

## Evacuation Criteria

The decision to evacuate is difficult. Use your best judgment, while taking into account the following:

Patients should be evacuated if they have:

- Immediate threat to life
- Immediate threat to limb
- Malaise (e.g. Serious infection, fever greater than 39°C greater than, extreme dehydration)
- Pain (severe: sudden onset, abdominal with symptoms of shock, or chest)
- Cosmetics (potentially scarring to face, head and neck or potentially scarring injuries to joints)
- Mechanism of Injury (may be slow onset of symptoms for potentially serious injury. E.g. Fall greater than 15 ft; trauma resulting in any loss of consciousness)
- Psychological (threat to self or others. Behavioral and discipline issues, or a violation of program policy).
- Other (suspected fractures, progressive infection, serious burns)

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## Document, Organize, Determine, Send Message

These things may happen simultaneously by designating tasks.

### Document

- A thorough SOAP note is necessary to evacuate the patient. Write as if the reader has no prior knowledge of the patient's condition.
- Fill out the Field Evacuation Report and continue monitoring the patient.
- Complete documentation of behavioral and discipline (course log, verbal warnings, written contract) issues is a prerequisite of evacuation-unless circumstances demonstrate otherwise (e.g. a compelling reason).
- Use both the patient name and the roster number to avoid confusion.
- Prioritize: Call (evacuation coordinator by cell/sat phone); Radio (if possible); Go (send runners with a message if necessary).

### Organize

Assume leadership and delegate responsibilities. Divide the group into teams avoid having "too many cooks in the (evac) kitchen."

Keep everyone occupied. Here are some good possibilities:

- Determine distances to nearest road access/medical help
- Build a litter if necessary
- Scout or break trail up ahead
- Prepare evacuee's pack
- Prepare evacuator's pack
- Find and mark landing site (helicopter evac)

### Determine

The urgency of the evacuation:

- Severity of medical problem
- Distance to road head Difficulty of terrain
- Safety of evacuation
- Message to villagers or authorities
- Time to a hospital
- Weather
- Consequence of mechanical failures (of the rescue vehicle)

What type of evacuation is necessary?

- No threat to life or limb?
- Can the patient walk?
- The group can carry the patient (litter)?
- Outside air evac or helicopter?
- Helicopter access? Pre-arranged? Landing site?
- Outside ground help (e.g. truck, boat)?

### Message

Cell Phone and radio

- If possible, determine the longitude and latitude / UTM coordinates
- Delegate communication to one person from start to finish
- Write down your message before you call
- Utilize SOAP note
- All members of Instructor team should know radio guidelines and be able to operate it before going into the field
- Use Evacuation Report as a guideline. "I have a \_\_\_\_\_ with a \_\_\_\_\_"

Runners

- Ideal minimum group size is 4
- If someone in the party is incapacitated, split into 2 pairs and one group continues
- An instructor should lead the group. Runners must bring with them:

Runners must bring with them:

- Shelter and food
- Copy of the Field Evacuation Report
- Timetable, backup plan, travel routes,
- Any special requests (e.g. *Doctor*, spinal board, more people to help carry litter, etc.)
- Marked maps with location of accident, present location of course and victim, route they will follow
- Plans for runners' return to the course

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### Additional concerns

#### Decision making

When determining the type of evacuation consider the urgency of the medical situation, distance to the road, difficulty of the terrain, the group's physical strength, technical abilities and experience. Consider also the weather, communication possibilities, outside assistance, the transportation schedule and the suitability of landing sites. Verbally examine the WHYS of each decision. It will facilitate thorough planning and enhance understanding of the plan for the entire team.

A thorough patient assessment is essential to making a wise decision regarding method and urgency of evacuation.

#### Communication

Assume, and act as if, the cell phone, satellite phone and/or radio will not work. An inability to communicate with air traffic, a mishandled message or bad weather can thwart an evacuation.

When the instructors can't verbally communicate with each other, a clear understanding of expectations is vital. Messages delivered on foot and by radio are generally one-way so they must be accurate, concise and complete. Writing them down will help with this. Written backup plans on when a contingency will be initiated serve to help staff know what to expect from each other in the event plans change.

#### Pre-Plans

Think through the scenario from camp to road head and back, including contingencies for the inevitable changes. Details are important; small omissions in planning can have great consequences and tend to multiply over time.

Organization and travel during evacuations is often slower than anticipated, and plans must be laid for altered timetables or equipment failure.

Be familiar with evacuation assets before venturing into the field. The more you know about available resources, the wiser your choices will be during an evacuation. Look over your route and consider the possibilities for evacuation. Where are you farthest from the road? When do you cross obstacles such as passes or rivers that may impede evacuations? What unusual road heads or shortcuts may be viable alternatives, and which maps do you need to find them? Will extreme weather change your options?

#### Debriefing

Debrief the evacuation, both as a learning tool and as an opportunity to manage stress. In the event of a serious injury or fatality, someone qualified in CISD (Critical Incident Stress Debrief) should be brought in.