. Quality Practice

Use a general marksheet and judge each other very critically (no 3's). Treat the same patient-type more than once, and work on raising your scores. Practice verbalizing details!

4. Difficulty

Start practicing treating more difficult patients in the same manner. Two conscious patients at once, multiples injuries, etc.

5. 1st Guard

You need to practice being the first lifeguard into a first aid scene. Have 3 or 4 patients set up around the room with some sort of danger. Walk into the room, and go through the first two minutes of assessment, including a 9-1-1 call.

6. Blind Judging

The judge faces away from the victim and only gives marks for things that he/she actually hears the lifeguard do. This should help verbalizing.

7. Video

Record your treatment so that you look for any wasted time and/or words. If you have lots of time on your hands, transcribe everything that you say, word for word. Edit your treatment by crossing out extra words and adding more adjectives to increase your score.

Pool Simulations

The pool simulation is the most important event to do well at because it is worth the most. It is very helpful to practice at least once at the pool you will be competing at, or at least at a very similar pool. If this is not possible, you at least need a pool diagram.

1. On-Deck Placement

Stand on deck in the places you think are best to guard from. Take turns pointing out an imaginary patient, and have everyone move on deck as they would in order to maintain pool coverage.

2. Chalkboard Rescues

Have a pool map and each person on your team gets a penny. One person calls out patients and their location, and everyone responds by moving their penny and even describing what they would do.

3. Spineboard Races

Time yourself doing spinal procedures in all areas of the pool, and compare times.

4. Missing Person Search

Have one person hide a baby somewhere while the other three lifeguards are not looking. Turn around and find the baby as fast as possible.

5. DNS Talk

Practice your DNS talk in a similar way to the first aid procedures with a marksheet until you can hit every item as fast as possible.

6. Hand Signals

Make a set of cards that describe a scenario. Examples:

- I need you to call 9-1-1 for a non-breathing spinal patient, then bring the O2 and first aid kit
- There is a missing 6 year-old whose name is Jimmy and who is wearing a blue swim-suit
- I have to go off-deck to deal with a potentially violent customer in the lobby

Pass the message through 4 people and see if you get it right. Practice your clarity, and remember to mouth the words when you do hand-signals!

7. Interruptions

Lifeguards will often get interrupted in their treatment during pool sims. Practice treating one patient, and part-way through introducing a second patient. Or even just practice communicating with other lifeguards in the middle of patient treatment.

PAA

1. Basic Patient Care

Take turns being victim, rescuer, and judge. Use a general marksheet and practice your super-fast patient care without missing any steps. Here are four basic patient types that you can start with. Repeat each patient until you don't miss any steps on the marksheet.

1. Unconscious 2. DNS 3. Bleeding 4. PR

2. PAA Leapfrog

This works well with a large group of people. (With only four, you will just have to alternate partners).

Each person has a partner that pretends to be some sort of PAA patient (anything from spinal to PR). You have 10-15 seconds to treat that patient (some patients may take less time than that) and you quickly alternate.

3. Chalkboard Rescues

Design a typical PAA situation (ex. 5 patients of each priority). Have each patient on a small piece of paper and place them on a map of the pool. Each lifeguard decides what order they can rescue patients so that all victims are saved in the most efficient way.

Save the pieces of paper, and add more for varied situations.

4. One-person Spinals

An important skill in PAA is to be able to rescue any patient on your own, and to continue being useful in the event after that point. Practice Canadian spinal rolls & assessment while traveling through the water.

Also experiment with one person-spinals on land including walking-talking spinal.

5. Random Aids

Practice working with random aids. Pick a card that has an aid on it, and another card that has a victim type. Practice rescuing that patient with the aid that happens to be nearby.

6. Multiple Patients

Practice rescuing multiple patients at the same time, so that each lifeguard is aware of their capabilities. Many lifeguard can do a double pia-carry for example.

7. Baby Search

Practice searching for the baby. Throw the baby in the pool, and have one person be a DNS. The lifeguard has to do a running entry while they put on their goggles, rescue the DNS and then return for the baby that they hopefully spotted while they were doing the DNS carry.