

You Are the Rescuer

DEC Cycle A 2008

YATR Discussion Resources

Four scenarios have been selected for the “You Are the Rescuer” (YATR) exercise, one of which is an invitation for you alone, or with the help of an instructor, to write your own. Regardless of where the incident actually occurred—on a ski slope, in a river or on a hiking trail—the assessment and basic emergency care remain essentially the same. Each OEC technician should have read every scenario and formulated an opinion as to his or her proposed actions.

Carefully read the scenarios on the following pages. They are based on actual incidents. Using the matrix below, formulate your opinions on the leading questions. Potential discussion points have been suggested for each question, but these should not be considered comprehensive.

Remember there are many correct answers. “Solving the problem” is not the objective; exploring all possibilities through discussion is. Always consider how these scenarios could differ at your particular location and be ready to discuss the possibilities at your refresher course.

Leading Questions	Discussion Points
As you approach this patient, what are your priorities?	Describe and discuss what you would do to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure Scene safety• Manage the scene• Assess the patient
What possible problems do you think the patient may have?	Identify potential problems and the signs and symptoms of each
What resources might you need to manage this patient/situation?	For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Equipment• Human resources• Resources needed at base
What emergency care does this patient require?	Describe and discuss: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Immediate emergency care needs

What problem(s) might you encounter as you manage the scene?

For example:

- Needs during transport
- In the patrol room
- Important considerations

What are your transport considerations?

For example:

- Complications with patient
- Crowd control
- Challenging terrain
- From the accident scene to the base facilities
- 2) ALS / BLS?
- 3) Air ambulance?

How would your emergency care of this patient differ had it occurred in a different season or while doing a different activity?

Scenario 1

It's a warm morning, and you and your sailing mate are sitting in the cockpit of your sailboat at anchor in a small, unpopulated harbor. You notice a pair of divers approach in their small boat and anchor nearby. They have their dive gear ready to go, and in no time, with their regulators in their mouths, plunge into the water. Minutes later you notice one of the divers frantically waving and yelling. Upon closer look you see the female diver has the male by the collar of his jacket, and you notice something on his head.

You and your companion grab the first aid kit on board, jump into your dingy and head over. As you get closer, you see that the male diver is bleeding profusely from a large scalp wound, yet he is responsive and thrashing in the water. Upon reaching the divers you find the woman frustrated, as she is unable to lift him into the boat. Thankfully she has inflated both her jacket and that of her dive partner, so he is buoyant. When you arrive, the male starts to calm down, though he is still unable to hoist himself into the boat. You radio the Coast Guard for assistance, but they are a minimum of 45 minutes away.

The woman tells you they had turned on their tanks before leaving shore during a buddy check, but had turned them off for the ride over. It wasn't until they were descending that they

realized they had forgotten to turn their tanks back on. Her partner had descended quite quickly, and shot for the surface when he realized his mistake. Failing to look up, he crashed head-first into the propeller shaft of the boat's motor.

The male starts to shiver. Though the water is calm, the shoreline is rugged and rocky, so the injured man cannot be transported to shore. You are concerned for spinal considerations but have nothing that can be used as a backboard.

Scenario 2

It's an overcast day with temperatures hovering around 20°F and a cold northern wind at 15 mph. You receive a report of a downed skier at the top of an intermediate run. You're told that the skier is a 55-year-old male paraplegic in a sitski who is complaining of intense pain in his left shoulder.

On approach to the scene you notice a strongly carved track leading past a small group of bushes. The track seemingly ends there, followed by a large, obvious sitzmark in the snow. On arrival at the scene, you find a skier strapped into a sitski lying on his left side. The skier is in obvious pain, but acknowledges your arrival and asks for help. You note that the skier appears to be short of breath, and that his left arm is severely abducted, with a broken outrigger still attached around his forearm.

Your scene size-up concludes that the scene is safe, and you have a single patient. You mark the scene and immediately assess the patient's breathing. At this time, the skier asks you to loosen the strap around his chest, as it is too tight in his present position. On loosening the strap, the skier affirms that he can now breathe more easily. As you continue your assessment, he tells you that he caught his outrigger in the brush as he made a turn. His arm, affixed to the outrigger, was pulled away from his body and behind him. He lost control of the equipment as his ski lost its edge. He heard and felt a "pop" as his arm was pulled away from his body, and then heard a second "pop" as he slid to a stop. His arm, still strapped into his outrigger, was trapped over his head.

Your focused history and physical exam reveals deformity of the left shoulder. The skier tells you that he dislocated his right shoulder in a biking accident the previous summer, and that it felt a lot like this. Vitals are within an expected range, but there is a significant strength deficit in his left hand. Since loosening the strap around his chest, his respirations are now robust.

Scenario 3

It's 20:15 on a clear, breezy night with a temperature of 10°F when you are called by the top lift operator, who is reporting an unresponsive skier in the chairlift at the off-ramp. You race from the patrol facility to the off-ramp and find an approximately 45-year-old male alone in the chair and slumped over the safety bar. He has no detectable breath and no palpable pulse. There are no other patrollers immediately available, and none can reach the scene by skiing from the top of another lift. The lift operator states that he completed the pre-season Outdoor First Care course taught by the patrol, and about a dozen other untrained guests are nearby.

Scenario 4

In the past, you've been presented with several scenarios for discussion. You were provided the details of an actual incident and asked to respond to discussion points with fellow rescuers. This year, to challenge you in a slightly different way, we are asking you to write your own scenario.

Here's how: Think of a specific location at your home area where an accident could happen. Keeping in mind the cycle-specific topics for this year's refresher, imagine a worst-case scenario--literally. What type of incident could happen at this location? Would it be a great challenge to you as the first person on scene?

Take into consideration the gender, age and physical condition of your patient or patients. What would the weather be like? Would the accident be due to a collision, a fall, a medical condition? How much help would you have available? What type of equipment would be available or needed? How soon would help arrive?

If you would like, draw a stick figure sketch of what the scene would look like upon your arrival (similar to the photos provided in the YATR scenarios). Describe the condition of your patient and what you would expect to find in your assessment. Then note how the patient's condition would change if help was unavailable.

Refer to the points for discussion in the other scenarios and apply them to your scenario. Think about the major topics of scene safety, assessment, emergency care (equipment and helpers), extrication and transportation. Be realistic here and have some fun with it--you never know when it might actually happen.

Feel free to share and discuss this scenario with your fellow rescuers. Also, ask your instructors if they might stage this incident at a future training session or on-the-hill clinic. As an alternative, if you would prefer to write up an actual incident for your refresher course that occurred at your area, which falls into the topic areas being covered at this years' content, feel free to do so. Try to choose one that was challenging for you.