

CPR & Emergency Cardiovascular Care

Updated January 18, 2018

Q: What is HeartCode PALS?

A: HeartCode PALS is the AHA's blended learning delivery method for the PALS Course. Blended learning is a combination of eLearning, in which a student completes part of the course in a self-directed manner, followed by a hands-on session.

HeartCode PALS uses a series of videos and 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 HeartCode PALS Course is to improve the quality of care provided to seriously ill or injured children, resulting in improved outcomes.

After successfully completing of the online portion, students must attend an Instructor-led hands-on session with an AHA PALS Instructor, where they will practice and test skills to demonstrate proficiency. Where available, students may also complete the hands-on portion using a voice-assisted manikin (VAM).

Q: What is blended learning?

A: Blended learning uses online technology not only to supplement but also to transform and improve the learning process. Successful blended learning can reach students with varying learning styles and in different environments. It is a combination of eLearning, in which a student completes part of the course in a self-directed manner, followed by a hands-on session with an Instructor or using a VAM.

Q: What specifically is taught in HeartCode PALS?

A: After successfully completing the full HeartCode PALS Course (online portion, followed by hands-on session), students should be able to

- Perform high-quality Child CPR AED and Infant CPR per AHA BLS recommendations
- Differentiate between patients who do and do not require immediate intervention
- Recognize cardiopulmonary arrest early and begin CPR within 10 seconds
- Apply team dynamics
- Differentiate between respiratory distress and failure
- Perform early interventions for respiratory distress and failure
- Differentiate between compensated and decompensated (hypotensive) shock
- Perform early interventions for the treatment of shock
- Differentiate between unstable and stable patients with arrhythmias
- Describe clinical characteristics of instability in patients with arrhythmias
- Implement post-cardiac arrest management

Q: What are the key differences between the 2010 Guidelines HeartCode PALS and the 2015 Guidelines HeartCode PALS?

A: The new HeartCode PALS includes the following changes and enhancements:

- 2015 Guidelines science including the Chain of Survival for in-hospital and prehospital
- Precourse Self-assessment that must be passed with 70% before students can proceed to course content
- Updated videos, scenarios, and life-like skills animations
- Updated number of exam questions for consistency in advanced life support courses (ACLS, PALS)
- Hands-on skills session may be completed using a VAM instead of an AHA PALS Instructor, where available

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Target Audience

Q: Who is the intended audience for HeartCode PALS?

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

HeartCode PALS is for healthcare professionals and others seeking an alternative delivery method for completing PALS training.

Course Length

Q: How long does it take to complete the online portion of HeartCode PALS?

A: The online portion of HeartCode PALS takes approximately 6-9 hours to complete, depending on the student's level of experience.

Q: What is the length of the HeartCode PALS Instructor-led hands-on session?

A: The hands-on session for HeartCode PALS takes approximately 3-4 hours without breaks.

Accessing HeartCode PALS (online portion)

Q: How do students access the online portion of HeartCode PALS?

A: Once a student is either issued or purchases a key for the online portion of HeartCode PALS, the student will go to OnlineAHA to activate the key and complete the online portion of the course.

Q: Can the online portion of HeartCode PALS be accessed after students successfully complete it?

A: Yes, students may access all material included in the online portion of HeartCode PALS program for 24 months following initial activation of their course key.

Q: Other than a HeartCode PALS key, what course materials do students need?

A: All student content is contained within the HeartCode PALS online portion, so no additional student materials are needed. A variety of additional videos, as well as the *PALS Provider Manual* and the *2015 Handbook of Emergency Cardiovascular Care*, are included to enhance learning and facilitate successful completion of the patient cases.

HeartCode PALS Online Portion Certificate of Completion

Q: What is required for student entry into the HeartCode PALS Hands-On Session?

A: Upon successful completion of the online portion, including the course exam, students receive a certificate of completion, which they must print and present for entry into the Instructor-led hands-on session.

Q: How can PALS Instructors verify the authenticity of the HeartCode PALS Online Portion certificate of completion?

A: Instructors can verify certificates at OnlineAHA.org/verify_certificate.

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Instructor-led Hands-on Sessions

Q: How should PALS Instructors prepare for conducting HeartCode PALS Hands-On Sessions?

A: Before conducting hands-on sessions for HeartCode PALS, Instructors

- Must have completed their 2015 Guidelines Instructor Update.
- Must have a current copy of the *PALS Instructor Manual* (product #15-1047) and PALS Course DVD Set (product #15-1051). The *PALS Instructor Manual* includes information and Lesson Plans for blended learning, and the PALS Course DVD Set includes the HeartCode PALS DVD for Instructors to use during hands-on sessions.
- Should thoroughly review the official HeartCode PALS Training Memo posted on the HeartCode PALS Course page on the AHA Instructor Network.
- Are strongly encouraged to complete the PALS Product & Course Orientation (P&CO) available on the Instructor Network. The P&CO familiarizes PALS Instructors with both Instructor-led and blended learning course delivery.
- Are also encouraged to become familiar with the HeartCode PALS Online Portion of the course.

Q: What is the difference between the PALS skills session (parts 2 and 3) for the 2010 Guidelines HeartCode PALS and the Instructor-led, hands-on session for the 2015 Guidelines HeartCode PALS blended learning course?

A: The HeartCode PALS Instructor-led hands-on session is a *structured* course focused on meaningful skills practice of BLS, airway management, and Megacode skills, as well as skills testing. It is more comprehensive than the skills practice and testing session for the 2010 Guidelines HeartCode PALS.

Hands-on Sessions Using a VAM

Q: What are the differences between the HeartCode PALS Hands-on Sessions conducted with an AHA Instructor and those conducted using a VAM?

A: With an AHA Instructor, students receive reinforcement of skills using practice-while-watching; they benefit from a high-performance team activity; and may get the benefit of optional lessons including Life is Why and Local Protocols (if the Instructor offers them).

Using the VAM, students receive the benefit of real-time directive feedback during training. The system is designed to accurately measure rate, depth, recoil, and ventilations.

Various methods exist to achieve the objectives of PALS course completion and each offers advancements *and* limitations in the capability of their delivery methodology. Some aspects of technology can be limiting. While the VAM is inherently limited in its ability to manage team skills, the AHA would not remove that valuable component of the PALS Instructor-led Hands-On Session.

Q: Why don't students using a VAM for the hands-on session have to participate in Megacode practice and testing?

A: There is technically no way to replicate the Megacode on the VAM. However, the AHA highly recommends that students who practice and test with a VAM also have the opportunity to participate in Megacode practice in their institution.

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Continuing Education

Q: Does the 2015 Guidelines HeartCode PALS offer continuing education (CE/CME)?

A: Yes, the following CE is available upon successful completion of the online portion of HeartCode PALS:

The American Heart Association is accredited by the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC), the Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education (ACPE), and the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME), to provide continuing education for the healthcare team.

AMA Credit Designation Statement – Physicians

The American Heart Association designates this enduring material for a maximum of 7.25 *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit™*. Physicians should claim only the credit commensurate with the extent of their participation in the activity.

AAPA Credit Acceptance Statement – Physician Assistants

AAPA accepts certificates of participation for educational activities certified for *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit™* from organizations accredited by ACCME or a recognized state medical society. Physician assistants may receive a maximum of 7.25 hour of Category I credit for completing this program.

AANP Credit Acceptance Statement – Nurse Practitioners

American Academy of Nurse Practitioners (AANP) accepts *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit™* from organizations accredited by the ACCME.

***AMA Credit must be claimed within 6 months of participation. CME/CE will no longer be available to claim for this activity after six months of participating.*

ANCC Credit Designation Statement – Nurses

The maximum number of hours awarded for this CE activity is 6.50 contact hours.

***ANCC Credit must be claimed within 6 months of participation. CME/CE will no longer be available to claim for this activity after six months of participating.*

ACPE Credit Designation Statement – Pharmacists

ACPE Credit: 8.00 Contact Hours | Universal Program Number: 0256-0000-17-914-H01-P

***ACPE credit must be claimed within 30 days of participation. ACPE credit will no longer be available to claim after one month of participating.*

Continuing Education Accreditation – Emergency Medical Services

This continuing education activity is approved by the American Heart Association, an organization accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Pre-Hospital Continuing Education (CAPCE), for 5.75 Advanced CEHs, activity number 17-AMHA-F3-0346

***CAPCE credit must be claimed within 6 months of participation. CME/CE credit will no longer be available to claim for this activity after the six-month claiming period.*

Disclosure Policy

All persons who develop and/or control educational content in CME/CE activities provided by the American Heart Association will disclose to the audience all financial relationships with any commercial supporters of this activity as well as with other commercial interests whose lines of business are related to the CME/CE-certified content of this activity. In addition, presenters will disclose unlabeled/unapproved uses of drugs or devices discussed in

Technical Requirements

Q: What are the minimum technical requirements for HeartCode PALS?

A: Minimum technical requirements are available at https://www.onlineaha.org/technical_requirements.

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Q: Can a student log in and out of the course?

A: Yes. Students can log in and out as many times as they choose. However, the written exam must be taken in one sitting. To log out, students must click the "Click here to logout" link located at the top of the page after login. When the student is ready to continue training, he/she can return to OnlineAHA.org and login with his/her registered email and password.

Customer Support Information

Q: Whom should I contact for technical assistance with HeartCode PALS?

A: Customers may contact the AHA Customer Support Center at 888-242-8883 or help@onlineaha.org for technical assistance. Hours of operation are Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. – 5 p.m., Central Time.

Q: Whom should I contact with questions related to the administration of the HeartCode PALS Course?

A: For questions about course administration, you may contact your AHA Account Manager or Account Specialist. AHA Instructors should always consult their TCC as their first point of contact. TCCs may also contact AHA TCC Support at tccsupport@heart.org.