

**2011 Pediatric Advanced Life Support (PALS) Classroom Course & Materials
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)
As of November 3, 2011**

Course Information

Q: What is the PALS Course?

A: The American Heart Association's PALS Course has been updated to reflect new science in the *2010 American Heart Association Guidelines for Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation and Emergency Cardiovascular Care (2010 AHA Guidelines for CPR & ECC)*. This classroom, video-based, Instructor-led course uses a series of simulated pediatric emergencies to reinforce the important concepts of a systematic approach to pediatric assessment, basic life support, PALS treatment algorithms, effective resuscitation and team dynamics. The goal of the PALS Course is to improve the quality of care provided to seriously ill or injured children, resulting in improved outcomes.

Q: Specifically, what content is taught in the PALS Classroom Course?

A: The new PALS Course contains key changes reflecting science from the *2010 AHA Guidelines for CPR & ECC*. Specific content covered is listed below:

- 1-rescuer child CPR and AED use
- 1- and 2-rescuer infant CPR
- Management of respiratory emergencies
- Rhythm disturbances and electrical therapy
- Vascular access
- Resuscitation team concept
- Cardiac, respiratory and shock case discussions and simulations
- Systematic approach to pediatric assessment

Q: What is different about the 2011 PALS Course versus the 2006 version?

A: The 2011 PALS Course is updated to reflect the *2010 AHA Guidelines for CPR & ECC*. Other key changes include:

- After ROSC, titrate oxygen to $\geq 94\%$ but $< 100\%$ to limit risk of hyperoxemia
- Defibrillate with an initial dose of 2 to 4 J/kg; subsequent shocks at least 4 J/kg but not to exceed 10 J/kg
- Stronger recommendation against routine use of calcium in cardiac arrest because it does not improve survival and may be harmful
- Therapeutic hypothermia may be considered if patient remains comatose after resuscitation
- Monitor exhaled CO₂ in intubated patients; this may help determine the effectiveness of chest compressions during CPR
- New Team Dynamics Debriefing Tool
- New PALS Systematic Approach
- Instructor materials cover full and update courses, as well as HeartCode PALS Parts 2 and 3
- Format similar to that of ACLS

Q: Who is the target audience for the PALS Course?

A: The PALS Course is for healthcare providers who respond to emergencies in infants and children. This includes personnel in emergency response, emergency medicine, intensive care and critical care units, such as physicians, nurses, paramedics and others, who need a PALS course completion card for job or other requirements.

Q: What is the format of the PALS Course?

A: PALS is a classroom-based, Instructor-led course. In the course, skills are taught in large-group sessions and small-group learning and testing stations where case-based scenarios are presented in the course video. The course includes skills practice and testing.

This course uses a recommended ratio of 6 students to 1 Instructor to 1 manikin or station. The CPR and AED and Management of Respiratory Emergencies stations require 1 Instructor and 2 manikins for 6 students per station.

Q: What are the course completion requirements for PALS?

A: For course completion, students must successfully:

- Pass the 1- and 2-Rescuer Child BLS With AED and 1- and 2-Rescuer Infant BLS Skills Tests
- Actively participate in, practice and complete all learning stations
- Complete the closed-book written exam with a minimum score of 84%
- Pass 2 PALS core case scenarios (1 cardiac and 1 respiratory or shock) as a team leader, providing appropriate medical treatment and demonstrating effective team dynamics

Q: Approximately how long does the PALS Course take to complete?

A: Approximate course completion times are listed below. Times are based on a recommended ratio of 6 students to 1 Instructor to 1 manikin or station (NOTE: the CPR and AED and Management of Respiratory Emergencies stations require 1 Instructor and 2 manikins for 6 students per station). Using different ratios will result in increased course completion times.

- Full course: 14 hours 10 minutes, plus additional time for breaks and lunch
- Update with all optional stations: 8 hours 20 minutes, plus additional time for breaks and lunch
- Update without optional stations: 6 hours 20 minutes, plus additional time for breaks and lunch

Q: Does successful completion of the PALS Course result in an AHA course completion card?

A: Yes. Students who successfully complete the requirements of the PALS Course will receive an AHA PALS Provider course completion card, valid for two years.

Q: Are there prerequisites for taking the PALS Course?

A: Before taking PALS, students should have a mastery of infant and child BLS skills. They should also be able to recognize various heart rhythms, be familiar with different types of airway management tools and their use and have knowledge of the drugs commonly used to treat cardiovascular irregularities.

To help students adequately prepare for the PALS Course, the AHA highly recommends that each student complete the online PALS Precourse Self-Assessment, available through the AHA Student Website (www.heart.org/eccstudent). To access the AHA Student Website, students and Instructors will need an access code, which is included on page ii of each *PALS Provider Manual* and *PALS Instructor Manual*.

Q: What is the difference between the structured debriefing portion of the PALS Course and the Structured and Supported Debriefing online course?

A: The structured debriefing portion of the PALS Course does not teach the student how to debrief; it is simply a tool that can be used during a debriefing.

Q: Are continuing education (CE/CME/CEH) credits offered for the PALS classroom-based course?

A: The AHA is currently in the process of completing requirements to be able to provide CECBEMS CEH for classroom-based PALS Provider Courses. We will announce this when available.

Because the continuing education approval process for nurses and physicians is much more involved, credit for these professions will not be available through the AHA at this time.

Course Materials

Q: What new materials are available for the PALS Course?

A: Materials for the classroom course, updated to reflect the *2010 AHA Guidelines for CPR & ECC*, include:

Student/Provider Materials

- 90-1052 *PALS Provider Manual*, includes PALS Pocket Reference Card (90-1053)
- 90-1053 PALS Pocket Reference Card

Instructor Materials

- 90-1057 PALS DVD Set (2 discs)
- 90-1054 *PALS Instructor Manual* (includes Lesson Maps, Instructor CD, divider page tabs, scenario cue cards, ECG rhythm cards)
- 90-1058 PALS Instructor Package, includes:
 - *PALS Provider Manual* (90-1052)
 - *PALS Instructor Manual* (90-1054)
 - 2 PALS DVD Sets (90-1057)
 - PALS Posters (90-1055)
 - PALS Emergency Crash Cart Cards (90-1056)
 - Stopwatch

Supplemental Materials

- 90-1055 PALS Posters (set of 10)
- 90-1053 PALS Pocket Reference Card
- 90-1056 PALS Emergency Crash Cart Cards

Cards

- 90-1808 PALS Provider Course Completion Card (2-card mailer)
- 90-1818 PALS Provider Course Completion Card (3-card sheet)
- 90-1817 PALS Instructor Card (3-card sheet)

Q: What is included on the Instructor CD that comes with the *PALS Instructor Manual*?

A: The CD includes the following key resources:

- Core Case Scenario Cards in PDF file
- Precourse materials (equipment list, sample agendas, precourse letters)
- Lesson Maps for full and update courses, as well as for HeartCode PALS Parts 2 and 3
- Skills Testing Sheets (for classroom-based PALS Course and HeartCode PALS Parts 2 and 3)
- Algorithms and flowcharts
- Scenario photos
- Progress checklists
- Team role labels, and more

Q: Will the contents of the Instructor CD also be posted to the AHA Instructor Network?

A: Forms, checklists and some other tools found on the Instructor CD will be posted to the [AHA Instructor Network](#) under Courses > PALS > Course Resources. Lesson Maps will not be posted to the AHA Instructor Network.

Q: What materials must a student have to take the PALS Course?

A: To take the PALS Course, each student must have access to his/her own *PALS Provider Manual* before, during and after the class.

Q: Is there a student CD included in the *PALS Provider Manual*?

A: No, the 2011 Provider Manual does not include a student CD. Information for students is covered in the Provider Manual and on the [AHA Student Website](#).

Q: Is there a student website for this course?

A: Yes, AHA has created the AHA Student Website at www.heart.org/eccstudent, which allows students and Instructors access to the online PALS Precourse Self-Assessment tool. To access the AHA Student Website, students and Instructors will need an access code, which is provided on page ii of the *PALS Provider Manual* and *PALS Instructor Manual*.

Teaching PALS

Q: Who can teach the PALS Course?

A: PALS Instructors may teach this course.

Q: What materials are necessary to teach PALS?

A: To teach the PALS Course, PALS Instructors, at a minimum, must have a *PALS Instructor Manual*, a PALS DVD and a stopwatch for testing. However, for added convenience and cost savings, it is recommended that Instructors have the full PALS Instructor Package, which contains the following tools:

- *PALS Provider Manual* (90-1052)
- *PALS Instructor Manual* (90-1054)
- 2 PALS DVD Sets (90-1057)
- PALS Posters (90-1055)
- PALS Emergency Crash Cart Cards (90-1056)
- Stopwatch

Also, 2011 PALS course completion cards must be issued. AHA course completion cards are issued through the Training Center with which the Instructor is aligned.

Q: How will PALS Instructors be updated on the new curriculum and materials for the PALS Course?

A: AHA has created a “product orientation” to introduce all PALS Instructors to the new PALS curriculum and materials. This product orientation is a Windows Media Player or QuickTime presentation available through the [AHA Instructor Network](#). It is not mandatory that Instructors review this orientation or provide documentation to their Training Centers; however, it is highly recommended.

Course Completion Cards & Instructor Cards

Q: When do Training Center Coordinators/Instructors have to start using/issuing new PALS course completion cards?

A: Training Center Coordinators and Instructors should begin to use new PALS course completion cards immediately upon release because new cards 1) visually indicate that the students have been trained according to the *2010 AHA Guidelines for CPR & ECC* and 2) include updated security features. Training Center Coordinators and Instructors must begin using new cards no later than 60 days after new materials have been released.

Q: Do PALS Instructors need a new PALS Instructor Card to continue teaching?

A: No. It is not an AHA ECC requirement that Training Center Coordinators issue new PALS Instructor Cards. New Instructor cards should be used as follows:

- New Instructor cards must be issued to new PALS Instructors who are trained following the release of new materials.
- New Instructor cards must be issued to PALS Instructors who complete their Instructor renewal requirements following the release of new PALS Classroom Course materials.

Purchasing Materials/Finding Classes

Q: Where/how can I purchase new PALS Course materials?

A: AHA ECC training products can be purchased from any of ECC’s three trusted product [Distributors](#) (Channing Bete, Laerdal and WorldPoint).

Q: How do I find a PALS Classroom Course in my local area?

A: To find a class near you, please use the ECC Class Connector Tool at www.heart.org/eccclassconnector.

Technical Issues

Q: Whom should I contact if I have problems with PALS materials?

A: For problems with this product, customers should contact the AHA ECC Distributor from which they purchased the product (Channing Bete, Laerdal or WorldPoint).

Translations

Q: Will PALS be translated? Into what languages will it be translated? When will translated editions be available?

A: Yes, the PALS Course materials are scheduled to be translated into Japanese, German, Spanish and Portuguese. A timeline for these languages is still being developed.