



May 29, 2020

A Message from the Chief Medical Officer

These are challenging and uncertain times, necessitating that healthcare institutions, EMS agencies, workplaces, lay responders and the institutions and instructors who train them understand the latest science to minimize risk while providing lifesaving training and/or response.



In order to help address this need for the latest clinical, infectious disease and educational science, the Scientific Advisory Council and I have thoroughly assessed the data and updates from myriad sources including the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. This week, we released official guidance for aquatics and updated recommendations on responding to emergencies during this pandemic, all of which are based on the latest science:

- [Aquatics](#): There are unique considerations for aquatic facilities, among them reopening safety, precautions for lifeguards, staff and patrons, pool maintenance considerations, and rescue adaptations.
- [Healthcare Professionals](#): The COVID-19 pandemic is requiring modifications of assessment and care across the entire healthcare system, and our recommendations offer guidance on CPR and resuscitation including use of personal protective equipment, minimizing transmission risk during care (including interventions such as intubation), clinical decision-making, and care in pre-hospital and hospital settings.
- [Lay Responders](#): The established “Check, Call, Care” guidance directs that lay responders check the person, call 9-1-1, send someone to get an AED, and start CPR. Our guidance reiterates the importance of high quality CPR and use of AED and further delves into recommendations to minimize risk of transmission when performing CPR on persons with presumed or confirmed COVID-19.

We continue to track the latest science closely and will maintain regular correspondence with you to ensure you have this information on hand.

As we enter a new phase of the COVID-19 pandemic, we are seeing modifications to public health guidance that allow businesses to reopen. To this end, the Red Cross introduces a new course called *Returning to Work During COVID-19: Safe Work Practices*. The content of this course corroborates with recommendations from the CDC and OSHA, as well as our own Scientific Advisory Council. You can access this one-hour online course in two ways:

- Via [RedCross.org](https://www.redcross.org)
- Via the [Red Cross Learning Center](#) for training providers, who can assign students using the Request Blended Class functionality

Returning to Work During COVID-19: Safe Work Practices adds to the instruction we have already provided, such as course modifications for social distancing and virtual skills practice. This suite of tools allows critical resuscitation, CPR and first aid education to continue during the pandemic in support of healthcare providers and essential workforce while also providing information to support all businesses and the public through this crisis.

Further learnings, science-based application and direction will be forthcoming in a series of “Ask the CMO” webinars, details of which will be released in the coming weeks. I am looking forward to connecting with many of you during these virtual events.

Lastly, CPR + AED Awareness Week starts on Monday, June 1. It is with this in mind that I thank you for your involvement with the Red Cross and for your efforts to prepare for the unexpected.



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