

## 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.

We are offering a two-day ASHI (American Safety and Health Institute) *Wilderness First Aid* course. This course meets the New York State first aid requirements for trip leaders at children's camps. It also meets the Philmont first aid requirements for trip leaders.

ASHI *Wilderness First Aid* is an intensive 16- to 20-hour course for those who are involved in serious wilderness activities. This course is the choice of many wilderness trip leaders and guides. (Note: This is their *Advanced* level Wilderness First Aid course. It is not their *Basic* level course, which is called *Basic Wilderness First Aid*.)

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. 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.

Note: The First Aid requirements the American Camping Association uses for accrediting camps are as follows:

1. When access to EMS is **20 minutes or less**: Standard or Basic First Aid
2. When access to EMS is **20-60 minutes**: Advanced First Aid, RTE, First Responder, or EMT
3. When access to EMS is **more than one hour**: Wilderness First Aid, Wilderness Advanced First Aid, Wilderness First Responder, or Wilderness EMT  
(Minimum 16 hour course)

Scout Camps are accredited by National Council BSA; however, this does bring out the inadequacy of the urban first aid courses and the need for Wilderness First Aid training for trek leaders. Beginning in 2008, trek leaders at Philmont will be required to be certified in Wilderness First Aid.